

Minutes of the Ridgefield Commission on Aging
October 19, 2026
Pantry at Town Hall

Co-Chair Yaffa called the meeting to order at 1:36PM which was the First Order of Business. Commissioners Nolan, Mullin, Berkley, Culhane, Cushman, Kabasakalian and Richards were present. Also present were Tony Phillips, Director of Social Services, Karen Gaudian, Municipal Agent for the Elderly, Dee Tufariello, Carolina Gahagan and Linda Lebovitz. Additionally present was Bill Swaney, Chairman of Rides for Ridgefield. Debi Orr was absent.

As to the Second Order of Business, Public Comment - Mr. Phillips shared that there was the recent passing of Christine Robertson who had previously been the Chair of the CoA for over 20 years. She was a volunteer at the RVNA, had a column in the Ridgefield Press and passed at the age of 96.

As to the Third Order of Business, Approval of Minutes of September 28, 2026. At said meeting it was noted that Bob DeFalco had passed. The minutes would be approved with an additional comment shared by Tony Phillips- the motion to make sure that Bob DeFalco is remembered in the Town records was made as follows "Bob was the long time volunteer administrator of the Ridgefield Senior Gold Card program and was responsible for its growth and success over the past decade. Ridgefield seniors have lost a great man and a great friend. Bob's contribution to make the Ridgefield community better will be missed". The motion to add these words to the 9/28/26 minutes was made by Mrs. Kabasakalian and seconded by Mr. Richards. No discussion, said motion passed unanimously.

As to the Fourth Order of Business - Housekeeping-Financials - We have \$806.27 in Office Supplies; The Leir account now has a \$0 balance and will be closed out; \$42,448.33 in the Expo account and \$2,315 in the intern account.

As to the Fifth Order of Business - Transportation Update - Presented by Bill Swaney as the new Chairman of the Board of Directors of Rides for Ridgefield. Bill shared that the BOD has interviewed two candidates for the combined position of Volunteer Coordinator and Office Manager. A new rider intake process has been developed and, a major piece of the Transportation Task Force work has been to work with a third party who would dispatch drivers for riders when there are no volunteer drivers to take rides. This had a trial run which was successful. This system hopes to be operating come January 2027. The CoA previously voted on allocating funds to Rides for this outsourced piece. Discussed Rides's enhancing rider intake forms to become more efficient. Rides will make further presentations to the CoA as the new enhancements take place.

As to the Sixth Order of Business - Review Allocation of Funds from Expo 2025 - Brief discussion of using funds for the Transportation Task Force. Additional discussions will take place.

As to the Seventh Order of Business - Review Our Email Distribution list - Nolan, Mullin and Tufariello. Some seniors and some commissioners did not receive our first Newsletter which went out at the end of August 2026. Ms. Nolan and Ms. Mullin along with Ms. Tufariello met with Gillian at Town Hall to discuss and create a better database. Together they have made great headway and this continues to be a work in progress. Looking to attach our CoA newsletter (generated quarterly) in Gillian's weekly town newsletter. Discussed ways to get our information out such as through Ridgefield Mom's page on FaceBook.

As to the Eighth Order of Business - EXPO April 17, 2027 - FULL DISCUSSION All Commissioners - Discussed the list of tasks/assignments. The group who will work on getting speakers will consist of Dee, Linda, Carolina, John and Alden. Patty will work on the site. The allocation of funds raised from Expo 2027, a motion was made by Mr. Richards and seconded by MS. Mullin as follows: the distribution of funds received from Expo 2027 will be earmarked for seniors' food and fellowship needs. After a discussion on all the ways to do this (Community dinner, breakfast for seniors outing), the motion was carried unanimously.

As to the Ninth Order of Business - Current Priorities division - All - This item was tabled to a future meeting.

As to the Tenth Order of Business - New Business - Briefly discussed holding a breakfast for seniors. This and other ideas will be discussed at a later meeting.

As to the Eleventh Order of Business - Next CoA meeting date is November 16, 2026 and the next Sr. Voices is November 10, 2026 with Paul and Susan Doyle of Oasis Senior Advisors.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05PM following a motion made by Mr. Cushman and seconded by Mrs. Kabasakalian Culhane which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, Patricia Yaffa
Acting Secretary