

TOWN of RIDGEFIELD – BOS MEETING – JANUARY 4, 2017

TOWN HALL/LARGE 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, R. Hebert, M. Kozlark, S. Zemo

Absent: B. Manners

Agenda

1. RECDC Interview: Augustus Ryer
2. Pension Commission Interview: Thomas J. Hayes
3. Ridgebury Cemetery
4. Recycling Ordinance Modification
5. Schlumberger Lease Discussion
6. DEEP Grant Amendment Resolution
7. Selectman Report
8. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 10/24/2016 and 12/7/2016
9. Possible executive session for personnel matter.

R. Marconi stated he had spoken with B. Manners. She is feeling better following her back surgery. She finds it difficult to get in and out of a vehicle but her voice sounds 100% better.

The Board of Selectmen completed their Executive Session at 7:20 p.m. with the Fire Commission and Director of Human Resources, Laurie Fernandez.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to add to this evening's agenda as Item #A, notice that at today's Fire Commission Meeting, Fire Chief Kevin Tappe has resigned after a lengthy career of service with the Fire Department. Motion passed 4-0.

Item #A – M. Kozlark moved and R. Hebert seconded a motion to approve the separation agreement relevant to the resignation of Fire Chief Kevin Tappe, as amended and approved by the Fire Commission. Motion passed 4-0.

M. Kozlark moved and R. Hebert seconded a motion to accept the resignation of Fire Chief Kevin Tappe as agreed upon at this evening's Fire Commission Meeting. Motion passed 4-0.

Note – Assistant Chief Jerry Myers has accepted the role as Acting Chief for the Fire Department.

There were no additional comments from the public.

The Board of Selectmen Meeting continued with the evening's agenda.

1. RECDC Interview: Augustus Ryer

“Gus” Ryer came forward to introduce himself to the BOS. Mr. Ryer works as a commercial real estate broker in Ridgefield. Arnold Light, Chairman of the EDC, was present at this evening's meeting and stated Mr. Ryer would be a wonderful addition to the EDC. R. Marconi reviewed the

letter of application received from Mr. Ryer, and asked him to add any additional comments. He has recently purchased a house in Ridgefield and is excited about being part of the community.

R. Hebert stated he knows Mr. Ryer as a neighbor and an Eagle Scout. Mr. Ryer brings a great skill set to the Commission. S. Zemo commented about the term “skill set”. Mr. Ryer understands working with numbers and the many tasks involved with administration. We are all chasing the same people to fill up Ridgefield’s office space.

Mr. Ryer has attended several meetings. The EDC has just finished putting together what is next on their agenda for 2017. They have a fairly large agenda and want to focus strongly on retail. Tomorrow there is a meeting focusing on Branchville.

R. Marconi stated Milford is looking for an EDC Director. Such a person can be very helpful. With regard to outside retail development, does Mr. Ryer see openings in Fairfield County? The lifestyle we have in Ridgefield is different than that in Stamford. We can feature the quality of life issues for employees. Productive employees are a benefit. We need to leverage the strengths we do have in our town – our school system and the lifestyle.

R. Hebert asked what are the drivers to bring people into Ridgefield? We feature a highly-educated workforce. Our population does very well. Our employee pool consists of a lower population density. That will draw people from out of town as well. We need to develop a spread sheet that shows what Ridgefield has in comparison to neighboring towns.

S. Zemo moved and R. Hebert seconded a motion to appoint M. Augustus “Gus” Ryer to fill a vacancy on the Economic & Community Development Commission for a one-year term. Motion passed 4-0.

2. Pension Commission Interview: Thomas J. Hayes

Mr. Hayes came forward to express his interest in serving on the Pension Commission. R. Marconi read the email received from Mr. Hayes and asked if he had anything to add. Mr. Hayes stated he has been looking the last few years into how he can best serve the town when this position opened up. He has mainly been employed as a money manager and an officer in a public company. He has worked on all sides of an issue but his main focus has been on asset allocation.

M. Kozlark stated Vanguard is a low-cost provider. Mr. Hayes has spent time looking at Ridgefield’s current allocations. He has been interested in attending the Pension Commission meetings and hearing the debate. R. Hebert asked Mr. Hayes as to what is his view given the market now. Ridgefield is experiencing a 10.9% compounded return. The previous return was in the 7% range which is much lower. The Commission is looking over a 10-15 year horizon. S. Zemo stated last year the Commission spent a lot of time on their possible investment return.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to appoint Thomas J. Hayes to fill a vacancy on the Pension Commission for a three-year term. Motion passed 4-0.

R. Marconi shared the letter of resignation received from Dave Campbell, past Chairman and member of the Ridgefield Pension Commission. He commented on Mr. Campbell’s history and institutional knowledge in his 30+ years of service. The Pension Commission has created a \$100 million pension trust, which is better than 90% funded to pay the pensions of the Town’s employees. The assets are now in Vanguard and the legal documents have been updated. S. Zemo

commented on Mr. Campbell's many years of service and expressed a thank you from the Board of Selectmen and the Town of Ridgefield.

3. Ridgebury Cemetery – R. Marconi shared the pamphlet prepared detailing the Vital Statistics & Operating Manual for the Ridgebury Cemetery. He would like for Bob Reynolds, President, Doug Clewell, Vice President/Sexton, and Maureen Kiernan, Treasurer, to come in and discuss the cemetery with the BOS. R. Marconi commented on how the cemetery is kept in good order and their record-keeping is meticulous.

4. Recycling Ordinance Modification

Ellen Rossini came forward to discuss this issue with the Board of Selectmen. She reviewed Article III, Recycling. She oversees all the recycling which is done in Ridgefield and applies for the grants that are available. Our ordinance needs to be brought up to date. It was initiated in January 1991 and no changes have been made since that time. It is time for it to be updated. Ms. Rossini reviewed many of the changes that are being made. A good clean copy needs to be generated and then forwarded to Town Counsel, David Grogins, for his review. She commented that each Spring there is a compost give-away program which is well received. There will be a way for residents to drop off household hazardous waste (which includes paint thinner and strippers, insecticides, household and automotive cleaners, waste fuels, oil-based paints, solvents, pool chemicals, to name a few) rather than waiting for a Hazardous Waste Collection Day.

S. Zemo inquired as to how can we increase participation. There continues to be much to be done.

Once the recycling ordinance is updated and approved by the BOS, a Town Meeting will be scheduled. Thank you to Ellen Rossini for her work on this project.

5. Schlumberger Lease Discussion

It was agreed that the lease discussion would be in public. S. Zemo reviewed the details of the leases which are in draft form now. BASSAM FELLOWS, INC. – a non-profit corporation is anxious to rent the Schlumberger property for their showroom and administrative offices. Their manufacturing is in Pennsylvania. They will not be allowed to do retail sales in Ridgefield. They want to bring people to the showroom from around the world so people can see their furniture. The individual would then go out to the factory and place their order. The general public cannot go to the manufacturing location and do a tour. Their display of furniture and decorative accessories are not for retail sale. BASSAM FELLOWS, INC. plans to put some improvements into the Philip Johnson Building and their rent is \$1/year. They could do subletting and use the facility to make additional income. Whatever the sub-tenant is doing has to be similar to what ACT, INC. is doing. D. Grogins will submit a clean version of the leases by January 18.

R. Hebert moved and M. Kozlark seconded a motion to approve the two leases for the Schlumberger property with a Public Hearing scheduled for February 8, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Large Conference Room, 400 Main St., Ridgefield, CT 06877 and a Town Meeting for February 22, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Large Conference Room, 400 Main St., Ridgefield, CT 06877. Motion passed 4-0.

6. DEEP Grant Amendment Resolution

A grant amendment application dated November 17, 2016, was received from the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection. This grant contract amendment between the

Town of Ridgefield and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, will provide funding for the project entitled, “2016 Municipal Waste Reduction and Recycling Rewards Program”. This grant contract amendment adds “Recycling Rewards” to our existing grant, increasing the grant value from \$13,000 to \$18,760, and extends the grant expiration date from 12/31/2016 to 6/30/2018.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to approve a grant contract amendment between the Town of Ridgefield and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection providing funding for the project entitled, “2016 Municipal Waste Reduction and Recycling Rewards Program”. Motion passed 4-0.

7. Selectman’s Report

- Two letters were received this past Friday, December 30, from the State of Connecticut advising Ridgefield of a \$234,100 reduction in our income from the State.
- Map shows \$250,000 for higher performing AAA towers.
- 2nd LOCIP program – as of 7/16, bonded \$825 million. The State allocated more than what was bonded, therefore have to cancel the program. We need complete reconciliation of our LOCIP account. We might not get a reimbursement. The State can act with no notice. If we cannot get the dollars, we will have to bond it. What we are already paying for – we are hoping for reimbursement. If not paid out, then we will have to cancel. We have limited resources available. We will put in our request and see what we get.
- Dog park lighting – if we cannot allocate from LOCIP, then we will have to find the funds elsewhere. It may well need to be funded privately. The commuter parking lot has a lighting issue also. EverSource money filed an application.
- 2017 - \$16 million in excess of revenue. R. Marconi met with K. Redmond, and Finance Chair Dave Ulmer. We want to be a partner with the community in doing what we need to do going forward.
- The State of Connecticut is facing a \$1.5 billion deficit. The State is looking at moving dollars from higher income communities into cities. How are we going to be cut? We need to figure out how to get as much from the State as we can. R. Marconi is going to talk to our representatives in Hartford.
- On Tuesday, January 10, the League of Women Voters will hold a “State of the Town” meeting in the Town Hall large conference room. We have a healthy surplus because of the tax sale, which realized \$1.6 million. We have had calls from other Selectman in other towns as to how they are handling this cut in income from the State.

8. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 10/24/2016 & 12/7/2016

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to approve as written the minutes of the October 24, 2016, Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Motion passed 4-0.

S. Zemo moved and R. Hebert seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the December 7, 2016, Public Hearing and Board of Selectmen Meeting. Motion passed 4-0.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to enter into Executive Session at 9:45 p.m. Motion passed 4-0.

Possible Executive Session for: 1) Legal Matter, 2) Possible Land Purchase, 3) Possible Land Sale, 4) Open Space.

The Board of Selectmen returned to public session at 10:35 p.m. No vote was taken.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 10:43 p.m. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet L. Johnson