



Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectpersons Meeting Minutes
APPROVED

June 25, 2025 at 6:30pm

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

Present: Sean Connelly, Maureen Kozlark, Barbara Manners, Rudy Marconi, Geoffrey Morris

Absent: None

Rudy Marconi called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Rudy Marconi stated that he had spoken with the Town Attorney Jason Buchbaum who advised that the Board of Selectpersons vote again to appoint Geoffrey Morris to the BOS to satisfy some expressed concerns from residents. Barbara Manners motioned and Sean Connelly seconded the motion to add this item to the agenda. Motion carried 4-0-1

B. Manners motioned to appoint Geoffrey Morris to fill the Republican vacancy on the Board of Selectpersons, created by the resignation of Chris Murray. S. Connelly seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

1. Public Comment

The following residents voiced their support for the Board of Selectpersons to assist in mediating the cleanup of 145 High Ridge Avenue for the benefit of all impacted, and also expressed their support for the 'HRCC' presentation to be given by Dave Liederbach and Laurie Schupmann 139 High Ridge Ave

Glori Norwitt- 143 High Ridge Ave

Dave Schupmann – 139 High Ridge Ave

Sue Liederbach - 129 High Ridge Ave

Julien Britz – 7 Byron Ave

Susan McCormick -159 High Ridge Ave

Kristen Wagnblas – 13 Byron Ave

Rudy Marconi read a letter from Debra Francheschini, 72 Spire View Road, relative to the BOS vote recent vote for Geoffrey Morris.

Laura Schupmann, 139 High Ridge Ave read two emails as follows; Rebecca Ciota, 125 High Ridge Ave, regarding hazardous waste at 145 High Ridge Ave and surrounding area, proposed development of multifamily housing in single-family zoning area, and needed hazardous waste

remediation prior to any development, and; Lorraine Trapani, 153 High Ridge Ave, regarding lack of notice to her regarding hazardous waste nearby. She explains that she has had independent testing and requests that the town protect the health and property values of these residents.

Mike McCormick, 159 High Ridge Ave – supports neighbors’ comments and the scheduled presentation.

Anne Wineglass, 13 Bryon Ave – lives directly behind the former dry cleaner and also supports the presentation.

Benjamin Pajak, 144 High Ridge Ave – is worried for health and safety and feels there is a lack of transparency.

Jennifer Carpenter, 9 Bryon Ave – also supports the presentation.

2. Port of Missing Men – Conservation and Parks & Recreation Commissions

Jack Kace, member of Conservation Commission, and Phil Kearns, chair of Parks and Recreation Commission, reported that the two commissions have worked to convert properties into Open Space. They are requesting that the Port of Missing Men be added to Sturges Park, which is overseen by Parks and Rec. Rudy Marconi read a letter from Conservation Commission Chair, James Coyle, affirming the request to change the land designation from Open Space and add it to Sturges Park. The BOS discussed location, maintenance and environmental testing needs, and current and future uses. Rudy Marconi explained that when Ridgefield first pursued the acquisition of this property, all testing was completed. Sean Connelly disclosed that his residence is about 200 yards away. Dave Liederbach, 129 High Ridge Ave expressed appreciation for the commissions’ work recognizing that this type of action differentiates Ridgefield from others. He added that the same should be done with 145 High Ridge Ave.

Sean Connelly motioned to change the Port of Missing Men from Open Space and add it to Sturges Park. Barbara Manners seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

3. 145 High Ridge Ave - Presentation

Dave Liederbach and Laura Schupmann of the High Ridge Community Conservation Campaign (HRCCC) presented a status of the property. They explained the health, environmental, and economic impacts of the environmental contamination at the property. They requested support and advocacy on behalf of the community. They need immediate environmental remediation at twenty plus affected properties, health support for residents affected by the contamination, and local control and management of the property that considers wetlands, water flows, and blight. They would like to collaborate with the BOS and plan to put in the work necessary to achieve their goals. Rudy Marconi responded to the request for a project manager stating that they will likely have to hire an independent contractor. He added that a legal advisor would be needed to direct any potential litigation. He acknowledges the seriousness of the matter and requests BOS and legislator support the remediation. Rudy Marconi will speak with Legal Counsel to explore litigation. A budget will require approval from the Board of Finance.

4. Laurel Hill Road – Paving

Jake Muller, Director of Public Works and Facilities, and Rudy Marconi, have been working on converting Laurel Hill Road to a tertiary road. The residents of the street will cover the cost of the drainage work and the town would cover the paving costs. The project was sent out for bids. The drainage portion is \$127,250 and the paving cost is \$74,500. Rudy Marconi proposed a short-term maintenance of the road costing the town \$10,000 - \$12,000 from the fiscal year 2025 budget. The full project would then be completed in fiscal year 2026 after having been added to the town's paving budget.

5. Affordable Housing Trust Fund

Rudy Marconi reported that BOF requested removal of the word TRUST from title because it could have financial implications. However, Town Counsel advised against removing TRUST because of statutory requirements. The BOS reviewed the proposed language of the town code governing the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Sean Connelly pointed out that an appeal process is needed in the language. It will be revised and brought back to the BOS for approval. Then it will be scheduled for town vote to approval.

Rudy Marconi also reported that he communicated with Jane Davis, President of Ability, who understands fully the town's concern regarding the property on the corner of Halpin Lane and Prospect Ridge. She agreed to dissolve the lease with the town. Town Counsel is working on the dissolution. Any future use of the land requires a town vote.

6. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a. May 28, 2025 Meeting

Maureen Kozlark corrected that neither she nor Chris Murray attended this meeting and did not make any of the motions.

Rudy Marconi will request meeting minutes are rewritten.

b. June 11, 2025 Meeting

Maureen Kozlark edited her comment in item 2 regarding making the event an annual one. She also corrected the statement with HRA. It should be HRRRA and composting facility tour. Sean Connelly edited item 5, last paragraph, "...commercial" to "250 commemoration." He also added his comment to item 8, that he asked if Acadia has been investigated and confirmed to be good stewards. He also corrected item 8, 145 High Ridge Road to Greyrock LLC. He also edited the last statement in item 8 to clarify that 5 interviews were on June 13 and the other 7 interviews on June 19 and 20.

Maureen Kozlark motioned to approve the June 11, 2025 Board of Selectpersons Meeting minutes, as amended. Sean Connelly seconded. Motion carried 3-0-2 (Manners and Morris abstained).

7. Selectpersons Report

Rudy Marconi reported that upon his appointment to the BOS, Geoffrey Morris submitted resignation as co-chair from the Ridgefield Commemorates America 250 and member of the Economic and Community Development Commission. The board discussed a potential conflict of

interest if he were to continue to serve as co-chair of the America 250. Therefore, he will continue as a member but will no longer serve as co-chair.

America 250 also discussed having the Theatre Barn act as the merchandising agent, July 4 and 26, to process all payments and send the funds to the town.

Dan O'Brien distributed an informational update on the East Ridge Historic District. Vote forthcoming.

E-bikes and scooters on sidewalks are still a concern. The suggestion will be to prohibit them on town sidewalks in the Village District. An ordinance amendment is needed.

Road classification change request for tertiary roads to delete the phrase, "cul de sac serving not more than 7 interior lots" because it excludes roads that otherwise meet the town's paving criteria. An ordinance amendment is needed.

Rudy Marconi also suggested a blanket ordinance to Chapter 19 to allow up to 3 alternates for all boards, committees, and commissions but Town Counsel advised against it. Therefore, each commission must request special approval for any alternate members.

Maureen Kozlark motioned to schedule a special town meeting and public hearing for July 16, 2025, 7:30 pm to amend the existing ordinances regarding the prohibition of e-bikes and scooters on sidewalks in the Village District and tertiary road classification deletion of the phrase "not more than 7 interior lots, and the affordable housing trust fund ordinance" Barbara Manners seconded. 5-0.

Branchville Public Forum last night online was interesting with 74 attendees. The board discussed the allocation of \$15,000 to FHI of the \$19,334.73, expiring in one week.

The town was awarded \$14,000 from the Opioid Settlement Fund.

There is a multifamily building moratorium in effect.

Aquarion Water Company opposes a water company merger. Any new water company buildings will be non-taxable.

217 Danbury Road – oil tank removed. Contamination Report pending.

Rudy Marconi suggests placing traffic agents at the recreation center to ease the traffic congestion.

Sean Connelly motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 pm. Maureen Kozlark seconded. Motion carried 5-0.