



Town of Ridgefield
BOF Approved Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 31, 2025

I. Call to order

BOF Chair Mike Rettger called the Board of Finance meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, March 31, 2025 in the Town Hall Large Conference Room. Board Members Mike Rettger, Dave Ulmer, Greg Kabasakalian, Andrew Okrongly, Joe Shapiro present.

Others Present: Rudy Marconi, First Selectperson; Kevin Redmond, Controller; Maureen Kozlark and Sean Connelly, BOS members; Phil Kearns, Chair, Parks & Rec; Barbara Dobbin, Vice Chair, Parks & Rec; Dennis DiPinto, Director, Parks & Rec; Robert Hendrick, Chair, PZC.

II. Follow-up on Town Operating and Capital Items

Mr. Kearns told the BOF members that Parks & Rec is on track to outperform the current year's budget, with revenues above budget by more than expenses are above budget. Memberships are above their peak before Covid. It is anticipated that membership will flatten out over the next few years. Maintenance-related increases are mostly going to the Rec Center. Eighty-six percent of capital is concentrated on existing facilities.

Mr. DiPinto presented regarding the following Parks & Rec capital budget proposals:

- ADA compliance improvements to the cycle studio at the Rec Center, making it more accessible, are proposed at \$33,900. This would involve switching the existing spin room with the childcare room. This is part of a long-term plan to make accessibility improvements at the Rec Center.
- Safety improvements to the parks and baseball fields mostly involve fencing, at \$28,910 in FY 2025-2026, with other safety capital improvements in subsequent years.
- Replacement of the irrigation system at East Ridge Middle School, which is the Town's oldest and is due for replacement, at \$80,000 for FY 2025-2026.
- Rec Center pool surface needs long-term recoating with a specialized paint that provides long-term protection, at a cost of \$89,000.

- Replacement of one of Parks & Rec's oldest tractors from the mid-90's with a vehicle that would be used year-round in all schools and parks facilities.
- The ten-year vehicle replacement plan includes the purchase of a light-duty truck and a heavy-duty truck.
- The surfaces of six outdoor tennis courts at RHS need replacement. The new surfaces will be made of post tensioned concrete that will provide a long-term surface needing little repair, unlike black top courts. The cost in the budget is \$1.1 million, down from a \$1.2 million initial estimate. This includes four pickleball courts laid out on two of the tennis courts.

III. Budget Deliberations and General Budget Discussions

Tax Collection Rate: The BOF members reviewed historical data on tax collections and discussed the effects of retaining or changing the budget tax collection rate, which is currently 98.8%.

Motion to set the tax collection rate at 98.8% for FY 2025-2026 by Mr. Ulmer, seconded by Mr. Okrongly. All in favor.

Other Revenues: The BOF reviewed and discussed the proposed budget for Other Revenues provided by Mr. Redmond. One change involved the sale of fuel by the Town to RPS. The expense for fuel shown by RPS in the BOE-adopted budget should match the fuel revenue from RPS for the Town. Correction of this mistake, identified on March 27, required a reduction of the fuel expense shown by RPS and a small increase in fuel revenue shown by the Town.

Motion to adopt a budget for Other Revenues of \$16,565,419 inclusive of investment income for FY 2025-2026 by Mr. Rettger, seconded by Mr. Okrongly. All in favor.

Proposed Capital Budget: Mr. Hendrick, Chair of the PZC, answered questions from BOF members and explained the need to update the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development. BOF members discussed two amendments to the proposed capital budget. One was the removal of the parking project due to the loss of offset funding, and the other was the removal of the Ridgefield Conservation Commission study from the capital budget which, when considered with the offset of state funding, was for a small amount more appropriate as an operating expense.

Motion to approve the amended capital budget in the amount of \$7,503,495 for FY 2025-2026 by Mr. Ulmer, seconded by Mr. Shapiro. All in favor.

IV. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. by Mr. Okrongly, seconded by Mr. Rettger. All in favor.

Next meeting April 1, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted by
Steve Foundoukis