

BOARD of SELECTMEN MEETING – AUGUST 8, 2007

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

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

In attendance: R. Marconi, A. Bodner, B. Manners, J. Plock
Absent: D. Masters

Agenda

1. RACE – Clean Energy Supplier Recommendation: Jay Whelan
2. Year-End Transfers: Jay Wahlberg
3. Travel Allowance: Jay Wahlberg
4. Selectman's Report
5. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 7/25/07
6. Executive Session: Turner Hill Discussion

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

1. RACE – Clean Energy Supplier Recommendation: Jay Whelan

Jay Whelan, President of RACE (Ridgefield Action Committee for the Environment) came forward to present RACE's recommendations regarding the CT Clean Energy Sign-ups Program. On February 28, 2007, the BOS voted to become part of the 20% by 2010 initiative offered by the CT Clean Energy Fund. As one of the first 40 towns to sign-up, Ridgefield is entitled to a \$5,000 grant from the CT Clean Energy fund. For each 100 residents that sign up for the Clean Energy Option, the Town receives a 2kW Solar Panel (\$20,000 value) free. Ridgefield is currently at 174 Clean Energy residential sign-ups and well approaching its 2nd free Solar Panel. Ridgefield will begin a challenge with Newtown and Westport during the week of September 8 and ending on Earth Day April 2008 to secure Clean Energy sign-ups.

RACE was asked to research and recommend the clean energy supplier for the town. Mr. Whelan reported on their findings and presented two alternatives considered: Community Energy out of Radnor, PA with facilities across New England, and Sterling Planet out of Norcross, GA. Costs for both companies are approximately the same. Both companies offer incentives if they are chosen by the town for the Municipal Clean Energy Purchase. Sterling offers \$15 per resident sign-up per year, but cannot commit to '08 pricing and rebate rates, whereas Community offers a \$20 one-time rebate per residential sign-up. Sterling is difficult to reach on the phone; Community has been very responsive and supplied Ridgefield specific marketing materials. Of the \$20 rebate, RACE is proposing that \$10 would go to the town to offset costs of the program and \$10 would go to RACE to help fund additional marketing activities to bring on additional residents. RACE is recommending that Community Energy be selected to be the clean energy supplier for Ridgefield.

Regarding where to install the solar panels which will be awarded to Ridgefield,

R. Marconi stated that a municipal building with an older roof would be the best choice, one with a visible roof where the solar panels would be appropriate for educational purposes.

R. Marconi indicated that a July 21, 2007 memo was sent out to all Ridgefield employees encouraging energy conservation, the turning off of lights, and prudent use of air conditioning.

J. Plock moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to approve the selection of Community Energy as the company chosen by the Town of Ridgefield for the Municipal Clean Energy Purchase, and to send a notice to the Finance Department to set up an account for RACE to receive the \$20 one-time rebate from Community Energy per residential sign-up and to permit the release of the funds for the purpose of clean energy promotion as approved by the Director of Finance and the Board of Selectmen. Motion passed 4-0.

2. Year-End Transfers: Jay Wahlberg

J. Wahlberg, Controller, came forward to present various year-end transfer requests:

#200714 – Inter-Departmental Transfer as requested by the Finance Department.

J. Plock moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to approve Department of Finance Memorandum #200714 for an Inter-Departmental Transfer to cover various year-end expenses:

- **General Government has incurred legal costs above the estimated budget for unanticipated litigation and various legal notices published in the Ridgefield Press.**
- **Tree Warden has incurred emergency expenses in connection with a late Spring storm.**
- **Fire Department has incurred retro-active salary adjustments associated with the recent contract settlement above the budgeted appropriations**
- **Highway Department has incurred snow removal costs above the estimated budget appropriation.**
- **Finance Department is required to balance the various line items to comply with GASB guidelines for financial reporting.**

This memorandum provides for an increase:

- General Government -	\$49,000
- Tree Warden -	104,000
- Fire Department	26,000
- Highway Department	96,500

and a decrease from various departments in the amount of \$275,500. Motion passed 4-0.

#200803 Capital Bond Projects Close-Out & Transfer of Funds as requested by the Finance Department. Under IRS and State guidelines, any excess funds must be transferred to bond issuance costs or debt service reduction and subsequently applied to said principal payments on those bond issues. Some questions were raised regarding some of the overcharges. J. Wahlberg will research and report back at the next BOS Meeting on September 5.

#200804 Capital Non-Bond Projects Close-Out & Transfer of Funds as requested by the Finance Department. The review of closed non-bonded capital projects was assessed by the Finance Department and final approval to closed said projects is required. Under prevailing Town policy, any excess funds shall be transferred to a capital reserve fund. There were some questions regarding the presented list of projects. J. Wahlberg will research and report back at the next BOS Meeting on September 5. One question in particular was regarding any left over donated funds for the fountain as such monies should go into a special maintenance fund for the fountain.

#200805 Appropriation from the Capital Reserve Fund as requested by the Fire Department for funding to complete the Emergency Operations Center in order to bring about its full operations. The major funding of the Emergency Operations Center was through State and Federal grants; the Town must appropriate the remaining costs. **J. Plock moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to approve Department of Finance Memorandum #200805 for an appropriation from the Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$11,600 as requested by the Fire Department to complete the Emergency Operations Center in order to bring about its full operations, with an increase in #30951-56239, Emergency Operations Center, in the amount of \$11,600 and an increase in #31095-54826 Transfer of Funds, in the amount of \$11,600. Motion passed 4-0.**

3. Travel Allowance: Jay Wahlberg

An August 3, 2007 memo was sent to the BOS from J. Wahlberg proposing a travel allowance recommendation. This recommendation is for consideration of a monthly 'travel allowance' for certain key employees. This would reduce the number of Town vehicles and replace them with fixed monthly payments as compensation for use of their personal vehicles on Town business. This program is already in effect for several Ridgefield Board of Education administrators and is in effect in other municipalities and educational systems. There is a present need to replace two passenger vehicles for the Assessor's Office and Parks & Recreation. The memo proposes transfer of the First Selectman's vehicle to the Assessor. The First Selectman and Director of Parks and Recreation would receive 'travel allowances'. J. Wahlberg indicated that he wants to check with nearby municipalities regarding their possible use of such 'travel allowances' and what is the standard allowance allotted. He will report back with further details at a later BOS meeting.

J. Wahlberg indicated that the 2006/07 budget is close to being closed out. It appears that there will be approximately a \$900,000 surplus. There also appears to be a capital reserve balance.

4. Selectman's Report –

- A letter has been received from Ed Tyrrell, Chairman of the Golf Committee regarding the proposed offering of GPS rental on a golf cart. The Golf Committee thinks that GPS could be available as an option, but they are not really interested in taking on this venture. The golf carts are paid for by the Town and the Town gets rental income from the carts. Ed indicated that there are about 10,000 golf cart rentals/year and the Golf Committee thinks that about 1,000 of these rentals might take advantage of a GPS option. The return is pretty small. Frank

Sergiovanni would like to provide the GPS option out of the Pro Shop as a trial offering from now to the end of the golf season.

- R. Marconi read the letter of resignation received from Doug Pool regarding his resignation as Chairman of the Graveyard Committee effective September 1, 2007. Bob Tulipani has indicated that he is also resigning from the Graveyard Committee. A letter will be sent from the BOS thanking both these men for a “job well done”.
- **J. Plock moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to approve the proclamation of September 2007 as Leukemia, Lymphoma and Melanoma Awareness Month as requested by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, Connecticut Chapter. Motion passed 4-0.**

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 7/25/07

J. Plock moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to approve as written the minutes of the July 25, 2007 Public Hearing & Board of Selectmen Meeting. Motion passed 4-0.

6. Executive Session: Turner Hill Discussion

J. Plock moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to recess the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 8:25 p.m. and go into Executive Session for a Turner Hill Discussion with Aimee Pardee, Town of Ridgefield employee, and Dr. Benjamin Oko as Chairman and various other members of the Conservation Commission invited to attend. Motion passed 4-0.

R. Marconi closed the Executive Session at 9:15 p.m. and called the BOS Meeting back to order.

J. Plock moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 9:15 p.m. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet L. Johnson