



Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
UNAPPROVED
June 7, 2023 at 7:30pm

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:45pm following the Special Town Meeting.

Maureen Kozlark moved to move Item #6, Health Department Fee Increases, on the agenda to Item #1a. Sean Connelly second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

1. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

a. Health Department Fee Increases

The fees for various Health Department services have not been increased in over 20 years. Jennifer Zbell, Deputy Director of Health, provided the Board with a list of fees for the same services from surrounding towns. The majority of the fees in surrounding towns are much higher than Ridgefield's fees. The increases are in correspond with the time it takes to perform the services.

There was a discussion about the \$1,000 fee for septic repairs and replacements, which is significantly higher than other towns. Ms. Zbell pointed out that Ridgefield's fees are lower in other services so it evens out. Bob Hebert commented that the septic fee should be lowered and motioned to lower the fee to \$500. The motion was not seconded.

Barbara Manners moved to approve the Health Department fee increases as presented. Maureen Kozlark second the motion. Bob Hebert opposed. Motion carries 4-1.

2. Poet Laureate Appointment – Ira Joe Fisher

Rudy Marconi read Ira Joe Fisher's background. Mr. Fisher talked about

his love of Ridgefield and of poetry. Brenda McKinley, Library Director, gave an overview of the history of the Poet Laureate and talked about the importance of the position and the library's role in supporting it.

Bob Hebert moved to appoint Ira Joe Fisher as Ridgefield's Poet Laureate. Sean Connelly second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

3. Commission on Aging – request for funds

Joe Turnello, Commission on Aging Chair, Commission member Peter Bancel, and volunteers Pamela Dunaway, a marketing researcher, and Kenn Devane, President of Mindtech appeared before the Board to discuss the Commission's request for \$5,350 to fund a new part time position and a Senior Needs Survey.

Mr. Devane talked about the purpose of the survey and the platforms on which it will be delivered. Mr. Devane also told the Board about his professional background.

Ms. Dunaway talked about her background in advertising and marketing research and how she can apply her experiences to helping with the survey.

There was a discussion about the questions that the survey will ask, adjusting the questions for different age groups, and how often a survey should be administered.

The Commission on Aging would like to hire Kavia in a part time position and are asking for the funds to do so. Rudy Marconi read a letter of endorsement for Kavia that was signed by Dean Miller from Meals on Wheels, Grace Weber from Founders Hall, Monica Stromwell and Jan Hebert from the Housing Authority, Karen Guadian and Tony Phillips from Social Services, Theresa Santoro from the RVNA, Debra Franceschini and Kathy Goetz from Rides for Ridgefield, and Library Director Brenda McKinley.

Barbara Manners moved to approve the transfer of \$675 for a part time salary and \$4,000 for the survey from this year's contingency fund to the Commission on Aging.

Barbara Manners moved to transfer \$675 for FY24 from the contingency fund to the Commission on Aging for a part time salary. Bob Hebert second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

4. Appointment to Housing Authority

Edward Baird would like to be appointed to the Housing Authority. Mr.

Baird shared some of his experiences and talked about his professional background. Jan Hebert and Vinny Liscio both commented on the ways Mr. Baird would be an asset to the Housing Authority.

Bob Hebert moved to appoint Edward Baird for a five-year term to the Housing Authority. Maureen Kozlark second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

5. Reappointment to the Pension Commission

Thomas Leonard talked about how much he has enjoyed working on the Commission for the past three years and how his professional background has been a great fit.

Mr. Leonard provided some pension percentages, his thoughts on the average age from an actuarial perspective and talked about their recent meeting with Vanguard.

Barbara Manners moved to reappoint Thomas Leonard for a three-year term to the Pension Commission. Sean Connelly second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

6. Pension Commission Resolution

Rudy Marconi recused himself.

Mr. Leonard presented a resolution recommending the Board terminate the Pension Plan after June 30, 2023. Mr. Leonard provided a background on the pension plan and the reason for the resolution. After the resolution is drafted by council, the Board will review it and take a vote.

7. Meeting Minutes

Maureen Kozlark moved to approve the May 24, 2023 Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes as amended. Bob Hebert second the motion. Sean Connelly abstained. Motion carries 4-0-1.

8. Selectman's Report

The Board members have been receiving lots of emails in objection to the proposed new development on Abbott Avenue. The Planning & Zoning Commission approved the application. The Board of Selectmen are not in a position to interfere with the Planning & Zoning application process.

The Charter Revision Commission has submitted the Charter draft proposal to the Town Clerk and the Board of Selectmen. The Selectmen will review the proposal and vote on it at the July 12, 2023 Board of Selectmen meeting.

The Town is required by the State to have a Draft MS4 Ordinance. The Board will review the draft and put it on the calendar for a vote at a later date.

It has been recommended that Ridgefield enroll in Active Assailment Coverage for Town property. The policy covers repairs and rebuilds of property that is damaged due to an incident. The Board will review the policy and discuss it at a later date.

The ECDC performed a Broadband survey for the town to find out the internet needs and wants of Ridgefield residents and business owners. There is an opportunity for Ridgefield to receive a grant for the project, however it needs to be shovel ready. The next step is to get an RRP for an estimate for an engineering study.

The ECDC would like to put a map of the town outside of Town Hall. The Board members agreed this would not be a good idea because it would set a precedence.

Dave Goldenberg has resigned from the Affordable Housing Committee. There is now a vacancy on the Committee.

Sean Connelly moved to adjourn the Board of Selectmen meeting at 10:09pm. Maureen Kozlark second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.