Town of Ridgefield
BOF Unapproved Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 16, 2026
DRAFT Final

I. Call to order
Mike Rettger called the BOF meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 16, 2026 in the Town Hall Large Conference Room. Members Mike Rettger, Dave Ulmer, Greg Kabasakalian, Joe Shapiro present. Andrew Okrongly absent.

Others Present: Alison Castoral, Assistant Controller; Jane Berendsen-Hill, Tax Collector; Christine More and Jonathan Paradiso, Co-Chairs of the BOE Policy Committee.

II. Comments from the Public
None

III. Approval of Minutes

> **Motion** by Mr. Shapiro, seconded by Mr. Ulmer, to approve BOF meeting minutes of May 12, 2026 as amended. All in favor.

IV. Treasurer's Report
Town Treasurer Molly McGeehin provided the following prior to the meeting, each which was reviewed and discussed by BOF members: May 31, 2026 Treasurer's Report; May 31, 2026 Portfolio Maturity Schedule; the Town of Ridgefield Liquidity Monitoring Report through May 2026; the Bauer Financial Report for Fairfield County Bank and Union Savings Bank showing a 5-star (Superior) rating for each; and the Veribanc Report for Fairfield County Bank and Union Savings Bank showing a Green rating.

V. Tax Collector's Report
Ms. Berendsen-Hill reviewed with the BOF the Tax Collector's report as of May 31, 2026. Overall, numbers look positive and all is running smoothly.

VI. Controller's Report
Ms. Castoral noted that Mr. Redmond was unable to attend the BOF meeting because he is attending a meeting for controllers of municipalities. She said she would take back to Mr. Redmond any questions or information requests from the BOF. Following discussion, there were

two BOF-member requests to Mr. Redmond for information, the gap between budget and actual on parking revenues, and the amount of the Town's expense overage attributable to unexpected snow removal costs from the past winter. Ms. Castoral reported that the gap between budget and actual for the education grant in intergovernmental revenues was due to timing, and that the full budgeted revenue amount was expected.

BOF members reviewed expenses and the revenue forecast. Additional revenue from golf and Parks & Rec will offset the additional expenses projected since the May BOF meeting.

Ms. Castoral provided to the BOF a memo from David McFate, the Town's Purchasing and Financing Manager, about evaluation of fixed asset management software solutions. This was prepared in response to the BOF's request to Mr. Redmond for a review of the topic based on the comment in the auditors' most recent management letter regarding the handling of fixed asset accounting by the Town.

The analysis reviewed five options of software either suggested by the auditor or in use by neighboring towns, and determined that the Munis Capital Assets package would be the one to focus on as a possible alternative to the Town's current use of spreadsheet files for this process. The members agreed to ask Mr. Redmond for a formal recommendation regarding fixed asset accounting software vs. continuing current practice, for presentation and discussion at the September BOF meeting.

The BOF acknowledged receipt of a letter to the BOF dated June 8, 2026 from CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, the Town's auditors, regarding scope and responsibilities for the audit of the 2025-26 Fiscal Year financial statements. The BOF requested that Ms. Castoral ask Mr. Redmond whether the identification on page 5 of a risk concerning management override of controls was a risk specifically identified as applying to the Town of Ridgefield or was a standard part of this type of letter to a municipality.

Mr. Rettger noted that the Town Charter requires that appointment of the auditor be approved by the BOF and by the BOS. He reported that the proposed fee is an increase of 3% from the prior year, with that increase reflected in the recently-approved budget.

> **Motion** by Mr. Rettger, seconded by Mr. Ulmer, to appoint CliftonLarsonAllen LLP as auditor for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026. All in favor.

VII. BOE Financial Report

The BOF members discussed the May 31, 2026 Operating Budget Snapshot provided by RPS. Mr. Ulmer asked for clarification of what is within the cost line of pupil personnel services, which is over budget. Mr. Paradiso explained that it includes many types of services, some of which are special education services, but that there are also special education services that do not fall within pupil personnel services. He said that it was a state-determined category.

Mr. Kabasakalian expressed concern that electricity is substantially more expensive than expected beyond any effect attributable to absence of some solar panels. He asked why this had not been surfaced as a significant variance earlier in the fiscal year. Mr. Rettger agreed to pass that question along for response from the BOE.

The BOF members discussed the draft BOE policy concerning the rollover account process when there is a budget surplus. Mr. Rettger proposed consideration of a BOF communication to the BOE containing three BOF recommendations regarding matters to be considered by the BOE in finalizing that BOE policy. Substantial discussion followed about the substantive needs for BOE actions regarding rollovers, which are statutorily within the exclusive discretion of the BOE, but that nonetheless need to appropriately reflect the consequences to the entirety of the budget process. The discussion also included thoughts on whether or not comments should be submitted by the BOF to the BOE in writing as the BOF's comments on the BOE's draft policy. At the request of BOF members, Ms. More and Mr. Paradiso participated in the discussion.

Mr. Paradiso explained that the final paragraph of the draft BOE policy, which does not contemplate the existence of the relevant Charter provision, is in the current BOE policy. He said that this point will be taken back to the BOE Policy Committee.

Mr. Paradiso and Ms. More stated that in light of the robust discussion at this BOF meeting, the thoughts of the BOF members expressed at the meeting constituted a substantial body of comments for the BOE to take into consideration and that they would bring those comments back to the BOE Policy Committee and the full BOE as well as suggest that BOE members view this portion of the BOF meeting. In light of this, there was no action by the BOF to submit to the BOE written comments on the draft BOE policy. There was also some discussion about the expected timing of the finalization of the BOE policy.

VIII. Report on Meeting with BOE Strategic Planning Consultants

Mr. Rettger reported that he and Fist Selectperson Rudy Marconi were invited to a meeting with BOE Chair Tina Malhotra and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Susie Da Silva that was organized to help the BOE's team of long-term-planning consultants. The consultants posed three questions. First, they asked whether there are any specific charter provisions or BOF policies governing debt. Second, they inquired about the status of the public safety building, both as to timing and anticipated amount of capital. Third, they asked about any other major capital projects being contemplated.

Mr. Rettger told them that currently there is no debt policy but the BOF is working on one and it might include specific financial parameters. Mr. Rettger reported that Mr. Marconi communicated the current status of deliberations by the Public Safety Facilities Committee but no specific timeline or dollar amount has been decided upon. As to major projects, Mr. Marconi outlined several areas of expected major capital spending in the next five years, including four additional schools that will need roof projects over the next five years, major road maintenance such as Ridgebury Road, and several other potential areas

IX. Pickleball Project Completion

Mr. Rettger reported that shortly after the budget referendum, Parks & Rec learned that the Town will not receive the expected grant of $310,000 that had been anticipated to partly offset capital costs of the pickleball project. Based on the wording of the resolution concerning the pickleball project that was approved at referendum, proceeding with the project even without that grant is authorized, according to bond counsel. The BOS decided to hold a public information session on this issue before a decision is made as to whether to proceed with the project.

X. Draft Capital Budget and Debt Policy

BOF members discussed sections 1-3 of the current draft of a possible capital budget and debt policy. There was a discussion of minimum useful life and minimum dollar amount. There was a consensus that BOF members are comfortable with having a minimum useful life as well as minimum dollar amount to be counted as a capital item. To help with the issue of minimum project size, Mr. Rettger said for the August meeting, he will prepare a spreadsheet that goes back two to three years of capital budget information by size of project, with a graph of scenarios. He also reported that he and Mr. Okrongly will prepare a data set of budget and capital information that is available from the state Office of Policy Management, that may be helpful in considering financial debt parameters as part of the policy.

Mr. Rettger asked for BOF member word-change suggestions for sections 1-3 of the draft, which he will incorporate into a "redline" version. He also asked for other thoughts on additional financial parameters beyond those in the current draft, to see if comparative data could be developed. He asked to have these before the August meeting.

XI. Old Business

None

XII. New Business

Mr. Rettger reported that the state budget adopted this year includes additional funds for school districts and municipalities. For Ridgefield, the amount this upcoming fiscal year is about $22,700 for our school district and about $44,800 for our Town. He said it appears that there must be some specific criteria for using those funds within a specified window, so it will be on a use-it-or-lose-it basis. He reported each municipality has a choice of spending the funds or using the funds to reduce the already-adopted mill rate. He said, as reported at the prior meeting, if these funds were applied to the mill rate, the mill rate change would be reduced minimally, from 28.36 to 28.35. There was a consensus that retroactively reducing the mill rate would not make sense at this point for Ridgefield, given the added cost of re-issuing tax bills. Mr. Rettger also reported that it appears that any action to increase budgets to incorporate the additional state funds needs to be done by the BOS rather than the BOF, and that more guidance on this process is expected the state by September.

There was also a discussion of the use of Purchasing Cards, generally known as P-Cards, by Town officials and employees in light of the high profile given to this issue recently in news reports from New Britain. Ridgefield does authorize the use of P-Cards by certain Town officials and staff, and at the BOF request, Mr. Redmond had recently distributed copies of the Town's policies and controls for such use to the members. Members commented that this practice seemed well controlled and well monitored.

XIII. Communications & Correspondence
None

XIV. Review of BOF Calendar
Mr. Rettger noted some small modifications to the BOF calendar to conform the calendar better to the timing of several control reports viewed by the BOF. As already noted, the draft Capital Project and Debt Policy will be further discussed in August. Also, members agreed that the suggestion that the August meeting should include an initial preliminary review and discussion of mill rate projection model results for the next budget year.

XIV. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:20 by Mr. Ulmer, seconded by Mr. Rettger. All in favor.

Next meeting August 18, 2026.

Respectfully Submitted by
Mia Belanger