

Ridgefield Housing Authority

Ridgefield, CT

REVISION #1

RHA Approved Special Meeting Minutes of September 17, 2025

In person at Ballard Green Community Room - and on Zoom

Commissioners Present: Paul Janerico (PJ), Ed Baird, (EB) Mr. Baird left meeting from 7:00pm to 7:20pm, Derick Schirm (DS), Maree Macpherson (MM) All in Person,

Commissioner Absent: Vincent Liscio (VL)

REM Staff: Wade Rockwood (WR), Monica Stromwall and Wesley Robinson

Residents: Nancy Higgins, Krisann Benson, John Burke, Margo Seemann, Cocoa Barron, Marina Stuart Matilda Iemmazo,

A motion to approve RHA Regular Meeting Minutes from August 13, 2025, with one change, was made by Mr. Janerico and seconded by Mr. Baird, all Board present approved.

A motion to approve the Management Report was made by Mr. Janerico and seconded by Ms. Macpherson, all Board present approved.

A motion to approve the Financial Report was made by Ms. Macpherson. and seconded by Mr. Baird, all Board present approved.

A motion to approve the Tenant Commissioner Report was made by Mr. Janerico and seconded by Mr. Baird, all Board present approved.

A motion to adjourn to Executive Session was made by Mr. Janerico and seconded by Ms. Macpherson, all Board present approved.

A motion to adjourn RHA Special Meeting was made by Mr. Janerico, and seconded by Mr. Baird, all Board present approved.

Mr. Schirm, acting for Mr. Liscio, called the meeting to order at 6:30pm by reading the Mission Statement and then requesting the approval of the Minutes from August 13, 2025. This was accomplished and the Management Report was requested.

Management Report: There was a total of 142 work orders with 153 completed. Unit turns, as well as unit inspections were completed. A health department re-inspection of the Congregate kitchen was completed with the

vendor requested to satisfy open issues. Recently there were several required inspections completed: Fire alarm inspections by Johnson Controls at Congregate and Prospect General Units. Fire inspections performed by the Ridgefield Fire Department at Meadows and Prospect General. Looking ahead there is a five-year sprinkler system testing for later this month with the following required tests: 5th year fire Department Connection Hydrotest, Internal Fire Sprinkler Inspection, Standpipe Hydrostatic Test at a cost of \$5,570. Landscaping took place at Congregate and Ballard Green with weeding, pruning and removal of overgrown shrubs, painting and freshening of front entrances of both locations. Trip hazard at Ballard Pavillion has been addressed which included new railings. Property Management has also been focusing on vendor contracts which includes the meal program at Congregate. The present contract will expire on November 1, and an RFP has been prepared with submission due by October 1. At this time, we have two interested vendors and additional vendor interest is anticipated. There is also a need for significant paving to be done at Prospect Ridge. This work included an approved budget; a contractor was selected and approved at a previous Board meeting. We are in the process of scheduling the job. Property Operations and Maintenance Project Plans are in process. Ballard Green – gutter guards on the back of buildings B and C. Installation of a bicycle foundation to be installed at Prospect Ridge. 27 Gilbert Street to repair exterior stairs (quotes have been secured). Capital Needs Improvements for boiler replacements at both Gilbert Street and Prospect Ridge – one bid received; awaiting an additional one. Freezer replacement, already budgeted, is moving forward. Continued focus on vacancies with a total of 3. We are currently 98.7% occupied. Delinquencies also a continued focus with statements of account for those residents with debit balances. The balance for all developments has either been referred to legal or resident is on a payment plan. PJ asked about whether these upcoming expenses had been budgeted -.; also, will add to every 5 years (CNA on a 5-yr cycle).going forward." Mr. Schirm requested info on issues with health department inspection.

Resident Services: Ballard Green - September was marked by robust engagement in health, social, and wellness initiatives, along with significant case management support. Highlights included End of Summer BBQ; Food Security; Social Programs, Health and Wellness. Prospect Ridge Meal Program, Safety & Training (Stop the Bleed Training) and Social Engagement. Case Management including Renters' Rebate Program, Wellness Checks, Discharge Planning, Protective Services, Energy Assistance, SNAP Applications and Referrals. Cross-site Initiatives and Partnerships to include, Armchair

Travel Series, Monthly Trivia Series, Upcoming Programming Expansion with National Charity League, Holiday and Seasonal Programming, Resident Education, Food Security, Monthly Birthday Celebrations. Behavioral Health and Case Management, DMHAS Visits, Referrals Medicare, Medicaid and Husky. Challenges, Ongoing transportation barriers for residents accessing off-site medical care and shopping. Low engagement with DMHAS, raising risk of program withdrawal. Complex needs among frail residents continue to require intensive case management. Upcoming initiatives (Late September – October). Stop the Bleed Training, Fire Safety Drills, Launching Neighbor Connect, Harvest Socials, Expanded Intergenerational programming, Fraud Awareness Workshop, Holiday planning, Ongoing support with energy assistance applications, food programs and wellness checks.

Financial Report: Mr. Janerico sent out the final audit report from Jason for both, RHA, LP, and RHA. Lack of tracking – significant deficiency problem with state reporting and significant monies going back to state for not being used. Portion of these funds will need to be returned immediately and the balance will reduce the current year's approved subsidy over the next 12 months - 2 issues are the root cause of the subsidy repayment - change in monthly rentals which weren't budgeted accurately (not controllable) and secondly, the tracking of accounts and fully utilizing funds (controllable by REM accounting and reporting though this occurred in their first year taking over the account). Jason indicated that REM is doing a better job since mid-2024 on the first quarter filing to the state. Audit financial statements – Rob waiting for Jason's 2024 adjusting entries. Need update to these entries to ensure complete and accurate current year financial statements. These adjustments should be reported to Commissioners. REM is responsive now and Renee involved. Positive progress with REM and moving forward with analytics. REM is taking responsibility for Excel based analytics – REM is making this part of their monthly process unless or until a better alternative is implemented with PHA Web or accounting software. Formula issues have been corrected – financial statements delivered by REM sooner, before meeting. Mr. Liscio did review August summary and he had questions – manual formula issues on my side – corrections done and properly reflected in reports provided to commissioners after a final review by Mr. Janerico .

Daniel from Purepoint updated from Zoom Connection

Will meet with meter people from Eversource and seek approval for 3rd transformer right now and make sure Eversource approved. Possible kick-off first week in October. May be completed by end of the year, but more likely next year. Mr. Janerico asked the following questions: What would be cost of 3rd transformer - no additional costs expected, Tax Rebates – need clarity. 2025 tax year project – safe harboring – time line for cash flows? Submit for tax incentives. “RS” program – when do they read meters? Wanted Jason’s position on tax rebate. Mr. Schirm asked about timeline for entire project. 4-6 months – install 4 to 5 weeks, then approval – then turn on.

Tenant Commissioner Report: Ms. Macpherson was focused on the human climate at Ballard Green as it relates to gossip. She stated that it was a real problem with several of the residents. She read the description of gossip from several sources with the overall results being a toxic spirit under all circumstances. She requested that each resident look to improve their social behavior and be kind and courteous to all neighbors. Continuing this toxic behavior could result in legal action. She also mentioned there was an abandoned car on the property which needs to be moved. Later understood that there are two cars needing attention. Mr. Rockwood will look into this.

Old Business

CNA Update Tower Facing at Congregate - RFP being created.

Gazebo Roof at Congregate – Habitat for Humanity no longer can handle due to lack of manpower, but suggested a local contractor that could do job for \$2900. Confirming whether contractor will use asphalt or cedar shingles and also awaiting quote from another contractor to compare pricing.

Unit Refurbishments/Renovations – Ballard Green at 100% and Congregate at 97% occupancy give few opportunities for renovation so the focus is on upgrading kitchen appliances, by tenure. Mr. Baird to look at shed on property to see if appropriate for appliance storage or needs to be destroyed.

Solarization – Update by Purepoint this evening.

PHA Web Reports – Covered in Mr. Janerico’s report.

Alternate High School – No update at present.

New Business

Town Website – Plans to update.

Public Session

Coco Barrone – Suggest Board attendees have their names and area of expertise on tags in front of them at meetings and put into minutes. Suggested that it would be beneficial to have a separate Tenant Commissioner for 51 Prospect Ridge.

Marina Stuart – Appreciate all the work being done by those involved. Has intercom but it doesn't work, and it would be good backup. This will be checked to see if repairs will work. There is a background alarm that should be disconnected.

Nancy Higgins – In reference to Ms. Macpherson's report, what is the proper way to handle pressure from another tenant. Should I walk away, call office, call police? Mr. Rockwood explained the different ways to handle depending upon circumstances.

Krisann Benson – Very much enjoyed food truck. Great!

John Burke – Offered his help with rent rebate process on line. Can handle in minutes. Have we invested monies we have available – yes, all monies are in interest bearing accounts. Why are we not using grant monies? Any more than 4 people, take your arguments to the pavilion. Cars parked illegally should be removed.

Matilda Iemmazo – No update.

Margo Seeman – Can identify two cars not working. Will give info to Mr. Rockwood.

Mr. Schirm requested a motion to move to Executive Session, which occurred at 8:35pm.

Board returned to regular meeting at 8:50pm and Motion to Adjourn occurred at 8:50pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Patricia Harney, Recording Secretary.

**Next RHA Meeting, October 15, at 6:30PM
In person at Ballard Green Community Room
Other A/V to be determined**

Minutes available in Hardcopy at REM Office, Gilbert Street, or with this link on Town site: <https://www.ridgefieldct.org/housing-authority>