



Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectmen Budget Meeting Minutes
UNAPPROVED
February 2, 2023 at 7.00pm

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

Present: Rudy Marconi, Maureen Kozlark, Bob Hebert, Sean Connelly, Barbara Manners (via zoom)

1. IT Department Budget

Director of IT Andrew Neblett appeared before the Board to present the proposed IT budget.

Rudy Marconi mentioned the concerns that were brought up in last night's meeting regarding Neblett being the sole employee in his department. Neblett explained in detail what will happen if he is suddenly unavailable. Both the vendor EBM and Paul Yu are trusted backups and could step in to take over control if needed. Neblett also commented that his plan for succession involves hiring someone two years out to train to take over before he retires. Another trusted resource is Wes De Santis who is the Technology Director for Ridgefield Public Schools.

Kevin Redmond gave an overview of the proposed budget which has an increase of 30%. The major drivers for the increase include the new email system, cyber security requirements, telecom & professional services, and equipment maintenance.

This year's request is unusually high however, next year the Board can expect it to return to a small 2-3% increase. Neblett commented that he is looking into software that can save money and has already upgraded to small box monitors which are half the price.

2. Purchasing Budget

Jake Muller, Director of Purchasing, presented the proposed Purchasing budget. Kevin Redmond began with an overview.

The Venus building had a recent power outage resulting in the loss of a transformer which needed to be replaced. The addition of a chiller and solar panels have brought down energy consumption and the new windows for the gym will help with that as well.

The cupola repairs over the Chef's Warehouse entrance are extremely expensive but needed. There was a discussion about doing the repairs on the ground save money.

The project to place a water main from Criagmoore to the High School/Scotts Ridge campus was initially designed to have the pipe run all the way to the Mamanasco entrance however, it was decided to bring it to the entrance on Ridgebury Road which will save some money. Maureen Kozlark asked if there are any other ways to save money. Muller commented that the material costs won't change but there could be contract savings somewhere.

Next summer there will be an evaluation of all the roofs including the schools. Muller talked about ways to help reduce leaking at the schools which have flat roofs. The new standard is a slight pitch which eliminates puddling. Another option is to add a scuttle which is a relief drain that helps drain large puddles. The newer materials for roofing are better and the warranties are longer. They are currently in the design stage of a flat roof for the Highway Garage, which will be done this spring and include solar.

The sidewalk upgrades for New Street are being worked out. There have been a few trees that need to be worked around. Repairs are also needed on the sidewalks in front of Ballard Park, Casagmo, and Governor Street near the Boys & Girls Club.

Muller gave an update on the Branchville DOT project which is complicated due to all the moving parts.

There was a discussion about the increasing flooding from storms over the past few years. Muller commented that part of the MS4 Project moving forward will help with flooding. There is a level spreader on Governor Street that allows the water to be contained and released slowly. This is what will be applied in other locations to reduce flooding.

Muller talked about the projected 2025 budget which is at \$5 million. There was a discussion about the need to scale back or pick projects to push out and find more grant money to help with costs.

There was a discussion about the landscaping on the ACT property, which was part of the walk down plan. Trees need to line to property to block the light from

neighboring condos. This could be rolled into the PD/FD project to save money.

Muller gave an update on the status of the new PD/FD building which included new design plans that will give them private access and bring the building lower and closer to the road.

The Solar Panel Canopies at the High School will be installed this summer, which will be a tremendous power source for the campus.

There was a discussion about how to reduce costs for the 4th of July fireworks and if combining them with the RVFD parade is an option.

3. Possible Operating/Capital Budget Vote

No vote was taken.

Bob Hebert moved to adjourn the February 2, 2023 Board of Selectmen Budget Meeting at 9:33pm. Maureen Kozlark second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.