

TOWN of RIDGEFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

& PUBLIC HEARING

NOVEMBER 29, 2017 – 6:30 PM

TOWN HALL/LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

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

In attendance: R. Marconi, R. Hebert M. Kozlark, B. Manners (arrived at 6:45 pm), S. Zemo

Agenda

1. Public Comment
2. Ridgefield Prevention Council Interview: Emily G. Pambianchi
3. Tree Committee Reappointment: Anthony Tufariello
4. Jesse Lee United Methodist Church Tax Abatement Request
5. NW CT Public Safety Communication Center Member Appointment
6. Approval of Tax Refunds
7. Selectman's Report
8. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 11/8/17

The Board of Selectmen Meeting was called to order by R. Marconi at 6:30 PM.

Before public comment, R. Marconi asked to add an item to the agenda.

S. Zemo motioned to add a discussion about 'Reddington Settlement' as Item 6b. B. Hebert seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0-1. (B. Manners was not yet present; she arrived during agenda item #2)

1. Public Comment – None
2. Ridgefield Prevention Council Interview: Emily Pambianchi – R. Marconi read the letter submitted by Emily expressing her interest in joining the council. There is no minority representation issue in terms of political affiliation. Emily has been a life-long Ridgefield resident. She previously taught at Ridgefield Academy, in addition to co-directing Sphere and being a part of the Prospector start-up team. Emily briefly touched on the opioid epidemic that our community is facing.
M. Kozlark motioned and B. Manners seconded the motion to appoint Emily Pambianchi to the Ridgefield Prevention Council. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Tree Committee Reappointment: Anthony Tuffariello –
Tony discussed the committee's current initiative of creating a map (which is in production) of Ballard Park that will locate notable trees within the park. The booklet will be available at no

cost to visitors of the park. In April, the committee is planning to coordinate a walk meant to bring arboreal awareness to members of the community. Tony mentioned that he received push back with regards to installing informational pieces at various trees in Ballard Park; therefore he is now entertaining the idea of adding a QR code to the map which will allow visitors to more easily access arboreal information. Tony stated that the committee was assembled following an injury secondary to a tree. The Tree Committee proactively works to report any damaged or diseased trees for the safety of the community. R. Marconi asked that the Tree Committee offer input with regards to the two troubled trees in front of Town Hall.

M. Kozlark motioned and S. Zemo seconded the motion to reappoint Anthony Tuffariello to the Tree Committee. Motion carried 5-0.

4. Jesse Lee United Methodist Church Tax Abatement Request – Ginny Konopka of Jesse Lee United Methodist Church was in attendance regarding the commuter parking lot. She mentioned that the overflow commuter parking is currently controlled. Both R. Marconi and A. Garzi have discussed and agreed upon the potential abatement, in the amount of \$1,144.20.

B. Manners moved and M. Kozlark seconded the motion to approve the Jesse Lee tax abatement in the amount of \$1,144.20. Motion carried 5-0.

5. NW CT Public Safety Communication Center Member Appointment – R. Marconi read a letter from Fire Chief Jerry Myers nominating Firefighter Chris Sanders to be the Ridgefield representative for the NW CT Public Communication Center. Chief Myers is currently serving a dual role as Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief.

S. Zemo moved and B. Hebert seconded the motion to appoint Chris Sanders as the Ridgefield representative of the NW CT Public Communication Center. Motion carried 5-0.

6. a. Approval of Tax Refunds –

B. Manners moved and M. Kozlark seconded the motion to approve the tax refunds. Motion carried 5-0.

b. Reddington Settlement – This case dealt with open space off of Mamasasco Road in which trees were removed. We have reached an \$85,000 settlement with the homeowner's insurance company. The funds will go to the Conservation Commission, as they intend to replant the trees. R. Marconi does not believe this issue impacted erosion or run-off.

B. Hebert moved and M. Kozlark seconded the motion to approve the settlement in the amount of \$85,000. Motion carried 5-0.

7. Selectman's Report –

- *The Holiday Stroll* will begin this Friday from 5pm-9pm and on Saturday from 10am-7 pm.
- *"Strengthening the Bonds of Our Community"* will take place at the Leir Center on December 5th from 10am-1:30pm. All school principals and superintendents will be present.

- *Zoey Butchen and the Ridgefield Thrift Shop Volunteers* will receive this year's "United Way Hometown Hero Award" which will be presented on Saturday, December 2nd at the Amber Room.
- *Tri-Board Meeting* will be held on December 7th at 7:30 pm in the BOE Conference Room.
- *Town Employee Holiday Party* will be held on December 12th at Silver Spring Country Club. If you plan to attend, please reach out to either Laurie or Marguerite in the Human Resources Department.
- *Route 35 Bridge* work will be taking place over the next couple of days; therefore alternating traffic patterns will be in effect on Thursday and Friday.
- *Nod Hill Brewery* - After review of the existing food truck ordinance by David Grogins, Esq., he stated that in order to accommodate this request, we must go to a Public Hearing to revise the existing ordinance, which he strongly discourages. R. Marconi stated that other possible solutions are being explored.
- *Boys & Girls Club* - Signed an agreement with them for the Barn, \$60,000 barn budget slid over to the B&GC. We also agreed on 50/50 split for utilities. Per Kevin Redmond we do not have a line item for this in the budget.
- *Horse Ordinance* - R. Marconi states that they are expecting approximately 150 voters for the revisions to the horse ordinance; therefore R. Marconi is looking to secure a venue that can accommodate this large of a crowd.

8. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 11/8/17 –

B. Hebert moved and S. Zemo seconded the motion to approve the 11/8/17 meeting minutes with modifications. Motion carried 5-0.

B. Hebert moved and B. Manners seconded the motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen meeting at 7:30 pm. Motion carried 5-0.

Notice is hereby given that a Public Hearing and Special Town Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 29, 2017 at 7:30 PM in the Town Hall Large Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT, to discuss and approve: a) Federal Local Bridge Program (FLBP) funding of an amount not to exceed \$308,000 for a project estimated at \$1,040,000; and b) Funding of \$409,000 which represents the Town's 20 percent share of a \$2.5M grant under the TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) Related documents for the two funding projects are available for public inspection in the Office of the First Selectman, with the Town Clerk, and on the Town website.

The Public Hearing was called to order by R. Marconi at 7:30 PM.

The Public Hearing was scheduled to discuss two grants—the TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) Grant which aims to provide pedestrian connectivity in Branchville and the FLBP (Federal Local Bridge Program) Grant which entails a new crossing at Portland Avenue and updating of the Depot Bridge.

R. Marconi discussed appointment of a moderator for the meeting. Ed Tyrrell moved and B. Manners seconded the motion to appoint E. Tyrrell to serve as moderator for the meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

R. Marconi stated that the funds have been accounted for within the budget, as there is an overage which will be at a cost to the Town of Ridgefield. The funding amounts will not exceed \$308,000 for the FLBP project and \$409,000 for the TAP project. These amounts have already been approved by both the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance. The TAP project is slated to cost \$2,000,000 and will include new sidewalks from the Wilton line on the west side to the Tusk & Cup, where there will also be a pedestrian bridge and narrowing of the throat of Route 102. Greenery will also be added on the green at the intersection as well as a crosswalk. There will be additional crosswalks located at Ancona's and at depot allowing people to cross over Route 7 to the Branchville Train Station; however further research is required with regards to the Ancona's portion of the project. Walking signs and traffic lights will also be added. The FLBP project will be more extensive and will include: a new Portland Avenue bridge and traffic light. The project will aim to remove the left hand turn option into depot, and will add a left turn heading south. A new bridge will be installed at the location, as the existing bridge is in need of maintenance secondary to its age. There is currently a floodway at the bridge; therefore we are restricted from raising the level to anything over 0. The State of Connecticut and the MTA will be heavily involved in the project from both a safety and cost perspective. The vehicular crossing at Depot Road will be closed and a pedestrian crossing will be added and the intersection will be redone at which point the project will seek to change the grades, allowing trucks to make a left or right to go down Portland Avenue. The total cost for the FLBP project will be approximately \$4,817,000, of which \$208,000 will be paid for by the Town of Ridgefield. This will not be part of our normal budgetary process, because the state wants this expedited so they can begin the design phase. The engineering cost is paid solely by both the Federal and State Government.

John Katz of Ridgebury Road, asked if the \$208,000 figure covers both projects. R. Marconi responded no, the TAP is \$410,000 and the FLBP is a cost of \$208,000. The total approval for tonight is \$718,000. The reason the figures vary between \$208,000 and \$308,000 is secondary to an additional \$100,000 for other ad hoc costs.

Jay Sachman of Redding, asked if this will impact the number of parking spaces at the train station to which R. Marconi stated "no". Mr. Sachman also asked about the status of the vacant buildings behind the train station. R. Marconi stated that the development side is up to the landowners and he's unable to predict the future of the development in that area. R. Marconi stated that Branchville has been forgotten for many years and does require some attention.

John Katz, Ridgebury Road, pointed out that the TAP page states that there is \$100,000 contingency, but the page already includes contingencies. R. Marconi stated that the additional amount is only relative to the FLBP project.

Unknown Redding Resident (Peaceable Street), asked about what towns Old Branchville Road runs through relative to the proposed work. R. Marconi stated that the entirety of both projects will only be in Ridgefield.

John Devine, Governor Street, asked if the project is approved, when will work commence and for how long? R. Marconi stated that he does not have that information at this time; however he is hoping design work will begin in the next 1-2 years.

John Frey (State Representative), 2 Copps Hill Road, stated this is a good project and Branchville needs to be addressed.

Terry Ancona, asked if preliminary drawings will be made available to homeowners and business owners prior to the start of the project? R. Marconi stated that owners will see preliminary plans, at which point they will be asked for input and recommendations.

Unknown Redding Resident (Old Branchville Road), posed question regarding connectivity for this project and further south into Wilton, specifically the addition of bike lanes. R. Marconi stated that maybe the sidewalks can be widened. R. Marconi is unaware of the status of Redding, but ideally they'd like for all projects to connect (Georgetown Wire Mill Project).

Public Hearing closed at 8:58 pm. The Public Hearing was followed by a Special Town Meeting; those minutes are filed under separate cover.

Respectfully submitted,
Blaze Mazur; Shannon Freda