



**Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectpersons Budget Meeting
Minutes
UNAPPROVED**

January 29, 2026 at 7pm

Town Hall – Large Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT

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 7pm.

Barbara Manners motioned to change the agenda to hear the tax credit item first, police budget second, then highway and engineering budgets. Sean Connelly seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

- 1. Tax Credit Discussion – Gary Roman** – Rudy Marconi summarized that Gary Roman and the Tax Credit Committee designed and proposed changes to the senior tax credits. The BOS reviewed and considered the modifications. They responded with alternatives for committee consideration. The committee incorporated the BOS requests and provided a summary of the updated financial data. The BOS supported the means-testing income support for seniors with \$85,000 AGI. Mr. Roman presented community demographics including both seniors and non-seniors, renters and owners. Then he showed the impact on the mill rate in four scenarios with the committee's proposed tax credits. The BOS had previously discussed and decided to consider the tax credits shown in scenario 3 and focused this discussion on that data. Currently, senior tax abatements total \$2.1 million. If the BOS implements the preferred program changes, the cost would be an additional \$380,000 in the first year and \$756,000 in the second year.
- 2. Police Department Budget** – Mr. Redmond introduced the proposed police department budget total at 4.73% driven mostly by personnel costs. Police Chief Jeff Kreitz answered BOS questions regarding vehicle replacements and additions. There are five officers sharing two cruisers. The BOS considered increasing the Cruiser line item by another \$50,000 for a Ford cruiser and the 5000 hours spread over five years to justify that cost. Capital expense is for audio/video recording mandated by the state for certain crimes.

3. Highway Budget – Director of Public Works and Facilities, Jacob Muller, presented the proposed operating highway budget. The highway budget subtotal is 0.9%. Paving was originally at 2.6% and was decreased by \$500,000, not including the tertiary roads. Tertiary road paving is budgeted at \$500,000 annually. Mr. Muller explained that there are six or seven tertiary roads to be paved in the fall. Operating highway administration is at 2.78%. Maintenance is lower due to personnel turnover. Snow removal supplies line item is trending lower over the last couple of years. Support Services is up 3.8% driven mostly by vehicle parts. The BOS proposed sharing some equipment among Highway, Parks and Recreation, and Engineering to increase efficiency. Mr. Muller responded that sharing certain equipment would affect each department's productivity. However, he believed that attachments for the equipment could be shared for a reasonable cost savings with minimal impact to productivity.

4. Engineering and Facilities Budget – Mr. Muller reported that the proposed budget will trend on last year's budget. Roads and ADA expenses are at 2.246%. The BOS asked regarding personnel changes. Mr. Muller explained that although he moved one highway crew member to the recycling and compost yard, they maintain the same number of plow drivers, 16. They do need to hire a new person to fill the open crew slot but is not requesting personnel at this time.

Capital budget funding requests are for a smaller freightliner around \$250,000. Guardrail replacement is \$40,000, year after year. The tire replacement machine for smaller tires is from around 2014 and needs to be replaced.

Capital budget funding for the new Facilities Committee was discussed. \$425,000 was invested to get to a referendum with proposed actual costs. The BOS is now funding \$125,000 for the new committee to get from theoretical agreement on a site location and number of buildings to conceptual design and construction proposal.

PD roof and drainage are most critical. Drainage includes sump pumps and yard drains on the property. The BOS discussed funding that cost in this coming budget and using Yanity Gym showers as an alternative to FD shower upgrades. In that case, \$25,000 is needed to refurbish the Yanity showers.

The BOS discussed \$990,000 for Communications server relocation from the third floor to a ground floor cement vault.

Mr. Muller highlighted some Engineering capital items; Town Hall \$200,000 for duct work replacement, garage one renovations for \$1045, Schlumberger property electrical upgrade of \$45,000, and others. He discussed paving work expected and funding to address it.

Mr. Muller will make changes to the budget as requested by the BOS and circulate a revised draft budget.

5. General Budget Discussion – Mr. Redmond summarized changes discussed tonight; reduce PDFD by \$325,000, add PD drainage for \$95,000, add FD/Yanity showers for \$20,000, remove the FD

showers line item, add the communication relocation for \$990,000. These changes would bring the total capital budget to \$11 million.

6. Possible Capital/Operating Budget Vote – None

Barbara Manners motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:35pm. Geoffrey Morris seconded. Motion carried 5-0.