

## **BOARD of SELECTMEN MEETING – JULY 29, 2009**

TOWN HALL/LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM – 7:30 P.M.

### **UNREVISED/UNAPPROVED 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

Absent: A. Bodner (on vacation)

### **Agenda**

1. Rob Creamer – Outstanding Citizen Award
2. Ridgefield Library Tax Abatement Request – Al Garzi, Assessor
3. ARRA/Water Line for Scotland-Barlow
4. Verizon Lease Agreement – Police Department Cell Tower
5. Approval of Tax Refunds
6. Charter Revision Commission Charge and Resolution
7. Police JAG Grant Resolution
8. Selectman's Report
9. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 6/10/09, 7/1/09, 7/6/09, 7/8/09

R. Marconi called the BOS Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

1. Rob Creamer – Outstanding Citizen Award

R. Marconi indicated that this is the first time this award has been given. Mary Ann Baldwin and Carol Connors who work with Ridgefield's Social Services proposed that Rob Creamer, a life-time resident of Ridgefield, be recognized for his many hours of dedication to Ridgefield's senior and disabled citizens. Mr. Creamer and his wife and daughter came forward for the presentation of the award.

R. Marconi read the award, "*Be it hereby known that the Town of Ridgefield, Connecticut presents this Outstanding Citizen Award to Robert J. Creamer, Esq. in recognition of his many personal and professional kindnesses toward Ridgefield's senior and disabled citizens. Ridgefield is truly grateful for his longstanding, extraordinary concern for, and work on behalf of, our most vulnerable residents.*" Mr. Creamer is always there to provide counsel and advice to Ridgefield's senior and disabled residents and advice and assistance to the Town of Ridgefield as well. We thank Rob!

2. Ridgefield Library Tax Abatement Request – Al Garzi, Assessor

Al Garzi, Tax Assessor, came forward as well as Chris Nolan, Director of the Ridgefield Library, and the following members of the Library Board of Directors – Clonis Pearson, Bill Wyman and Liz Kelly. Also present in the audience were Barbara Dobbin and Lori Dowling.

Mr. Garzi received a June 23, 2009 memo from Chris Nolan requesting a Ridgefield Library tax abatement for property taxes owed on the Webster Bank Building at 25 Prospect Street. The Library has owned this property since 2000 and the building was rented for commercial office space until December 31, 2008, when the last tenant vacated the building. They are requesting abatement of the taxes owed for the time period that the building has been vacant. This request for

tax abatement covers the last two quarters of the 2008/2009 fiscal year and all of the 2009/2010 fiscal year. The amount of abatement requested for the 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 fiscal years are \$25,086.30 and \$50,399.40, respectively. Connecticut General Statutes 12-124 “Abatement of Taxes and Interest” empowers the Board of Selectmen to abate should they choose to do so.

**B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve the request for abatement of Real Property Taxes for half of the 2008/2009 fiscal year in the amount of \$25,086.30 and all of the 2009/2010 fiscal year in the amount of \$50,399.40 for the property located at 25 Prospect Street in the name of The Ridgefield Library and Historical Association. Motion passed 4-0.**

Mr. Garzi stressed that there is no ordinance which provides for exemption from property taxes in the middle of the year, and each year the Library will need to file for an exemption if they wish to qualify for such. The property tax situation needs to be made clear at budget time.

3. ARRA/Water Line for Scotland-Barlow

Charlie Fisher, Town Engineer, and Peter Hill, Director of Public Works, came forward to discuss this issue. R. Marconi reviewed an email sent by Selectman Andy Bodner with some questions concerning the water line for Scotland-Barlow. The questions required review by Kevin Redmond (Controller) and Charlie Fisher. K. Redmond prepared a “new” analysis reflecting changes requested with a comparison of Option A – water main costs; Option B – Reverse Osmosis (RO), and Option C – Drill Wells, no RO needed:

- Upfront Costs (Cost, Additional cost for RO waste (holding tank, pumps, etc, AARA Subsidy, and Net Cost)
- Ongoing Costs:
  - (1) Debt Service for Financing Net Cost (Lender, Interest Rate Assumption and Term)  
Annual Debt Service
  - (2) Annual Water Usage Cost (Annual Gallons for Ridgebury; Estimated Gallons for Barlow/Scotland; Cost per Gallon)  
Annual Usage Costs
  - (3) Operating and Maintenance Costs (Current Aquarion Costs; Additional RO Related Costs; Additional Costs)  
Annual O&M Costs
- Total Annual Costs:
  - Water Main - \$40,057
  - Reverse Osmosis (RO) - \$71,531
  - Drill Wells – No RO Needed - \$57,186

Charlie Fisher indicated that the good news is that Ridgefield received the grant of \$800,000 with additional cost at a loan of 2%. The next step is BOS approval to meet the August 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for acceptance.

D. Masters asked if this water line can be a dedicated line? R. Marconi responded that he sent a letter to Aquarian about this. By statute, a municipality cannot restrict access to a water line. We can provide water but we must continue to maintain the line for fire protection purposes. Hydrants were taken out of the contract as there won’t be enough water to allow hydrants as well. The laterals were taken out, but branches were allowed in case they want to be used at a future time. A homeowner can cut in if they are having well problems. The non-potable water now in the schools may be used for irrigation.

**B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve the following resolution as presented by Barbara Serfilippi, Town Clerk:**

*“RESOLVED, That the First Selectman, Rudy Marconi, be and hereby is authorized to execute and file applications, contracts, and agreements on behalf of the Town of Ridgefield with the Commissioner of Environmental Protection for state grants and loans in the amount of \$1,450,000.00 pursuant to the provision of Section 22a-475 through 483 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, as amended, and to execute on behalf of the Town of Ridgefield all the applications, instruments, contracts, and documents and accept payments and do all other things that may be necessary for state grants and loans for the Scotland-Barlow Mountain Elementary Schools water main extension State of CT Drinking Water State Revolving Fund application.”*

**Motion passed 4-0.**

4. Verizon Lease Agreement – Police Department Cell Tower

R. Marconi indicated that this subject will be discussed at a later BOS meeting. He is waiting for information about the income being received and lease agreements made by other neighboring municipalities. He wants to be sure that Ridgefield’s agreement with Verizon is “in the ballpark”, so to speak. We need to have all the information before signing the proposed lease.

5. Approval of Tax Refunds

**D. Masters moved and J. Plock seconded a motion to approve the list of refunds dated 7/23/2009 as requested by Jane Berendsen-Hill, Tax Collector, for a total of \$10,235.81.**

**Motion passed 4-0.**

6. Charter Revision Commission Charge and Resolution

The Charter Revision Commission held their first public hearing and approximately 95 people attended. The two main topics requested by the public were a request for the establishment of a Fire Commission and the Housing Authority residents want some changes made. All the Boards and Commissions have been contacted requesting that they review the Charter relevant to their area of responsibility and request consideration of any changes they would like to see in the new Charter.

**J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve the following resolution relative to the establishment of the 2009 Charter Revision Commission:**

*“IT IS RESOLVED that pursuant to Connecticut General Statute §7-188 and § 12-5 of the Ridgefield Town Charter, a Charter Revision Commission is hereby established for the purposes of amending the Ridgefield Town Charter.*

*IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to Connecticut General Statute §7-190, the following individuals are appointed to the Charter Revision Commission: Andrew Berger, Lisa Carroll, Sharon Hyde, Andrew Kelemen, John McNicholas, Tiffany Lenz, Charles Primerano and Edward Tyrrell (ex-officio).”*

**Motion passed 4-0.**

**J. Plock moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to approve the following charge to the 2009 Charter Revision Commission:**

*“2009 Charter Revision Commission Charge: The Charter Revision Commission shall examine the Charter of the Town of Ridgefield and confer with the various agencies of*

*the Town and conduct public hearings to solicit possible changes to the Charter. The Commission shall hold at least two public hearings; one prior to the beginning of any substantive work on such charter, and one after the draft report to the appointing authority has been completed. The Commission may hold other public hearings as it deems necessary. The Commission shall furnish to the Board of Selectmen quarterly status reports of its activities with a final report presented to the Board of Selectmen no later than July 15, 2010.”*

**Motion passed 4-0.**

7. Police/JAG Grant Resolution

This Police/JAG Grant is also possible because of the Federal stimulus package. JAG funds may be used for state and local initiatives to improve or enhance:

- Law enforcement programs.
- Prosecution and court programs.
- Prevention and education programs.
- Corrections and community corrections programs.
- Drug treatment and enforcement programs.
- Planning, evaluation, and technology improvement programs.
- Crime victim and witness programs (other than compensation).

**B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve the following resolution as presented by Barbara Serfilippi, Town Clerk of Ridgefield:**

*“RESOLVED, That the First Selectman, Rudy Marconi, be and hereby is authorized to make, execute, and approve, on behalf of the Town of Ridgefield, any and all Contracts and Amendments relative to the 2009 Recovery Act JAG Grant and to execute and approve, on behalf of the Municipality, other instruments as part of or incident to such Contracts and Amendments, effective until otherwise ordered by the Board of Selectmen.”*

**Motion passed 4-0.**

8. Selectman’s Report

- Theatre Festival Weekend – August 8 & 9 sponsored by all the Town’s art groups, the Playhouse, the Aldridge Museum, Theatre Barn, etc. The Michael Chekhov Theatre Festival will celebrate Chekhov’s one-time Ridgefield residency. The cost is \$40 for all activities for the weekend.
- Probate Court – Governor Rell has signed an order to reduce the number of probate courts in Connecticut from 117 down to 50. Ridgefield will now be part of the Bethel Probate Court group.
- Federal Subsidy Dollars to Ridgefield –
  - \$800,000 for the water-line issue
  - \$650,000 for road construction
  - \$ 94,000 for energy conservation
  - \$ 30,000 for the Police Department under JAG

9. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 6/10/09, 7/1/09, 7/6/09, 7/8/09

**R. Marconi moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to approve as written the minutes of the June 10, 2009 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Motion passed 3-0-1. J. Plock abstained as she was not in attendance at the June 10, 2009 meeting.**

**B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the July 1, 2009 Board of Selectmen Meeting. Motion passed 3-0-1. J. Plock abstained as she was not in attendance at the July 1, 2009 meeting.**

**D. Masters moved and J. Plock seconded a motion to approve as written the minutes of the July 6, 2009 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Motion passed 4-0.**

**J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the July 8, 2009, Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Motion passed 4-0.**

**J. Plock moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 8:45 p.m. Motion passed 4-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Janet L. Johnson