# Town of Ridgefield
## BOF Approved Meeting Minutes
October 20, 2026

**I. Call to order**
Mike Rettger called the BOF meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 20, 2026 in the Town Hall Annex Large Conference Room. Members Mike Rettger, Dave Ulmer, Greg Kabasakalian, Andrew Okrongly and Joe Shapiro present.

Other Officials Present: Jane Berendsen-Hill, Tax Collector; Dr. Susie Da Silva, Superintendent of Schools; Nick Karas, RPS Assistant Business Director; Jonathan Parasido, Vice Chair of the BOE; Christine More, Secretary of the BOE; Kathryn Graf, BOE member.

**II. Comments from the Public**
None

**III. Approval of Minutes**
**Motion** by Mr. Ulmer seconded by Mr. Shapiro to approve BOF meeting minutes of September 15, 2026 as amended. All in favor.

**IV. BOE Financial Report**
Dr. Da Silva presented the BOE Fiscal Year 2026 financial report, assisted by Mr. Karis. She noted that following review of its draft June 30, 2026 budget report by the Board of Education at its September 14 meeting, RPS identified needed changes in its accounting entries. These included properly recording certain late-reported legal and other bills into the 2026FY, and recognition of its E-Rate grant for electronics purchases in the fiscal year. She noted that this payment is usually very uncertain as to amount and is received too late to be recorded in the matching fiscal year, but this year the process and check had happened much earlier. The district also identified several cafeteria-related equipment expenses which could be covered from the Lunch Fund, but had not. With these changes, the district presented a revised final budget report showing a surplus of just over $37,000, which was approved by the BOE on September 23. Members of the BOF raised concerns and asked questions regarding significant expenditures, including the need for further clarification on why the deficit in the electricity budget had not been recognized sooner in the year, as had been noted in BOF discussions several months ago. Responding to a question, Dr. Da Silva explained why the Lunch Fund was applied to the prior fiscal year.

Dr. Da Silva also reviewed the BOE financial report as of September 30. She noted that the district is very concerned about the Special Education budget line, which is already showing indications of running significantly over budget due to several significant case and arbitration resolutions, with about ten more cases or arbitrations pending outcome in the next few months.

**V. Treasurer's Report**

Town Treasurer Molly McGeehin provided the Treasurer's Report dated September 30, 2026 to the BOF prior to the meeting. Mr. Rettger noted that the purchase dates of securities in now shown in the report, as requested at the last meeting. The Liquidity Monitor Report as of September 30, 2026, provided prior to the meeting, was reviewed by Mr. Rettger at the meeting.

**VI. Tax Collector's Report**

Ms. Berendsen-Hill reviewed the report for the month ended September 30, 2026 and noted that tax payment activity is slightly below expectations. She said that it may be due to timing, although there are times in the past when it has been comparably low. She reported that she is considering initiating a tax sale process for several properties with significant unpaid balances.

**VII. Controller's Report**

In the absence of Kevin Redmond, who was attending a controllers' association meeting, Ms. Berendsen-Hill presented the Controller's report, including the latest update to the FY2026 RSI reports and the current year reports. Ms. Berendsen-Hill noted that Golf is projecting a lower revenue estimate due to adverse weather this fall and that overtime in Civilian Dispatch continues to run high due to staffing vacancies and the reliance on overtime.

**VII. Tri-Board Meeting Preparation**

Mr. Rettger presented the Master Budget Schedule for Fiscal Year 2028 which had been submitted to Mr. Redmond and RPS. The schedule calls for the BOF public hearing on March 22, 2027, and BOF meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 23 and 24, but no more meetings that week due to the Easter holiday. Then there would be meetings on March 29, 30 and 31, and potentially April 1, with BOF completion of review and proposal of capital and operating budgets planned to be completed by Wednesday, March 31, or Thursday, April 1. Members had no other changes to the proposed schedule.

Board members engaged in discussion of topics for the upcoming Tri-Board meeting, of what the BOF should present at the Tri-Board meeting, and of approaches to communicating development of FY 2028 budgets, including taxes and the mill rate. As other possible content, Mr. Rettger distributed an exhibit showing the grand list in several Fairfield County district reference group towns, including the grand list per capita and other grand list-related metrics in those towns, and a chart showing the favorability vote for the Town operating budget and the school operating budget in recent years.

Members discussed how they wanted to approach the Board's portion of the Tri-Board meeting this year. There was consensus that, as was done in 2025, the Board preferred to present a consensus view. It was agreed to schedule a special meeting of the BOF for November 5, 2026 at

7:00 p.m. to prepare specific BOF comments. Mr. Rettger volunteered to prepare and distribute a draft set of slides for members to review in advance of the special meeting.

**IX. Old Business**

Mr. Rettger continued discussion of the topic of fraud risk assessment from the BOF's September meeting. He said that a knowledgeable colleague had identified a regional firm based in Boston that works in this area. Mr. Rettger asked for BOF volunteers to interview that firm, to assess the potential costs and benefits of conducting an engagement. Mr. Shapiro volunteered. Mr. Rettger said he would ask Mr. Redmond to participate. The target will be to bring the outcome of the discussion back to the BOF at the BOF's December meeting, to discuss whether there is an interest in moving forward.

**X. New Business**

Mr. Rettger reviewed three recommendations from the prior year's audit management letter and suggested that a letter be sent to the auditors outlining the actions taken by the Town in response to address these items. Members discussed whether a letter, if developed, should come from the BOF or from the Controller. They also discussed getting additional information on progress on two of the items before considering such a correspondence.

**XI. Communications & Correspondence**

Mr. Rettger acknowledged receiving emails from Town residents over the past month:

- Communications from Debra Franceschini, Kirk Carr, and Rich Fasanelli regarding budget-related concerns
- Communications from Debra Franceschini regarding recent the No Kings event

**XII. Review of BOF Calendar**

There were no additional topics beyond regular financial reports suggested for the regular BOF monthly meeting being held November 17, 2026.

**XIII. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 9:25 by Mr. Ulmer, seconded by Mr. Okrongly. All in favor.

Next meetings November 17, 2026, Tri-Board meeting and Regular BOF meeting

Respectfully Submitted by
Mia Belanger