# Town of Ridgefield
# Board of Selectpersons & Board of Police Commissioners
# Special Meeting Minutes
## APPROVED
## August 31, 2026 at 6:30pm
## Town Hall ANNEX Conference Room
## 66 Prospect Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

**Present:** Sean Connelly, Maureen Kozlark, Barbara Manners, Rudy Marconi, Geoffrey Morris
**Absent:** None
**In Attendance:** Chief Kreitz and Major Fowler of the Ridgefield Police Department; Chief Duckworth and Assistant Chief Cirulli of the Ridgefield Fire Department; Adam Safir, David Brickley, Denis Graves, Steve Scalzo, Ed Tyrrell, and Pamela Dunaway of the Public Safety Facilities Committee; Volunteer Fire Deputy Tim Pambianchi And Chief Gabbianelli; Board of Police Commissioners.

Rudy Marconi called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. He introduced the attendees and thanked the Public Safety Building Committee for their work. He proposed listening to the committee's presentation first and then taking public comment. Board of Police Commissioners member Ralph Money stated that he believes changing the order of the agenda violates Robert's Rules of Order. Rudy Marconi disagreed but opened the matter to additional comments. Katherine Daigle, 239 Peaceable Street, preferred the presentation first to allow for public comment on the information presented. Chuck Hancock, 480 North Street, agreed with the presentation first as well. Maureen Kozlark attempted to make a motion to change the order of the presentation, (as per Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, Section 41) but Mr. Money interrupted her stating that they can't vote on something not on the agenda. Rudy Marconi proceeded with the agendized public comment to avoid further debate.

1. **Public Comment**
   Rob Camera, Acre Lane, read a prepared statement thanking the BOS for creating the PSFC and the thoughtful process undertaken in their selection. He also expressed deep appreciation for the work done by the PSFC and he asked that the PSFC continue involved in any community information sessions.

Sean McEvoy, read a statement summarizing his understanding of the failed referenda, the simultaneously considered public safety facilities cost and the deferred maintenance needs of the Board of Education, his thoughts on the advisory committee's process and transparency, and five remaining questions that he believes are critical before a new referendum goes to the voters.

Chuck Hancock, 480 North Street, stated that tonight's proposal has value for the town, the fire department, and the police department. It meets three criteria; cost (reduced over $20 million), location, and avoidance of Schlumberger property. He plans to vote yes and asks the community to support it as well.

Greg Kabasakalian, 2 Washington Street, thanked everyone for their work and asked about the concept, cost, and location.

Andy Sternlieb, 62 Ridgecrest Drive, listed concerns; future growth potential, arbitrary cost cap of $50 million, arbitrary five-acre site size.

Roger Cavanaugh, 120 Prospect Street, raised a point of order. He said the site has never been disclosed, but it seems many in the room know the location. First Selectperson Rudy Marconi shared that it is on Danbury Road next to the recreation center. It had been kept confidential, as legally permitted, because it is privately owned, but the owner has discussed with the town and agreed not to sell to anyone else, and authorized disclosure.

Elizabeth DiSalvo, 57 White Bridge Road, stated that the road into town is very narrow and asked if it will be widened. First Selectperson Rudy Marconi stated that there is a traffic study underway.

Kirk Carr, 62 Prospect Ridge, thanked the committee for their work but hasn't seen a side-by-side comparison of four options or any Charette. He believes option 2 should be reconsidered.

**2. Public Safety Facilities Committee final recommendations to the BOS and Board of Police Commissioners**

Adam Safir, Acting Chair of the PSFC, began his presentation, stating that the committee met in session 24 times. They engaged in heavy public comment at every meeting and are confident that they've addressed the concerns expressed in public comment here tonight. He shared that the committee kept the charge first and forefront. The presentation included an Executive Summary. He explained that the square footage was built from the ground up based on needs. They explored different locations, weighed good versus perfect options, and balanced current needs with careful future growth estimation. They performed financial analyses including the cost of inflation. The committee final report includes one committee recommendation plus five additional fully explored options. He described the process they followed to complete work and named the different parties who assisted such as police and fire chiefs, KBA, NAFCO, and soil engineers.

Steve Scalzo presented Option D stating that both Option C (49,500 square foot combination building without a shared core) and Option D (48,000 square feet with a shared core that has economic efficiencies from shared spaces such as shared gym, reception, meeting room) are similarly situated at the Danbury Road site. Option D provides 23,000 square feet for fire and 25,000 square feet for police. The cost was estimated at $55 million, roughly $1145 per square foot.

David Brickley discussed the costing model developed to assess each option. He shared the details of Option D. He described the conversations with the police and fire chiefs to ensure that the square footage met operational needs. They discussed and all agreed to include seven apparatus bays. David Brickley also described the logic, reasoning, and calculation used for each line item in the cost estimate.

Steve Scalzo discussed the tax impacts of this proposal, including the debt service and tax cost to the residents. He calculated that the mill rate would increase by .85 mills. He gave the example of a property tax on a $709,000 home estimated at $389 per year.

Adam Safir reviewed the committee's survey results, which also guided the discussion. He described the expertise on the committee and thanked the committee members for their collaboration and the BOS for their trust.

First Selectperson Rudy Marconi stated that the Board of Police Commissioners and the Board of Selectpersons must discuss and decide if they move forward with an option by September 2 to allow that a question be placed on the next ballot.

The Board of Police Commissioners were invited to comment. Board of Police Commissioners Chair, Sharon Dornfeld, thanked the committee for their work, time, effort, and professional knowledge.

Selectperson Geoffrey Morris asked KBA's input and comments about Option D. David Brickley stated that KBA would likely prefer another 5% contingency, but they confirmed that these estimates fell within the range of what they've seen. Selectperson Geoffrey Morris also asked where the volunteer fire department fits within this Option D. Adam Safir responded that the seven proposed bays include the apparatus used by the volunteer firefighters. All apparatus is owned by the town, and use is coordinated between the two fire chiefs.

Adam Safir asked David Brickley to address the discussion and negotiation between KBA and the town's representative. David Brickley spoke to contingency and inflation.

Selectperson Maureen Kozlark asked for the accurate total cost, including the contingency recognizing that $55 million is just the base. She also asked for the next step. David Brickley stated that next comes concept design. Another three weeks are required for site work. Eight weeks are needed for borings. Pamela Dunaway stated that another 5% of $55 million is $2.75 million.

Board of Police Commissioners Chair Dornfeld stated that she doesn't yet have enough knowledge to reach a decision tonight. She feels there are several months of legal processes to complete before they can be ready for a vote. However, she doesn't want the cost of inflation to impact this project every month. She recognizes that the proposal addresses current needs not all potential future needs. She is concerned with leaving a problem for future residents. She is also concerned that not enough people are aware of this issue in time for a confident successful vote.

Board of Police Commissioners member, Ralph Money, asked for a timeline following up on Selectperson Maureen Kozlark's question. David Brickley explained that he estimates about eight weeks. Then Mr. Money asked what any potential offsets could be. Adam Safir explained that it wasn't in the committee's charge, but they felt that there could be room for training which will generate income. First Selectperson Rudy Marconi added that there are several possible grants and property transfer ideas. Mr. Money then asked about voter engagement and community outreach. Adam Safir explained that the committee discussed a plan to pursue once a concept is approved.

Board of Police Commissioners member, Steven Riebling asked about test fit, boring tests, and other "IFs" that are too vague. Adam Safir responded that there is no single standard to determine how to reach the final cost amount listed in the question for the ballot. There may also be a case to be made for a special election.

Board of Police Commissioners Chair Dornfeld asked what is the next best option after Option D in case Option D is turned down. Pamela Dunaway explained that she voted against this option because she wasn't sure Option D had all the chiefs' support. She was also concerned that there were too many unaddressed factors. She summarized and briefly described the minority report.

Selectperson Maureen Kozlark questioned the numbers listed in the majority report. Steve Scalzo clarified any confusion.

Selectperson Barbara Manners appreciated the committee's work and dedication and expertise. She added that she shares Ms. Dornfeld's concerns about the combined facility. She added that the proposed bays seem too tight. She feels they need more room and space for growth. The police department at Schlumberger made sense to her. She would also prefer to build for the future not just for today. Adam Safir responded to why the committee chose away from Schlumberger and added that the committee did in fact include a growth factor in Option D.

Selectperson Sean Connelly commented that not only is the goal a facility that meets the needs but also that will achieve voter approval. He asked for details about the test fit. He was concerned that it was a tight fit but appreciated the reinforced steel that would allow for upward expansion. He would like to be closer to a final design that can be presented to voters for approval.

First Selectperson Rudy Marconi explained what steps are required to place the referendum on the next ballot. He summarized that all of them want to present to the community a proposal that will be approved. The general consensus is that more time is needed to reach that point. Therefore, if a separate referendum is needed, then that's the direction to take. He is confident that the committee addressed the growth factor satisfactorily but also recognizes the need for an awareness campaign.

Chief Kreitz expressed his appreciation to the committee. He likes the concept and is optimistic that it will address needs. He would like to see the concept drawings to ensure all concerns are addressed.

Chief Duckworth also thanked the committee and appreciated the collaboration between the chiefs and the committee. He also felt that the schematics are needed before they can fully support the plan.

Selectperson Geoffrey Morris expressed support to move forward exploring Option D. Selectperson Rudy Marconi explained the process to follow and that nothing will be forced. They will avoid a special referendum during the holidays. Selectperson Sean Connelly stated that he is not tied to Option D. Pamela Dunaway offered her expertise with the community outreach.

First Selectperson Rudy Marconi explained that once the committee completes the charge, it is dissolved. The BOS feels there is more work to be done and the committee members agreed to continue to serve the BOS.

Ed Tyrrell stated that the BOS have risks to weigh; costs increasing and timeline stretching out.

3. **Possible vote to approve the question to be placed on Nov 3rd ballot**
   No vote.

   The BOS will reappoint members to the Public Safety Facilities Committee to continue with the next steps and concept design.

***Maureen Kozlark motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 pm. Sean Connelly seconded. Motion carried 5-0.***