



MINUTES

Ridgefield Conservation Commission

Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street

Ridgefield, CT 06877

(203) 431-2713 • conservation@ridgefieldct.gov

Meeting October 06, 2025 at 7PM

Present: Roberta Barbieri James Coyle Jana Hogan Jack Kace
 Erik Keller Allan Welby Anthony Markert Pete Nichols
 Matt Sharp

Absent: Jean Linville, Jim Liptack

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Nichols) and carried, it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of September 8, 2025 be approved and filed in Town Hall. Hogan abstained.

2. Wittman Stewardship Presentation

Mr. Keller and Mr. Sharp have met with the neighbors of the Wittman Preserve regarding the maintenance and removal of the phragmites. Several neighbors and the RCC have created a Wittman stewardship program where the neighbors will remove the invasives and help to maintain the property. This was the neighbors' first presentation to the RCC. Information on the program will be posted on the website and at the kiosk on the property. The work has begun at the site. The stewards of Wittman Preserve will update the RCC on a continual basis. The RCC will explore this option in the future in relation to other open space properties.

UPON motion duly made (Sharp), seconded (Keller) and carried, it was RESOLVED to approve up to \$1,000 stipend for the Wittman Stewardship Program.

3. Preparation for October 20th McKeon Meeting

The RCC will have a McKeon only meeting on October 20th for the public to present any and all ideas or proposals. Ms. Barbieri created a draft agenda to post shortly.

4. 2026 Library Talks

Mr. Keller proposed a tentative list of talks for 2026 at the Ridgefield Library. The RCC will also coordinate with the Woodcock Nature Center for a program of lectures/walks; Ms. Linville will reach out to align the walks and talks to cover similar topics.

5. Annual Appeal

The RCC will begin the annual appeal process including updating the brochure and preparing the mailing to be done by November 1. The plan is for the annual meeting in the Spring; we are waiting to hear back from ACT of CT re the event date. The RCC will need to identify potential speakers.

6. Forest Management Studies

Mr. Keller mentioned RCC is close to signing a contract with a forester for the forest management plan for the Hemlock Hills/Pine Mountain/Lake Windwing open space area. The contract should be signed this week and the work is scheduled to start next year.

7. Executive Session (Enforcement Actions)

UPON motion duly made (Sharp), seconded (Barbieri), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the commission go into executive session.

Returned to public session at 8:56pm.

8. New Business

Ms. Hogan mentioned "The Little Things That Run The World" at the Ridgefield Playhouse November 18th, which the RCC agreed to cohost along with the Pollinator Pathway.

Mr. Nichols is having the riding lawn mower engine replaced.

UPON motion duly made (Nichols), seconded (Sharp) and carried, it was RESOLVED to approve up to \$2,000 to repair the tractor engine.

Mr. Nichols will reach out to Whitney to see if she has a map of the water system valves at McKeon, reported that 8 to 10 of the Chestnut Trees may need to be replaced in the Spring, requested a 2nd tractor for McKeon to possibly add to the capital budget request, put out a request for any metal and wood benches, and let everyone know that the Old Ridgebury School House is in jeopardy of being demolished.

Mr. Sharp reached out to the state of CT to get approval for the Scout project on the John Soluri property; the representative Jeff Deering signed off.

Mr. Keller mentioned the Shadow Lake signs are complete and will work with the Scout for installation.

Ms. Barbieri and Mr. Sharp attended the Candees Pond site walk by IWB. The white house is slated for demolition and requires IWB approval given its wetlands location. She did mention at the site walk what the RCC would like to see done with the parcel. Also, she indicated that the Whitbeck Preserve trails are in need of being remarked and cleaned up. Mr. Sharp mentioned that it is on the list of potential Scout projects.

10. MEETINGS FOR ATTENDANCE

P&Z

October 7 – Keller

October 21 – Linville

IWB

October 9 – Liptack

October 23 – Markert

11. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Mr. Coyle noted that updates are needed on the website's home page and that the page will also need to reflect updated information once the deer hunt is approved by the BOS. He and Mr. Keller will meet with the First Selectman on October 16 to review potential property acquisitions. He has reached out to state representatives regarding vacant DOT properties. An update on the contamination at 145 High Ridge will be shared with the RCC via email.

ADJOURNMENT UPON motion duly made, and carried, it was RESOLVED that the meeting adjourn at 8:59 PM.