



# Ridge Civic



*Caring Citizens in a Quiet Country Community*

Ridge Civic Association • P.O. Box 354 Ridge, NY 11961 • [ridgecivic@gmail.com](mailto:ridgecivic@gmail.com) • [ridgecivic.org](http://ridgecivic.org) • [facebook.com/ridgecivic](https://facebook.com/ridgecivic)

## Officers

**Scott Wood**  
President

**Debbie Bedell**  
Vice President

**Chris Sosik**  
Corresponding Secretary

**Cynthia Eaton Tvelia**  
Recording Secretary

**Ken Casanova**  
Treasurer

## Board Members

Ken Casanova  
David Donofrio  
George Fernandez  
John Gulino  
Susan Kaufold  
Holly Wood  
Scott Wood

## Trustees

Ninette Kayton  
Chris Sosik  
Cynthia Eaton Tvelia

## General Membership Meeting

May 17, 2023, 7:30 pm

Ridge Fire House

### Call to Order and Pledge

- Meeting called to order at 7:33 pm

### Reading of the Minutes

- Minutes are accessible on our website: [ridgecivic.org](http://ridgecivic.org)

### Financial Report

- President Scott Wood reports current balances in each of our accounts since the treasurer position is currently vacant
- Contact us at [ridgecivic@gmail.com](mailto:ridgecivic@gmail.com) or after any meeting with questions

### Correspondence

- None at this time

### Unfinished Business

- Memorial Day parade is this Saturday at 10 am at Smith Road, line up at 9 am. It will be rain or shine
- Planter boxes have been placed along Route 25. Thank you to Chris Sosik and Debbie Bedell for planting flowers in those

### New Business

- Elections will be held in June. We are looking for a treasurer, plus we have some board and trustee positions are open. You must be a member in good standing for 3 months to be eligible; for president it's for 1 year. Let us know if interested

## Guest Speakers:

- Byron Young, Ridge resident and [president](#) of [Eastern LI Audubon Society](#) (ELIAS)
  - Ridge resident since 1986, here to discuss local birds in Ridge and surrounding areas. There are many [important birding areas on Long Island](#)
  - I've observed 82 species in my yard at bird feeders and flying overhead, plus 288 species of birds in Suffolk County. Fortunate to be surrounded by nature, undeveloped forests, open areas
  - For backyard bird watching, it's a relatively simple set up: You need food, water, and shelter (shrubs). Birds have plenty of food in the forest in warmer weather, so you'll get more at backyard birdfeeders in fall and winter
  - Bald eagles are local but in Middle Island. A pair is nesting in gravel pit for about 5 years and raising their young in nest near school bus depot in the back. Bald eagles have made a strong comeback on LI: In 2000 there was one pair, now there are 19 pair nesting on LI
  - Eastern screech owls are here in Ridge. Near my home, a pair raised 3 young last year. You can hear them in the evening but hard to see because blend in so well
  - Ruby-throated hummingbirds common in Ridge backyards. Nests are about the size of a quarter, active this time of year, and they love salvia plants
  - Others you can spot in Ridge are mourning doves, Baltimore orioles, red bellied woodpeckers, nuthatches (in winter), Carolina wren (very noisy), American gold finches (especially love sunflowers), song sparrows (multiple varieties), gray catbirds, mockingbirds, black capped chickadees (nest in wood cavities), and blue jays (year round, but they do migrate south)
  - Turkeys are everywhere (so plentiful they are holding a turkey hunt) and range all across Ridge; the ones we see today are the offspring of a stocking that took place in late 80s/early 90s of about two dozen birds. We have the right habitat for them; they are really useful at eating ticks
  - We also have turkey vultures. A fairly substantial population roosting on an elementary school in Riverhead. You can see them regularly, floating on thermals, about size of bald eagle. We have kestrels in the area too

## Places to look other than your backyard

- Try Randall Pond for Canada geese, hooded mergansers, others
- In Calverton by cemetery, you might see indigo bunting on north side of Route 25; they are a bold blue. Yellow warblers typically like to be by the edge of water because they feed on the insects; they migrate from South America all the way to Canada
- Try Smith Point for brown warbler, which migrate through here by the hundreds in fall
- Randall Road has a trail where you can see them but watch out for ticks
- Rocky Point property on Whiskey Road is another good spot (can also hear the whipporwhills there)
- Brookhaven State Park is a nice place to walk but because of the pine barrens it's more of a monoculture
- Calverton/Grumman park is a good spot, paved walkway. You can go from the parking lot to edge of runway and back
- Snowy owls at beaches on the south shore but we discourage people from hounding them

- Other great spots are Wertheim Wildlife Refuge, Smith Point, Southaven County Park, and Mount Sinai Park. [ELIAS does field trips/birding walks](#) at Quogue Wildlife Refuge and other areas

#### Questions

- Best time to put out hummingbird feeders? **B. Young:** I'll defer to Bill Erdmann at Hidden Ridge Plants on that; he is very knowledgeable
- Do you use the Cornell eBird app to help identify birds? **B. Young:** Yes, from Cornell school of ornithology. Download app to your phone and hold it up in air; it registers birdsong and lists which birds are nearby. Not perfect but does a great job. Cornell uses it to better track which birds are in NYS and in which regions. Or you can buy and use bird identification books along with a good pair of binoculars
- How many Audubon chapters are on LI? **B. Young:** Seven total. Ridge is technically within the Four Harbors chapter, but you can go to any one you choose. [I'm in ELIAS, and we sponsor field trips where you can learn about birds while hiking](#). We meet once a month at QWR, and it's open to all

#### Member Concerns

- Chris Sosik reports: Motel at 1856 Middle Country Road had been doing repairs but then started doing additions without a permit and asked to change number of units from 4 to 5 as a result of an illegal addition. Lawsuits have been ongoing regarding this because motel is in a zone where it is not permitted.

I'd like to make a motion for when owners go to town board that Ridge Civic will speak in opposition to any extension of the motel. Should not be allowed because it's a nonpermitted use. Bringing it up now because Ridge Civic does not meet over summer. Motel was built before 1958 so grandfathered in, but currently it is a nonconforming use. Also, if closed for over one year, that changes the rules. This motel seems to have slipped through the cracks, but Ridge Civic has long opposed a motel in the downtown area.

**Motion that if and when this motel goes to the town or zoning board for a letter to extend the building that Ridge Civic will be in opposition to any expansion, and that because it is a nonconforming use and because it has been defunct for over one year, it should not be allowed to operate as a motel. Motion is approved 15/0/1.**

#### Committees

- A. Community Park (Chris Sosik/John Gulino): Scott reports that there is broken concrete at the playground that needs to be addressed. Also, latch for double sided gate is broken so cannot be closed. A bench is broken and wobbles.

Chris reports that bricks from the parking lot to gazebo need to be repaired but still no P.O. from parks department; this is a tripping hazard and eyesore. The sign was taken down and Vinny is renovating it; it should be up by end of week.

The Ridge Veterans Memorial is nearly done. Need to place the flag, address a few

minor issues, and do some planting around the sign. People have been asking if the planters will be removed after the parade: The answer is no; they will stay.

- B. Membership (Holly Wood) — Holly reports that several more people have joined since our last meeting.
- C. Downtown Beautification (Debbie Bedell) — Debbie reports that Gulino family donated white flower boxes along Route 25. Planted flowers in those and in two large flower pots in front of Veterans Memorial. Town parks department helped with cutting grass throughout downtown.
- D. School House (Chris Sosik) — Diane wanted plaque for the schoolhouse, which has been funded, and remainder will be allocated for front door. As soon as plaque is done, the rest will be attended to.
- E. Clean Up (Rich Paduspska) — Rich reports that everything is good regarding clean ups.
- F. Scholarship Committee (Cynthia Eaton) — Cynthia reports that we received no applications for scholarships this year. Seems to be a structural issue; we fully believe there are plenty of area high school students that could use a \$500 scholarship.

Our idea is that this needs to be better advertised. Since Ridge Civic has been doing regular events each year and can always use volunteers, we will begin posting a call for volunteers for each event—aimed at the junior high and high school but also more broadly—and in doing so will let volunteers know that we also have these scholarships. This should be evident on the website too, which we will redesign.

- G. Events (Ninette Kayton) – Ninette reports that this year’s summer concert will be on July 15 at the Longwood Estate in the afternoon. The band will be the popular band Tradewinds, and Ridge Civic will organize some other activities for that.
- H. Brookhaven National Lab (*vacant*) – Scott notes that the Civilian Advisory Committee gave us a tour of the facility last week and taught us about nanoscience and some of the incredible research they are working on.

Scott Wood: Just one more reminder before we adjourn. Yearly dues are due in June. You can mail those to P.O. Box 354, Ridge NY 11961.

Also: Lois Meyer’s birthday is on Friday. Over 90 and going strong! Congratulations to Lois.

### Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.