

**BOARD of SELECTMEN MEETING – JUNE 22, 2005**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING**

TOWN HALL/LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM – 7:30 P.M.  
REVISED/APPROVED MINUTES

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These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription.

In attendance: R. Marconi, B. Manners, D. Masters, J. Plock, P. Yanity

AGENDA

1. Parks & Recreation Commission Interview – Evie Bottali
2. Discussion of town taking over Ridgebury Cemetery
3. Boys' and Girls' Club – additional space at Yanity
4. Chelsea Place Approval
5. Tamika Whitaker tax refund
6. Duncan Potter & Elizabeth Siw tax refund
7. Approval of meeting minutes – 4/13/05, 4/20/05
8. First Selectman's Report

**Economic Development Commission Meeting Agenda**

1. Intellectual Edge Lease at Richard Venus Building
2. Virginia Roebuck Lease at Richard Venus Building
3. Executive Session – land agreement

R. Marconi called the Board of Selectmen Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to move Items #1 and 2 from the Economic Development Commission Agenda, (1) Intellectual Edge Lease at Richard Venus Building, (2) Virginia Roebuck Lease at Richard Venus Building, to the Board of Selectmen Meeting Agenda instead. Motion passed 5-0.** This is necessary because the Board of Selectmen is responsible for setting Public Hearings and Town Meetings.

1. Parks & Recreation Commission Interview – Evie Bottali  
David Thaxter's membership on the Commission is up for renewal and there is one vacancy due to the resignation of Randall Balmer. Evie Bottali came forward to introduce herself and express her interest in serving on the Parks & Recreation Commission. She is co-owner of Environmental Strategies, a marketing research company; and for the past year and a half, she has been working on the Parks and Recreation Marketing Advisory Committee. She has been a Ridgefield resident since 1975. R. Marconi read the letter received from Ms. Bottali regarding her candidacy. In response to J. Plock's question regarding any special interest Ms. Bottali may have for the Parks & Recreation Commission, Evie replied that she sees a need for teen programs. The number of teens at the high school has increased considerably. It is important to identify recreation opportunities for children and citizens of all ages. The vacancy on the Commission has not been advertised. It was felt that advertisement of the vacancy should occur before an appointment is made. If anyone

else responds to the ad, interviews will be scheduled for the next BOS meeting. Appointment decisions will be made once all applicants have been interviewed.

2. Discussion of Town Taking Over Ridgebury Cemetery – Bob Reynolds introduced members of the Ridgebury Cemetery Association present for the BOS discussion. In attendance were: Bob Reynolds, Maureen Kiernan, Jeanne Timpanelli, and Doug Clewell.

Mr. Reynolds presented the BOS with a booklet he has compiled detailing the history of Ridgebury Cemetery, which dates back to 1707. The first gravesite is from 1724. There are now about 600 burials there, with room for about 20 more. It is a very historic location with burials of veterans from the many wars since the early 1700's. The Cemetery Association was formed in about 1900 and incorporated in 1960. Mr. Reynolds has served as President of the Association ever since. If the Town of Ridgefield were to assume responsibility for the Cemetery, it would be primarily a maintenance role. The Association is most anxious for the Cemetery to continue as an historic asset to the Town. There is an endowment fund of approximately \$165,000. Last year's Cemetery income was about \$50,000 with expenses of \$10,000. The current charge is \$1200/burial plot which includes "perpetual care" of the property. The Cemetery Association does not handle burials; a designated undertaker makes burial arrangements, and only two people are presently designated to do "opens". There are no current restrictions for Town residents only.

Mr. Reynolds would like to retire from his role as President. He is looking for a transitional replacement, and Doug Clewell has agreed to work closely with Bob Reynolds as Assistant President and learn what all is involved. Maureen Kiernan is willing to handle the finances. The existing Cemetery Association Board consists of 9 Directors. The annual meeting is the first Saturday in May, with approximately 21 members of the Association. One suggestion is to keep the Board of Directors and add some Town of Ridgefield members at large. There are other cemeteries in Ridgefield which are also not town-owned. There are no Town restrictions that only Town residents can be buried at Ridgebury Cemetery. The BOS needs to discuss the Town's role in cemetery maintenance and make plans that could if needed encompass other cemeteries besides Ridgebury. P. Yanity would like Town Counsel's opinion as to what options the Town has with regard to assuming responsibility for Ridgebury Cemetery and the possibility of keeping the Cemetery Association Board intact. Joan Plock is willing to serve on the Cemetery Board as a liaison between the Board of Selectmen and the Ridgebury Cemetery Board. Mr. Reynolds would like a plan for immediate action, call a special meeting of the Association, and resign as President and/or continue as an Advisor to Doug Clewell, and provide openings on the Board for new members.

3. Boys' and Girls' Club – additional space at Yanity – P. Yanity excused himself from the discussion and any possible vote as he serves on the Board of the Boys' and Girls' Club. Brian Qualey presented a rendering of possible expansion plans. The Club will need to relocate during construction and thus would like to move to Yanity Gym during this interim time. Planning & Zoning received the proposal and rendering June 21<sup>st</sup>. The Boys' and Girls' Club would like to have a two year agreement to use Yanity to allow for plenty of time for construction to occur and be completed. A parking problem is not anticipated at Yanity. It will be primarily traffic for dropping off and pick ups. R. Marconi has spoken to Paul Roche about this proposal and will check to see if the Parks & Recreation Association has been informed of the idea.

Another possibility for the Yanity Gym location is the creation of an Emergency Preparedness Center. State and Federal grant monies have been received for the creation of such a center with the installation of a permanent generator for emergency power generation, computers, and a phone

system. Yanity Gym is already designated as an emergency center and thus would be a logical choice for such a center, plus phone lines are already in. The set-up at Yanity currently includes two offices, a kitchen and the gym.

One idea is for Peggy Bruno to move the Adult Education offices to the Venus Building. Adult Education now occupies about 900 sq. feet, which might work as temporary space for the Boys' & Girls' Club. Many of the school buildings could accommodate the Adult Education classes. R. Marconi will research the various options. Planning & Zoning has scheduled a public hearing for July 19 on the proposed expansion of the Boys' and Girls' Club.

P. Yanity rejoined the BOS Meeting.

4. Chelsea Place Approval - **J. Plock moved and P. Yanity seconded a motion to accept Chelsea Place as a Ridgefield town road. Motion passed 5-0.** School buses and town plows will now be able to go up the road.

Daniel Valentine, developer of the Chelsea Place project would like to have a release and then will turn over the deed. This is a verbal agreement at this point. This release will prevent future tie-ups for individual homeowners. \$70,000 has been received as payment for the cistern and the drainage issue has been addressed. R. Marconi read the release. Town Counsel has given his OK for signing of the release. **D. Masters moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to accept the release as stated relative to the release of Daniel Valentine of all debts and obligations and all liability and in particular all liability relative to the bonds given to the Town of Ridgefield by Masterbulders, Inc. relative to the Chelsea Court subdivision, and authorize the First Selectman to sign the release. Motion passed 5-0.**

5. Tamika Whitaker Tax Refund - **D. Masters moved and J. Plock seconded a motion to approve the tax refund of \$4,192.00 to Tamika Whitaker of Countrywide Tax Services for duplicate payment of 2003 property taxes. Motion passed 5-0.**
6. Duncan Potter & Elizabeth Siw Tax Refund - **D. Masters moved and J. Plock seconded a motion to approve the tax refund of \$2,252.00 to Duncan Potter and Elizabeth Siw of 11 Mulvaney Court for overpayment of 2003 property taxes. Motion passed 5-0.**
7. Approval of Meeting Minutes – 4/13/05, 4/20/05 –

**J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the Special Board of Selectmen Meeting held on April 13, 2005. Motion passed 5-0.**

**J. Plock moved and P. Yanity seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the Special Board of Selectmen Meeting held on April 20, 2005. Motion passed 5-0.**

8. Intellectual Edge Lease at Richard Venus Building – R. Marconi read the letter received from Chaur-Jian Hsu, President of Intellectual Edge, Inc., a Connecticut corporation. J. Plock inquired as to the rental rate being charged Intellectual Edge for approximately 1,000 sq. feet. It is lower than the going rate in town and does include utilities. The rental rate is for the space “as is”. The renter will be responsible for painting, carpeting, etc. **J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to bring to Public Hearing on July 6, 2005, the proposed lease as amended between the Town of Ridgefield and Intellectual Edge for space at the Richard Venus Building. Motion passed 5-0.**

9. Virginia Roebuck Lease at Richard Venus Building - B. Manners pointed out the need for amending the lease to include the clause as in other town leases which requires the renter to seek approval from the BOS prior to subletting. **J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to bring to Public Hearing on July 6, 2005, the proposed lease as amended between the Town of Ridgefield and Virginia Roebuck, for space at the Richard Venus Building, pending approval by the renter to change the lease to a one year lease, if Virginia Roebuck so chooses, at the same monthly rate. Motion passed 5-0.**

10. First Selectman's Report –

- Sean Robinson has submitted his report on Affordable Housing Units in Ridgefield with a copy to Betty Brosius. Someone on the BOS needs to continue to monitor this project. Deed restrictions were never filed.
- Insurance Opt-Out Program is in effect. Do not know if any employees have responded to date.
- Update on Bissell Building – Bissell's has opened in the space where Celebrations used to be. On Monday, June 27<sup>th</sup>, preliminary plans are to be reviewed. Previously, plans were made to redo the space. These plans will now be revisited. Bids are being obtained for removal of the debris pile. Travelers, the insurance company, is requiring three to four bids and then will give the OK to remove the debris. D. Masters has been working with tenants in their attempt to retrieve personal items. A designated time for looking thru the debris was determined and each tenant did find something. This is heartbreaking as they now want to look further and it is not safe to do so. D. Masters reported that the Fire Department has been "wonderful and patient". It is difficult to say no to any future digging. Perhaps when the debris piles are taken away, the tenants can look for personal items one more time.
- Tickets are still available for the Playhouse Musical Benefit for the Bissell Building tenants on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- The lease has been set for Paul Roche's house with an additional charge of \$50/month to \$1300/month.
- R. Marconi passed out the June 20, 2005 Town Leaders' E-Bulletin, Connecticut Council of Small Towns, from Bart Russell, Executive Director, for general information reading.

**J. Plock moved and P. Yanity seconded a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen's Meeting at 9:00 p.m. Motion passed 5-0.**

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING**

**J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion for the Economic Development Commission to go into Executive Session to discuss Land Agreement at 9:10 p.m. Motion passed 5-0.**

The Economic Development Commission Meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m. with a motion to adjourn approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Janet L. Johnson