



**Town of Ridgefield
Public Safety Facilities Committee
Minutes
APPROVED**

February 26, 2026 7PM

ANNEX, Large conference room, 66 Prospect Street, Ridgefield, CT

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

Committee Members Present: Pamela Dunaway, Denis Graves (via telephone), Wally Martinez, Adam Safir, Stephen Scalzo, Ed Tyrrell

Committee Members Absent: David Brickley

Presenters in Attendance: none

Wally Martinez called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

1. **Public Comment** – Kirk Carr, 62 Prospect Ridge, thanked the committee for posting the historical reports. He commented that the JB report didn't have a comparison of response times proposed to existing response times and suggested that data could be helpful.
2. **Discussion and vote on KBA follow-up work for the March 5 meeting** – The committee continues to compile a list of questions for KBA. They will be grouped by working group. Each committee member will ask two questions at a time. Pamela Dunaway asked that if work was foregone due to inefficient use of funds, she would like to hear that rationale. Adam Safir stated that his working group has had ample discussion with Police and Fire and understands their needs present and future. Wally Martinez added that KBA will provide written information in advance of the meeting.
3. **Working Groups Due Diligence** – Adam Safir reported for the Needs Assessment and Site Evaluation Working Group. They toured the facilities and addressed the questions asked of each group; who, what, where, why, how. They have studied the documents request list and as they've gone through the project documents, understand what data they still need to gather. They understand the implication of the site and facility on factors such as operational workflow, commutes, response times, and access. Neither Police nor Fire are adamant about colocation. The group continues to explore potential sites in town and consider patrol routes and vehicle storage. Wally Martinez asked for public comment. Geoffrey Morris, Ivy

Hill Road, asked for clarification of the center of town. The committee explained that they refer to the geographic center of town and the area of highest population density included daily visiting non-residents. Ralph Money, Prospect Street, reminded the committee that the needs assessment reports are now seven years old and with a change of leadership at the departments, may be outdated. Ed Tyrrell stated that crime is statistically declining. Adam Safir and Pamela Dunaway noted that certain police activities are increasing such as financial crimes investigations, mental health and wellness checks, and other time commitments such as juvenile incidents. While certain needs may decrease with a decrease in crime, other resources are necessary to address the increases in other areas. Wally Martinez thanked everyone for the engagement and stated that they will have to look at the art of the data with discernment because no specific report will provide a clear and direct argument in favor of one direction. Adam Safir added that they are waiting for a comparative analysis of Fairfield County departments describing number of employees, square footage, and vehicle numbers.

Pamela Dunaway reported for the Public Engagement Working Group. The alerts subscriptions have doubled weekly. The library is including committee news in their weekly newsletter. The town website is posting committee updates. Recorded committee meeting views have gone from 26 in week one to 130 last week. Pamela has reached out to over 30 groups and clubs including PTAs and social clubs. She will reach out again in case her email went to Spam folders. Her next focus will be disseminating factoids, Public Safety Snippets, about the fire department. The survey is complete and currently designing distribution. There are 3600 emails subscribed for this committee's alerts, and if 350-400 responses are received, that is a good representation by industry standards. The survey will only be sent to those subscribed at RidgefieldCT.gov. Adam Safir asked if there is any direct contact with homeowner associations. Pamela Dunaway responded that she has spoken with 77 Sunset HoA and Founders Hall to request that residents subscribe to the email alerts. She further explained that once the committee fully grasps the history of the project, they should hold meetings at different venues in town to bring the information to the public and request input. Then once their financial analysis is complete, they could again hold meetings at different venues to seek public input. Wally Martinez supports the idea but perhaps thinks they should combine the historical and financial analysis. He added that those community engagements will not be formal committee members with a majority of committee members attending. Wally Martinez asked for public comment. Roger Kavanaugh, 120 Prospect, asked how Pamela Dunaway defined a representative demographic of the town's population. She explained that she will need 350-400 responses from a varied cross-section of the population. Wally Martinez added that the survey will be insightful whether statistically as a representative data point or even just as a reflection of some of the town's sentiments.

Steve Scalzo reported for the Finance Working Group. They are working on a model to assess each site in terms of cost, contingency fund, and taxpayer burden. He met with

Director of Finance, Kevin Redmond, regarding the town's current financial position and bond rating. Nothing suggests that the proposal's cost and interest have changed. The committee also looked at New Canaan, Wilton, and Newtown's rehabs. Wally Martinez commended Steve Scalzo and Denis Graves' creative thinking to address the tasks. Pamela Dunaway commented that the Wilton model is not a rehab. The \$17 million previously socialized was only for phase 1 of 3. Wally Martinez asked for any public comment. Steve Scalzo added that he would like to take the approach of being able to say to taxpayers, what it will cost each one. Robert Camera, Acre Lane, suggested that an understandable wording for the taxpayers would be, "per \$1000 you currently pay, you would pay X, per year for Y years." Tim Murphy, Fire Hill Road, asked if the committee will explore private funding. Wally Martinez responded that once the project takes shape, they will explore grant funding and private funding. Police Commissioner shared that there are models where different civic groups fund aspects of the proposal. Roger Kavanaugh, 120 Prospect, asked if the committee charge includes a funding plan. Wally Martinez read the charge aloud to clarify that they must address the cost not the funding but could ask permission to propose solid funding ideas.

4. **Discussion on Schlumberger Committee report and process** – Wally Martinez stated that the committee members are all familiar with this subject but asked if Ed Tyrrell, who served on the committee, would share advantages and challenges of the process, and protocols to copy or forego. The Schlumberger Committee report is available on the committee page of the RidgefieldCT.gov website. Ed Tyrrell shared that their committee chair, Dick Larson, was very knowledgeable and an invaluable resource. He suggested that pages 11-18 delineate the process; survey (1400 respondents), charrettes based on the survey, and another survey (900 respondents). Ed Tyrrell concluded by stating that ultimately the committee will make a recommendation, but the Board of Selectpersons may or may not act on the recommendation.
5. **General Discussion** – Wally Martinez asked the committee to consider stages for the next few meetings. The meeting with KBA will be for the committee to address their discussion points and he may engage public comment but only after the committee has thoroughly covered the committee's needs. He also shared that it's important to meet with Volunteer Firefighters' Deputy Chief Pambianchi to discuss the volunteer firefighters' needs. The committee agreed. Ed Tyrrell asked to set the expectations for the meeting with KBA. Pamela Dunaway will ensure the committee receives the KBA executive summary for the meeting in advance. Adam Safir explained that he only wants KBA to present historical information that is relevant to their charge and the completion of their task. He doesn't want to hold a debriefing about successes and failures. Pamela Dunaway wants to ensure they hear what KBA considered and why they were discounted. Ed Tyrrell added that they have a list of all the town's properties that could be considered and it should be shared with the committee. Public comment from Geoffrey Morris, Ivy Hill Road, was that the previous

committee looked at all the properties more than KBA. The data is in the project documents. Ed Tyrrell asked for focus on the KBA decision points that decided on a single structure and how they determined the number of parking spaces needed. Kirk Carr, 62 Prospect Ridge, asked to review the original request for proposal and the proposals submitted. Wally Martinez will moderate the discussion with KBA to stay on track and minimize time spent on discussion that doesn't serve the charge. Tim Murphy asked if it's been decided already that new buildings will be built. Wally Martinez responded that it hasn't been decided.

6. **Old Business** – none

7. **New Business** – none

8. **Adoption of meeting minutes** – *Pamela Dunaway motioned to approve the February 19, 2026 meeting minutes as modified. Adam Safir seconded. The motion carried 6-0 (Brickley absent).*

Wally Martinez adjourned the meeting at 8:26 pm, with no objections.

Respectfully submitted by,
Etna Monsalve