

**TOWN OF CANAAN
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
December 17, 2009
Senior Center
Approved as written 4-4-2010**

Members present: Chair David McAlister; Eleanor Davis; Denis Salvail; Russell Lester; Nathan Deleault; John Bergeron; and Al Posnanski. Also present were Michael Capone and Shirley Packard.

David McAlister called the meeting to order at 7:08 P.M. and took attendance.

Budget Review: Government Buildings

Michael Capone summarized that the following revisions have been made to the 2010 Selectmen's Budget: the salary line was increased to \$30,168, the FICA/MEDI line item was increased to \$2,310, the retirement line item was increased to \$2,765, and, therefore, the government buildings budget total has increased to \$81,893.

MOTION by Russell Lester and seconded by David McAlister to approve a revised 2010 budget of \$81,893 for the government buildings budget, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen.

Michael Capone explained that the job description for the building and grounds position was evaluated by NHMA at the request of the Board of Selectmen and that the increases reflect an entry level salary based on the recommendation of the NHMA.

Eleanor Davis commented that this position was never approved by the voters.

VOTE: 5 YES 2 NO [E. Davis and D. Salvail]

MOTION by John Bergeron and seconded by Russell Lester to reconsider the appropriation for the Police Chief's salary.

Russell Lester commented that no other town employees are receiving salary increases so he can not support an increase for the Police Chief although he believes that the Police Chief is underpaid.

Eleanor Davis expressed concern with salary increases that were provided to specific police officers outside of the negotiated contract. Denis Salvail suggested that the salary histories for each officer be reviewed. Michael Capone offered to discuss this concern with Gloria Koch.

Michael Capone summarized the results of the wage study that was completed in 2005 for town positions, including the Police Chief. Michael Capone offered to check the current salary of each town employee to verify that these salaries fall within the study's recommended wage range.

There was general discussion that the Town of Canaan offers a better benefits package compared to the surrounding towns even though the salaries may be lower.

VOTE: 1 YES [J. Bergeron] **6 NO**

MOTION by John Bergeron and seconded by Eleanor Davis to consider transferring the UVLSRPC line item [01-4197.11-560] from the Area Regional Agencies budget to the Planning Board budget with one dollar allocated to the line item.

John Bergeron explained that the UVLSRPC primarily works with planning boards and that he does not want the town to miss out on any grant funding opportunities when no funds are allocated. There was general discussion that nothing has been budgeted for this line item in past years since there was a general sense that the town was not benefiting from the previous annual dues paid.

VOTE: 5 YES **2 NO** [E. Davis and D. Salvail]

MOTION by Davis McAlister and seconded by Russell Lester to approve a revised 2010 Planning Board budget of \$1,104.

VOTE: 5 YES **2 NO** [E. Davis and D. Salvail]

Michael Capone noted that the quote from the Grafton County Prosecutor has been received and that the line item can be decreased from \$30,000 to \$27,138.

MOTION by David McAlister and seconded by Russell Lester to reconsider the Grafton County Prosecutor line item and to revise the allocation to \$27,138.

VOTE: Unanimous in the affirmative

MOTION by Davis McAlister and seconded by Russell Lester to approve a revised 2010 Legal budget of \$44,638.

VOTE: Unanimous in the affirmative

There was general discussion and consensus that the line item descriptions of Canaan Lake Association and Goose Pond Lake Association should be maintained but that the two line items should be transferred to the recreation budget, as already approved.

Revenues

Committee members reviewed updated handouts regarding current revenues received for 2009 and anticipated revenues for 2010. Committee members also reviewed the water and sewer expenses. Michael Capone answered general questions regarding the figures provided.

Default Budget

Committee members reviewed draft copies of the 2010 default budget. Michael Capone summarized the process used to generate the default budget. General discussion ensued regarding what is the default budget.

Other

Michael Capone summarized that the changes approved at the last Budget Committee meeting for the part time and overtime line items have created a need to adjust the associated benefit costs and, therefore, the bottom line of the Police Department budget to \$464,730.

MOTION by David McAlister and seconded by Eleanor Davis to approve a revised 2010 budget of \$464,730 for the Police Department budget.

VOTE: Unanimous in the affirmative

Al Posnanski asked whether the salary lines of the transfer station need to be adjusted if next year's hours have been reduced. Michael Capone responded that the Board of Selectmen is currently reviewing the figures and that adjustments will most likely be needed.

Capital Outlay budget

There was general review that the Budget Committee removed the proposed funds for the police cruiser from the Police Department budget at the last meeting.

MOTION by Nathan Deleault and seconded by David McAlister to add \$30,000 to a machinery vehicles and equipment line item of the capital outlay budget for the purchase of a police cruiser.

VOTE: 6 YES 1 NO [E. Davis]

Approval of Minutes:

Committee members reviewed draft copies of the December 3rd, 2009, minutes.

John Bergeron corrected the misspelling of "recommended" on page one.

Eleanor Davis corrected "part-time salary" on page four.

MOTION by Eleanor Davis and seconded by David McAlister to accept the December 3rd, 2009, minutes, as amended.

VOTE: Unanimous in the affirmative

Chairmen's Report and Selectmen's Report:

No reports were provided at this time.

Next Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled on January 13th at 7 P.M. to discuss the warrant articles, the warrant, and any budget adjustments that may be needed at that time.

Public Comment:

Shirley Packard asked what will happen if a warrant article is submitted for a police cruiser. David McAlister responded that he will suggest that the funds be removed from the proposed operating budget if a warrant article is proposed.

Shirley Packard commented that setting salaries has been the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen so the Budget Committee should not be adjusting salary or salary related line items. There was general clarification that salary and salary related adjustments made by the Board of Selectmen impact the bottom line figures that the Budget Committee approve.

Shirley Packard asked whether there are any “strings attached” to the water related grant funding that is being discussed by the Planning Board. John Bergeron responded that the details are not fully known at this time but that the “strings attached” are no more than what the EPA is already requiring from the town.

Michael Capone noted that there may possibly be petition warrant articles for funding of the senior center and \$200,000 for paving.

MOTION by Nathan Deleault and seconded by Al Posnanski to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 P.M.

VOTE: Unanimous in the affirmative

