



Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectpersons Special Meeting Minutes
APPROVED

February 25, 2025 at 7:00pm

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

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

Present via Zoom: Barbara Manners

Rudy Marconi called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

1. General Budget Discussion

Kevin Redmond, Finance Director, was in attendance. Topics discussed included:

- Mr. Redmond shared three potential budget models: 1. Town budget 3.64% increase, Board of Education (BOE) budget 4.21% increase (budget approved by BOE on February 24, 2025), no use of fund balance; 2. Town budget 2.51% increase, BOE budget 3.57%, \$1.5M use of fund balance; and 3. Town budget 2.51% increase, BOE 4.21% increase, \$1M use of fund balance.
- Sean Connelly asked about fund balance use. Mr. Redmond confirmed with \$1M fund balance use, the Board of Finance (BOF) would still be at the high end of the 12% fund balance recommendation.
- Mr. Redmond shared, over the last 10 years, capital, relative to expenses, averaged 3.71%, but was closer to 4.3% over the last three years, typically in the \$6M-7M range.

Chris Murray arrived at 7:11pm.

- Maureen Kozlark asked how much the overall budget would need to be reduced to get to the 3.96% mill rate with \$1M use of fund balance. Mr. Redmond confirmed roughly \$700k would need to be reduced from the BOE budget or additional fund balance use.
- Rudy Marconi shared the use of fund balance is determined solely by the BOF and would likely dictate BOE budget reductions, should the BOF recommend doing so.
- Mr. Redmond shared the Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP) budget is \$85k higher than before, due to a correction in the local/state match formula.
- With respect to capital, Mr. Marconi shared the proposed Parks & Rec parking lot expansion (\$483k) project was removed from the budget, and instead will be partly completed in-house by the Highway Department, with an outside contractor completing the grading and paving work using existing Town Aid Road (TAR) funds (~\$100k). Mr. Marconi also shared the purchase of new Fire Department radios have been separated out over two years, which reduced the expense from \$544k to \$272k this fiscal year.

- Mr. Redmond shared documents with the BOS detailing the two changes mentioned by Mr. Marconi, and also indicated a \$658k BOE capital reduction. Mr. Connelly asked how that figure was determined. Mr. Redmond confirmed as the school roofs were removed from the budget, the same amount that the Town capital budget was reduced by to make those changes (22%) was applied to the BOE capital budget.
- Ms. Kozlark asked about Police Department tasers, and Mr. Redmond confirmed they were all moved into the same fiscal year (\$149k), per the PD's recommendation.
- Ms. Kozlark asked about the proposed BOE capital projects. Mr. Marconi indicated the BOS could do a line-by-line walkthrough during their next meeting (February 26, 2025).
- Chris Murray and Mr. Connelly asked about debt service. Mr. Redmond confirmed an \$8M assumption, and the proposed budget would be updated, as necessary, following the Referendum on February 25, 2025.
- Ms. Kozlark asked about proposing a budget that would have a sub-4% mill rate, with \$1M fund balance use. Mr. Redmond indicated the additional ~\$500k could be found by the BOF either in the proposed BOE budget, interest revenues, additional fund balance use, or other methods.
- Barbara Manners noted the BOS always makes a recommendation to the BOF about fund balance use, and expressed she understands rating institutions want a 12% fund balance, but would rather see taxpayer money used than held in escrow.

2. Possible Capital/Operating Budget Vote

There were no votes.

Maureen Kozlark motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:54pm. Sean Connelly seconded. Motion carried 5-0.