



Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectpersons Meeting
Minutes
UNAPPROVED
June 10, 2026 at 6:30pm
Town Hall – Large Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

Present: Sean Connelly, Maureen Kozlark, Rudy Marconi, Geoffrey Morris

Absent: Barbara Manners

Rudy Marconi called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. He informed the public that the Fair Rent Commission just held the legally required meeting but no issues were reported and no one was in attendance. He added that a Fair Rent Commission is required in all municipalities with a population of 25,000 or greater. Please email firstselectperson@ridgefieldct.gov with any concerns. This will be included in the next newsletter.

1. Public Comment

Richard S. Country Club Road shared that a neighbor of his doesn't follow current ordinance with leaf blowing at 6:30am on a Saturday.

Carol Horn, 27 Fairview Road shared that gas blowers sound all day long during the summer and she supports summer hours like several neighboring towns.

Coleen Devila Added that there have even been retaliatory actions taken against neighbors submitting complaints. She supports clear language for the new ordinance.

Eduardo Escribano, 16 Bailey Ave, 7-year town center merchant shared that losing the 3-hour parking has been detrimental to businesses and visitors. He felt that two hours is too little for guests to enjoy all the town offers. He supports the paid parking software but hopes it's enough and asked the BOS to think big picture.

2. Ridgefield Youth Commission update – Vijay Pertab, Akshay Pertab, Mirabel Rodgers

They reported that there was a webinar on civil discourse with panelists from different professions and perspectives. Two panelists had political experience and shared tactics to reduce tension during discussions of differing viewpoints. They also hosted two additional webinars focused on mental health in response to the impact of Covid on the town's youth. These webinars are recorded, archived, and available at their Kids in Crisis website. They modeled their

own civil discourse to discuss the impact of various town issues on the youth commission. They discussed improvements to the gardening box outside of the barn next to the VP. One member, Secretary Krishaa Bhattacharjee, shared that she is working on her Girl Scouts Gold Award Project, which focuses on middle school mental health awareness. She provided several local resources. She presented to the Youth Commission and the Boys and Girls Club. The commission tracks attendees, website visits, and webinar views. Future goals include updating the website and recruitment for more members. The BOS presented Vijay Pertab and Akshay Pertab with a special proclamation honoring their contributions to the Youth Commission and community.

3. Appointments and Reappointments

a. Christine Santori – Commission for Accessibility Reappointment

Chair Don Ciota provided a summary of commission activities. He encouraged public awareness of accessibility issues in the environment. Ms. Santori expressed her admiration for the work of the commission and Mr. Ciota. She shared her hope for collaboration with the Commission on Aging and public awareness of the Commission for Accessibility.

Geoffrey Morris motioned to reappoint Christine Santori to the Ridgefield Commission for Accessibility. Maureen Kozlark seconded. Motion carried 4-0 (Manners absent).

b. Jennifer Englert – Ridgefield Prevention Council Appointment

Ms. Englert described her personal history in Ridgefield and desire to contribute her professional expertise in social work to the community. She would like to help build awareness of the council among adolescents and their families, as well as the older community especially the elderly.

Sean Connelly motioned to appoint Jennifer Englert to the Ridgefield Prevention Council. Geoffrey Morris seconded. Motion carried 4-0 (Manners absent).

4. R.A.C.E. (Ridgefield Action Committee for the Environment) – Update and presentation on future projects by Roberta Barbieri, Gavin Watson, and Dr. Ben Oko – In 2025, Ridgefield was awarded the Silver Certificate from Sustainable Connecticut for achieving sustainability objectives. R.A.C.E. coordinates the efforts for the Ridgefield application to the Sustainable Connecticut program which awards the certifications every three years.

- a. Plants - R.A.C.E. met with Planning and Zoning to ask that regulations be revised to state that native plants are required not preferred. It will take four to six months to implement the change. Sean Connelly asked how it would be enforced. They explained that enforcement will be built into the architectural requirements for the architect on the project to certify. The BOS had already previously approved the requirement for any plantings in town-owned property. They are asking for BOS approval to purchase signage describing the native plant project and benefits. Rudy Marconi stated that the design, dimensions, and installation locations would require BOS approval and possibly from other municipal bodies such as the Historic District. The BOS would like consistency with the Museum in the Streets signs and will try to combine this signage project with replacement of faded Museum in the Streets signs. Geoffrey Morris had begun signage

replacement research and will share information with R.A.C.E. who will return with a vendor estimate, consistent design, dimensions, and proposed locations.

- b. Lighting – They reported that wildlife and human health are severely impacted by artificial lighting. The town has implemented regulations to limit light pollution. R.A.C.E. is hosting the DarkSky Connecticut director and a moth expert in a seminar at the library June 25 to educate the public. Existing regulations through Planning and Zoning will also be shared. R.A.C.E. is asking the BOS to join the Lights Out Connecticut campaign encouraging the community to turn off all unnecessary lighting from 11pm to 6am during peak bird migration which is from April 1 to May 31 and August 15 to November 15. BOS needs more specificity regarding ‘unnecessary’ lighting.
- c. Electrical permitting – They also asked the BOS to consider an incentive of some amount discounted from building permit costs to encourage applicants to go full electric. The BOS will get input from finance.
- d. Purchasing policy for grounds maintenance – They also presented the Sustainable Connecticut guidelines for grounds maintenance stating that Ridgefield only scores 25 of the 75 points available in this category. One feasible area of improvement is to adopt a policy for grounds maintenance equipment replacement with battery powered equipment. Although the town is already converting to battery powered equipment, a policy is needed to qualify for gold certification. The BOS will get input from the relevant departments.

ADJOURNMENT TO PUBLIC HEARING at 7:30 PM AND RETURN TO FINISH ITEM 4 above at 7:45 PM

5. Leaf Blower Task Force – Bill Cygan and Ben Oko

They presented the previously submitted written report with options for restrictions and committee member comments on each of those options. Current Ridgefield regulations all number of gas-powered leaf blowers, any day of the week, any holiday, from 7am to 9pm. They presented new information regarding a regulation for Quiet Summer as used in some form at neighboring towns such as New Canaan. Rudy Marconi asked if the committee explored the BOS concerns about applying the same regulations to golf courses and abutting properties. Then the committee, BOS, and audience members debated if golf courses are exempt from such regulations in nearby areas. Mr. Cygan shared that the golf course where he works is already migrating toward electric equipment. But the proposed options would not be feasible for the golf course. There was also a petition from 450 Ridgefield members advocating for one option. Landscapers may not be able to comply with regulations that would work well for property owners with small lots to maintain. The BOS will bring several options to a public hearing. Based on public comments, the BOS will weigh the different options against potentially opposing community needs to craft a regulation that will have majority support at a town meeting. The BOS also discussed any potential conflicts between the noise ordinance and any of the leaf blower regulation options. Rudy Marconi explained that now that the task force completed the task, it is officially disbanded. However, any former member can attend and share comments when the item is discussed again. Town Counsel will be asked to create a draft for BOS discussion at a later meeting.

6. Parking Authority – Software permitting

They are asking to approve 17 spaces for up to 3-hour metered parking via the ParkMobile app. Maureen Kozlark stated that she would only support the idea at Branchville train station. Geoffrey Morris asked for the details regarding implementation and test period. There would be signage and social media education with a 3 to 6 month roll-out. Sean Connelly stated that he had shared the concern that workers may use up the 17 spaces and keep renewing the parking via the app but after this discussion, he would support the pilot program.

Public comment expressed concern for non-cell phone users who can't use cells or apps. Another comment was that this won't work.

Sean Connelly motioned to approve ParkMobile contract signed by first selectperson to implement 3-hour parking at 10-12 selected spaces. Geoffrey Morris seconded. Motion carried 3-1-1 (Kozlark opposed, Manners absent).

Maureen Kozlark motioned to flip agenda items 7 and 8 to listen to the Pickle Ball item first. Sean Connelly seconded. Motion carried 4-0 (Manners absent).

7. Pickle Ball Courts – Approval for a public information meeting June 22

Rudy Marconi stated that the Bond Counsel stated that the town can proceed with a bond even though the grant wasn't approved. Therefore, Town Counsel suggested a public information meeting to educate the community about capital funding for the project with the clarity that the item is already approved. Total costs will be about \$900,000.

Sean Connelly motioned to approve a public information meeting following the town meeting on June 22. Geoffrey Morris seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0 (Manners absent).

8. Town Administrator

Rudy Marconi shared four documents. The BOS reviewed notes on BOS discussion. They discussed distinguishing reporting authority for each department. The Darien model works and perhaps that's the model to follow. Maureen Kozlark envisioned that the hired role will have a higher salary than the first selectperson. Geoffrey Morris suggested a slow ramp up of responsibilities transitioned from the first selectperson to the town administrator. He also suggested defining the role and duties of the first selectperson to clarify why the first selectperson needs to be freed up by a town administrator. The BOS discussed the recruiting process and mechanisms. Rudy Marconi will fine tune the job descriptions with HR Director Laurie Fernandez and work on the org chart based on BOS feedback. The Form of Government Committee may be invited to discuss the potential org chart with the BOS in advance of a public information meeting.

9. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a. May 21, 2026 BOS Special Meeting (Executive Session)

Sean Connelly motioned to approve the minutes from the May 21, 2026 Board of Selectpersons Special (Executive Session) Meeting. Maureen Kozlark seconded. Motion carried 4-0 (Manners absent).

b. May 22, 2026 BOS Special Meeting (Executive Session)

Sean Connelly motioned to approve the minutes from the May 22, 2026 Board of Selectpersons Special (Executive Session) Meeting. Maureen Kozlark seconded. Motion carried 4-0 (Manners absent).

c. May 20, 2026 BOS Meeting

Maureen Kozlark, Geoffrey Morris, and Sean Connelly submitted corrections.

Geoffrey Morris motioned to approve the minutes from the May 20, 2026 Board of Selectpersons Meeting, as amended. Sean Connelly seconded. Motion carried 4-0 (Manners absent).

10. Selectpersons Report

Rudy Marconi reminded the BOS of Peter Nichols on June 24 at the Rotary.

He added that recommendations may come from a Board of Education study which could benefit from a Building Committee to study the recommendations and report to the BOS.

He reported that town meetings are necessary to; modify the town pension plans, approve the senior tax credit program, complete HRA cleanup, and approve the leaf blower ordinance.

Aqaurion Water proposed several increases to usage, meter size, and surcharges. Headed to PURA.

Geoffrey Morris motioned to adjourn the meeting. Maureen Kozlark seconded. Motion carried 4-0 (Manners absent).