



Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectpersons Meeting Minutes
UNAPPROVED

August 14, 2024 at 7:30pm

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

Present: Rudy Marconi, Maureen Kozlark, Sean Connelly, Barbara Manners, Chris Murray

Rudy Marconi called the meeting to order at 7:24pm, immediately following the Special Town Meeting.

1. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

2. 66 Grove Street Lease Agreement

Dr. Susie DaSilva, Superintendent of Schools, Jill Browne, Ridgefield Public Schools' Director of Finance, and Sean McEvoy, Board of Education Member, were in attendance. Topics discussed included:

- Dr. DaSilva discussed the need for 66 Grove Street space to serve its programs for 18–22-year-olds (currently housed in portables at Veteran's Park) and the Alternative High School (currently at Ballard Green). Dr. DaSilva shared the BoS had previously approved funds to expand the A-School space at Ballard Green, but 66 Grove Street will provide sufficient space for both student populations and asked the BoS support applying those previously approved funds to the 66 Grove Street lease.
- Chris Murray asked about measuring the savings of keeping students in-district. Dr. DaSilva shared they could get a correct figure to the BoS, but out-of-district transportation for a student can cost \$100,000.
- Sean Connelly asked about enrollment for next year. Dr. DaSilva shared they anticipate 25 students in the 18-22 program and an average of 20-22 students in A-School, and they believe the 66 Grove Street space will be suitable for the next 10+ years.
- Mr. Connelly asked about transportation. Dr. DaSilva shared the 18-22 program will use in-district vans, and for the A-School some students drive, and others are dropped off.
- Rudy Marconi shared the 66 Grove Street space costs roughly \$15/sqft (11,227 sqft space) and need to finalize any additional costs and parking in the lease. Mr. Marconi shared the BoS hopes to have the lease finalized for their review at the September 4, 2024 BoS meeting.
- Mike Rettger, Board of Finance Chair, asked about build-out expenses. Mr. Marconi shared they don't have those figures yet. Mr. Rettger suggested the BoS holds a single Public Hearing and Town Meeting for both the lease and build-out budget. Dr. DaSilva shared they have a tentative number and could finalize for a Public Hearing in September.

3. Proposed Overlay Zone for 76 East Ridge – Discussion & Possible Comments to Planning & Zoning

Robert Jewell and Thomas Montanari were in attendance. Topics discussed included:

- Mr. Jewell shared a Public Hearing is scheduled for September 3 for this proposed Main Street Design District overlay zone and would appreciate BoS comments for that meeting.
- Mr. Jewell shared the history of the Main Street Design District (MSDD), which was first used in 2013 to redevelop The Elms property. The MSDD allows up to 6 units per acre and requires maintaining the integrity of the streetscape.
- Mr. Jewell shared their proposal would require the existing Victorian homes on East Ridge be maintained and the MSDD apply to Governor Street from East Ridge to Prospect Ridge.
- Rudy Marconi shared the MSDD would apply to the existing Police Station, if approved by Planning & Zoning, and asked what the consequences would be for that property. Mr. Jewell shared the MSDD would be a floating zone and optional for landowners to elect.
- Maureen Kozlark asked about streetscape maintenance requirements. Mr. Jewell confirmed yes, streetscape maintenance is a requirement, and plans are subject to both a design and architectural review; the MSDD is a special permit and is a very regulated zone.
- Mr. Marconi read a letter from Alice Dew, Director of Planning & Zoning.
- Chris Murray expressed the MSDD could enhance the value of 76 East Ridge should the Town want to sell it in the future and provide flexibility.
- The BoS agreed to write a letter to Planning & Zoning in support of the proposed MSDD overlay zone.

4. License Agreement – CT Department of Emergency Services

Rudy Marconi shared this is a standard agreement, sent to every municipality.

Maureen Kozlark motioned to approve the license agreement with the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services. Sean Connelly seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

5. Tax Collector Refunds

Barbara Manners motioned to approve Tax Collector refunds totaling \$5,995.11. Chris Murray seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

6. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a. July 17, 2024

Sean Connelly suggested an edit to Chris Murray’s statement in the Review of Board of Ethics Decision, correcting the minutes to read “Mr. Murray shared ACT lost a primary benefactor” and removing the “due to the BOE decision.”

Maureen Kozlark suggested adding “Board of Ethics (BOE)” to Barbara Manners’ statement to indicate in this context, BOE refers to the Board of Ethics and not the Board of Education.

Sean Connelly motioned to approve the Board of Selectpersons Minutes from July 17, 2024, as amended. Maureen Kozlark seconded. Motion carried 4-0-1, with Rudy Marconi abstaining.

b. **July 17, 2024 Special Meeting**

Ms. Kozlark requested the month be added into the header to read “Wednesday, July 17, 2024” instead of “Wednesday 17, 2024.”

Barbara Manners motioned to approve the Board of Selectpersons Special Meeting Minutes from July 17, 2024, as amended. Maureen Kozlark seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

7. Selectperson’s Report

Rudy Marconi shared Andrew Neblett, IT Director, will send out another email to Board, Committee, and Commission members who still need to come in for their new Town emails. Maureen Kozlark asked about non-compliance, and Mr. Marconi shared a list with Ms. Kozlark, stating there were quite a few people outstanding.

Mr. Marconi shared they’d received thank you notes from Founders Hall, Family & Children’s Aid and RVNA Health, and RVNA Health’s fall fundraiser dinner is September 26, 2024 at Le Chateau.

Mr. Marconi shared the Town received \$49,113 from CIRMA as a member’s equity distribution.

Mr. Marconi shared there are three upcoming Public Hearings about South Central Connecticut Regional Water District’s bid to acquire Aquarion: August 22, 2024 at 7:00pm and August 27, 2024 at 10:00am and 6:30pm. Mr. Marconi shared he’s been asked to testify about this acquisition’s potential impact, which could result in rate increases of 30-40%.

Mr. Marconi shared the Fair Rent Commission has received a complaint, and the BoS will schedule a meeting to review the complaint on September 4, 2024. Mr. Marconi shared he will meet with Alice Dew, Director of Planning & Zoning, prior to the meeting, and will research permitted rent increases.

Mr. Marconi shared an update on 145 Highridge Avenue, which may require an additional \$8,000 in testing. Mr. Marconi reiterated mitigation is the responsibility of the homeowners, not the Town, but the Town is able to apply for funding through the EPA’s Brownfields Program as a municipality to assist with the project. Sean Connelly asked about the July meeting with the public. Mr. Marconi shared it was about two hours long, and Chris Cole went through everything relative to the contamination and the extend and explained what it meant for the adjacent homeowners.

Barbara Manners motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:24pm. Maureen Kozlark seconded. Motion carried 5-0.