

Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Wednesday, February 6, 2019 – 7:30 pm
Town Hall Large Conference Room
400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut
UNREVISED/UNAPPROVED MINUTES

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

Agenda

1. Public Comment
2. Andrew Loya – Deputy Fire Marshal – Appt recommendation (Chief Myers)
3. Appointment Requests:
 - a. Mary Dougherty – Youth Commission (Adult Member)
 - b. Dave Goldenberg – Affordable Housing Committee
4. Refunds: Tax Collector’s Office
5. Selectman’s Report
6. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 1/23/19
7. Budget Discussion
 - a. Highway Department – Pete Hill

In attendance: R. Marconi, M. Kozlark, B. Manners, S. Zemo, B. Hebert-absent

Rudy Marconi called the **Board of Selectmen** meeting to order at 7:32PM.

1. Public Comment

No Comment

2. Andrew Loya – Deputy Fire Marshal – Appt recommendation (Chief Myers)

Chief Jerry Myers spoke to the BOS about the temporary appointment of Andrew Loya as Deputy Fire Marshal, which would begin from the date of appointment until November 15, 2019. The Chief mentioned that A. Loya is already a certified Fire Marshal and would be the best choice for this interim position. On November 15, the position will be reevaluated with the Union, which is also when the other candidate will have finished school. R. Marconi asked if there would be a grievance if A. Loya was appointed that night. The Chief said there wouldn't be a grievance because of an agreement with the Union until November 15. It was mentioned that in the event of this appointment no extra expenses would occur due to the Fire Department's sufficient funds. The Chief said the temporary appointment cannot be revisited at another time due to the agreement between the Union and the Fire Department. The Union and the Fire Department aim to have agreed upon a more permanent solution by the set date of November 15.

B. Manners moved and M. Kozlark seconded the motion to appoint Andrew Loya as Deputy Fire Marshal. Motion carried 4-0.

3. Appointment Requests:

- a. Mary Dougherty – Youth Commission (Adult Member)

Mary Dougherty and her family moved to Ridgefield in 2007. From 2012–2014, M. Dougherty and her family moved to a suburb in Zurich, Switzerland, where she observed that the community was similar to that of Ridgefield. She expressed her pleasant surprise at the way children there had more freedom, connected with each other more, and became independent faster.

She expressed an interest in the local Kindness project as well as an interested in promoting personal versus virtual relationships and encounters. M. Dougherty wants to provide the opportunity for kids to connect more without spending too much time using their electronics.

B. Manners asked M. Dougherty to speak more about the kids in Zurich and their electronics usage. M. Dougherty said the children in Zurich became independent at a quicker rate, they walked more, kids were outdoors more often and showed a rather noticeable decrease the use of electronics.

M. Kozlark moved and B. Manners seconded the motion to appoint Mary Dougherty to the Youth Commission as an adult member. Motion carried 4-0.

b. Dave Goldenberg – Affordable Housing Committee

R. Marconi stated that Jacqueline Bean, an Affordable Housing Committee candidate, is not a citizen; therefore, she cannot formally become a part of the committee. However, she is welcome to attend meetings and pursue obtaining her citizenship from her current green card status.

R. Marconi noted the need to update the report from approximately 20 years ago.

D. Goldenberg stated there is clearly a need for elderly housing of this type and feels that an updated study will help. He further mentioned that 8-30g units are filled quickly. There is a 3 to 5 year waiting list for elderly housing. He said more multi-family and elderly housing is slowly becoming more available.

There are a lot of Baby Boomers with large houses who want to stay in town but need help moving to more affordable homes yet not a lot of prospective buyers. B. Manners asked D. Goldenberg if he thinks any of the homeowners would consider converting their houses into two family homes. D. Goldenberg said homeowners generally do not like to do that because it affects their ability to sell their home.

D. Goldenberg emphasized that the goal of the Affordable Housing Committee is not to only build affordable housing but to create zoning that encourages it. He also said that the units that were originally created for a twenty-year time period are now gone because 20 years has passed.

D. Goldenberg mentioned a 144-page report on zoning that includes information on septic in the area. The plan took 18 months to create and includes various recommendations to solve the sewer problem as well as other problems. He also said we should do something with this ideas and visions outlined in the report.

D. Goldenberg said there is a level of public education about Affordable Housing that needs to circulate around town, and that there is a need to fulfill the requirement to have an Affordable Housing plan that is updated every 5 years.

S. Zemo moved and B. Manners seconded the motion to appoint Dave Goldenberg to the Affordable Housing Committee. Motion carried 4-0.

4. Refunds: Tax Collector's Office

R. Marconi moved and M. Kozlark seconded a motion to approve the Tax Collector's refunds. Motion carried 4-0.

5. Selectman's Report

-R. Marconi mentioned that a few members of The Conservation Committee have created a report entitled "Open Spaces." The report mentions the town deer population and the attempt to balance it with the legal hunting of the town. R. Marconi stated that the BOS has the option to accept the report as it is, but further added the need for a Public Hearing or a Town Meeting on this matter in the near future.

-John Xsu of Intellectual Edge said the lease looks fine except for a slight discrepancy about the dollar amount per square foot. R. Marconi stated the details of the square footage are firmly set.

-R. Marconi asked the BOS if they agree with moving forward with the ownership of the Branchville Cemetery. Presently, there are no known owners that can be found. There are certain qualifications that the Town does not necessarily qualify for in terms of ownership. There are no known gravesite records as well as no known available plots. S. Zemo inquired about continuing to maintain the total of 2-3 acres of cemetery, even if they don't own it. R. Marconi said the BOS was hoping to go the statutory route, but it now will have to be a more complicated one. The Branchville Cemetery Association supposedly holds the title, but after R. Marconi's research, it seems the association is a nonexistent entity. Going through probate will most likely be a necessary step, which would cost \$10,000. R. Marconi said the cemetery has always received \$12,500 for costs, but this amount had to be decreased to \$10,000. The BOS agreed they would move forward if the cost to maintain the cemetery did not exceed \$10,000. It will be put on a future agenda, and there will be a formal vote at such time.

BOS Voted No on taking on more expenses than what they already have <found1: 05>

6. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 1/23/19

B. Manners moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to approve the 1/23/19 meeting minutes as amended. Motion carried 4-0.

7. Budget Discussion

a. Highway Department – Pete Hill

Present: Pete Hill , Public Services Director; Kevin Redmond, TOR Controller, Burt Motta, HWY Dept Mechanics; Dave Buccitti, HWY Dept Foreman

Operate Expenses:

-10601 Highway Administration – Personnel and Operating Services presented a -23.02% change

-10602 Highway Maintenance- no changes

-The Highway Dept. asked for 1 new person, a Truck Driver laborer

-10603 Snow Removal ended flat and with no changes

-10605 Road Maintenance ended flat and with no changes

-10604 Highway Support Services-Operating Expenses presented a -27.06% change.

-There was a proposed possibility of adding subcontractors to avoid being caught in bundles. P. Hill said the truck driver laborers handle the tasks. R. Marconi said the subcontracts would help to cut back on benefits. The Highway Dept also said that they would benefit more from hiring a full-time person because they often scramble to find someone to do the work. S. Zemo proposed the idea of reassigning jobs. P. Hill said subcontractors do not receive a lot of pay, so the incentive is low. The Highway Dept is willing to talk about this further in the future.

- There is an issue with fulfilling the recycling requirement because the worker who was formerly in charge of it is no longer taking on the responsibility. P. Hill wants to make one of his clerks in charge of it.
- A possible purchase of a van, which would need wheelchair access, would possibly replace the Sphere Bus
- Drainage was lowered by the Highway Dept., so they could increase another portion of the budget. R. Marconi asked if it is possible to outsource some of the drainage work. The Highway Dept. said it is a possibility. Ridgebury Rd is a top priority for drainage solutions. The Highway Dept. continued that they have other roads they consider a priority. R. Marconi asked for a list of priority roads to be worked on within the next few years.
- The Highway Department provided a list of roads they feel need paving.
- The Highway Department wants to utilize a new paving method. Through the company Gorban, they will be able to pave the roads with a compound using recycled and ground up asphalt. This material is projected to add 5-8 years to the integrity and overall life to the road. Redding has had significant success with it. Gorban also provides this material rather inexpensively, which would significantly cut costs.
- They completed all but one road in last year's plans.
- The Highway Department is not looking for more than their regular budget amount. They feel they can accomplish all roads and projects with this amount.
- R. Marconi asked if the fiberglass in the new paving material would affect the environment. P. Hill states that he asked an expert if there was something that could be done after 6 years. He is currently awaiting an answer.
- Fracking materials, possible toxic chemicals, is a town and state issue. They discussed it, and it will be looked into further.
- M. Kozlark asked the Highway Dept. if they can gauge how long the roads are lasting. It was agreed to be an interesting idea, but it might be time-consuming to try to obtain that information.

Capital:

- The new trucks are not supposed to sit idle, so they are left running while the workers sleep in their cars. The Highway Department is interested in possible sleeping quarters.
- The Highway Department needs a new sweeper to replace the 14-year-old sweeper they are currently using. The BOS thought it might be best to wait for next year's budget. However, the cost of upkeep would continually cost money for repairs and with no guarantees. The Highway Department asked the BOS to consider their proposal, and ultimately pass along the request to the Board of Finance who makes the final decision.
- BOS is trying to keep the budget within \$4 million
- The Highway Department requested a truck wash to clean the hardened salt stuck under and on their trucks.

M. Kozlark moved and B. Manners seconded the motion to adjourn the BOS meeting at 10:20PM. Motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa M. Ackerly