



Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectman Meeting & Public Hearing Minutes
UNAPPROVED

November 17, 2021 at 6.30pm

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

Present: Rudy Marconi, Maureen Kozlark, Barbara Manners Bob Hebert, Sean Connelly

1. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

2. Agendas – Signage

Mr. Marconi recently attended a meeting with Ridgefield Psychologist Dr. Carol Mahlstedt, Town Clerk Wendy Lionetti, and Conservation Commission member Dan Levine to discuss adding new wording regarding conduct from the Town Charter to all agendas and possibly posting signs in meeting rooms. The goal is to remind meeting attendees to conduct themselves in a respectful manner and to respect all other people in the room. Board, Committee and Commission members will read the code of conduct at the start of each meeting and can refer to the sign when attendees act out of conduct during meetings. The Board of Selectman will set a policy for their agendas which will be a recommendation for other Boards, Committees and Commissions. There was a discussion about the format for agendas and the process for adjusting it.

Carol Mahlstedt commented that the sign in the meeting room could act as reminder to people during meetings. Denise (?) commented that there has been a decline in the number of volunteers for Boards, Committees and Commissions because of the scrutiny and verbal attacks they receive both in meetings and on social media.

Mr. Hebert moved to approve adding the following wording to all agendas for Board, Committee and Commission meetings: “*Board of Selectman’s meetings will be conducted under Roberts Rules of Order and all participants are expected to conduct themselves with dignity and treat all those present with respect, empathy and civility.*” Ms. Manners second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

3. Conservation Easement – Resolution

The Town is in the process of receiving grant money under OSWA to acquire the property known as Bear Mountain Open Space. The Resolution, which states that as First Selectman, Mr. Marconi is authorized to enter into agreements and contracts on behalf of

the Town of Ridgefield was read out loud and voted on by the Board.

Ms. Kozlark moved to approve the Resolution of the Town of Ridgefield for the grant to acquire Bear Mountain Open Space as required by OSWA#612. Ms. Manners second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

4. Tax Collector Refunds

The Tax Collector refund amount is for \$11,100 and the rebates are 100% auto.

Ms. Manners moved to approve the Tax Collector Refunds. Mr. Hebert second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Ms. Manners moved to approve the November 2, 2021 Executive Session meeting minutes. Mr. Connelly second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

The November 3, 2021 BOS meeting minutes were tabled and will be voted on at the next BOS meeting.

6. Selectman's Report

The Bond Council has noted that they did not receive the approval for the Bond Resolutions for the 2020 budget cycle, which are always approved at the Annual Town Meeting. There can be an implied approval based on the voting that was done during the process at that meeting. The published notice in the Ridgefield Press detailing the amount of Capital that clearly referred to as Bond Capital along with the booklet that was presented at the meeting stating Bond Capital with the amount were both submitted to the Bond Council to verify that the vote that approved the capital was indeed for the Bond Capital. The Bond Council has not yet responded to the Town's submission. Mr. Marconi commented that he and Finance Director Kevin Redmond are extremely concerned that the Bond Council did not bring this up with them earlier, especially since the Council received an email from Mr. Redmond asking about it and even reached out to discuss the same issue with other towns. Mr. Marconi and Mr. Redmond will get the issue sorted and discuss the possibility of making changes to the process.

Long serving members Jack Kace and Dave Cronin are retiring from the Conservation Commission.

There was a complaint about the noise level from the new pickle ball court at Martin Park. Mr. Marconi met with Parks and Rec Commission member David Shofi, Commission Chair Phil Kearns and Parks and Rec Director, Dennis DiPinto regarding the complaint. The sub-committee for the Parks and Rec Commission reviewed and investigated the complaint and determined the noise was not too bad, however Mr. Marconi asked the Police Department to use the Town decimeter to verify the readings and also make a recommendation. The Board talked about the large interest in pickle ball and the foreseeable parking problems that might arise if interest in the sport continues to

grow. The Town may want to begin thinking long term and find a location for permanent pickle ball courts.

Mr. Connelly moved to adjourn the November 17, 2021 BOS meeting. (I could not tell who second the motion). Motion carries 5-0.

Public Hearing 7.30pm – continued from 11.3.2021

Present: Rudy Marconi, Maureen Kozlark, Barbara Manners, Sean Connelly

Absent: Bob Hebert

At the November 3, 2021 BOS meeting, the Board discussed the acceptance of the donation of 7.41 acres of land located on route 7 for open space. It was decided at that meeting that Mr. Marconi would reach out to the property owners in a final attempt to allow the Town, upon acceptance, to use 2 acres of the land for development, while designating the balance as open space. Mr. Marconi read out loud his email to Attorney David Speranzini, who represents several of the property owners. The email thanked the owners for their generosity and asked them to reconsider the 7.41 acres of donation as open space and allow for a split of 5 acres for open space and 2 acres for business development. The email also talked about the importance of non-residential tax revenue, which the Town would gain if allowed to develop a small portion of the land.

Mr. Marconi read the response from Attorney Speranzini on behalf of his clients. The response stated that the property owners would like to donate all 7.41 acres as open space, however this also includes passive recreation such as a playground, ball field, and/or dog park. The Board was happy to find out that passive recreation is an option. There is Town Meeting scheduled for December 8, 2021 to vote on the acceptance of the land donation.

No votes were taken and the public hearing was closed.