

Canaan Budget Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 17, 2015
Canaan Fire Station, Canaan, NH

Attendees: Budget Committee members: John Bergeron, Scott Borthwick, Ellie Davis, Patty Duszynski, Al Posnanski, Denis Salvail, Philip Smith Jr.;
Budget Committee members not in attendance: William Crowther, Martha Pusey, Sadie Wells;
Public attendees: Vicky McAlister, Nelson Therriault, Phil Carter, Barbara Hayward, Joe Frazier.
Canaan Town Administer Mike Samson; recorded by Roger Lohr.

Final Minutes

1. Call to Order

Committee Chair Ellie Davis called the meeting of the Canaan Budget Committee to order at 7:00 PM

2. Committee Discussion

Town Administrator Mike Samson distributed two documents including a narrative of the significant budget variances, and the 2015 Budget vs Actual/2016 Proposed Budget for town expenses.

A. Town Clerk Vicky McAlister reviewed the town clerk and election sections of the proposed Canaan budget for 2016. There are four elections next year (town, state, two national primaries), which will necessitate an increase along with the 2% salary increase for town employees.

B. Nelson Therriault reviewed the welfare section of the budget and discussed increases in the utilities and miscellaneous line items. There were 24 new cases this year for assistance (rent, electric, fuel). The Tri County Cap is now in Ashland or available on line and it is also available one day per week in Lebanon. The electric company also offers some assistance on electric rates.

C. Cemetery

Phil Carter reviewed the cemetery section of the budget. There will be salary increases and the acquisition of a commercial mower. The acquisition request is in the CIP for one mower in 2016 and one in 2018. The mowing is done for the season and there will be leaf removal to do and some trees to cut down.

D. Planning Board

John Bergeron reviewed the planning board section of the budget, which is the same as the previous year's budget except there will be training for new members in the miscellaneous line item.

The building inspection and health sections will be the same as the previous year's budget with salary increases.

E. Budget Committee

The committee discussed the budget committee expenses for 2016 and it was suggested that since there will be fewer meetings, that the minutes taker be paid more per meeting.

F. Treasurer

Joe Frazier reviewed the treasurer section of the budget, which has salary increases. The supplies will remain the same. He acquired a laptop from the town this year, where he keeps all the records separately. His departmental responsibilities include financial matters where there is income (some gross budgeting activity) concerning general funds, police department, recreation, water and sewer, conservation, transfer station, CDs, and bonds. Some of the areas require voter approval annually and some areas do not.

G. Other Budget Sections

The 2016 budget is projected to be \$118,436 higher, which is a 3.5% increase above last year's budget but the tax rate is only expected to increase by less than 1%. The wage expense increase is 2% but Workers Compensations, health insurance, property and liability insurance, dispatch service and criminal prosecution service increases are not yet known. The health insurance premium increase is currently anticipated at 6%.

There is offsetting additional revenue of \$103,000 from new construction taxes, sale of equipment, library revenue, and other revenue. After adding this revenue, the increase that needs new tax funding is \$15,000 or a .98% increase.

Town Administrator Samson's memo on the year-to-year budget variances showed major increases (total \$167,000) and decreases (\$141,000) anticipated in the 2016 town budget.

4. Other Budget Discussion

Town Administrator Mike Samson then reviewed major variances in the budget sections that are not scheduled to be reviewed by department heads in the October Budget Committee meeting.

The assessment section will increase \$9,000 for a new contracted appraiser. Data processing has a major increase in salary due to a change in a budget account line. Attorney fees will decrease as the electricity case should come to an end in the spring. The prosecutor fees will increase due to an increased number of arrests. The personal administration will reflect increases in the health insurance. The Workers Compensation refund is paid in the following year and testing for health and safety will increase by \$500. The drug testing is conducted at DHMC through Primex.

The government buildings account will put funds in capital reserve for repairs at the fire station and some work on the town office. The town garage also needs to accommodate keeping more vehicles warm in the winter. These needs will be addressed with a savings

of \$25,000 per year for a few years. Heating oil and gas were left the same as the previous budget to prevent a surprise increase in prices.

The increased health insurance and other insurance premiums are not known yet and more should be known in November. Regarding general government, the Committee discussed an increase in postage, which covers an increased amount of mailings to water and sewer. The postage is used in multiple departments and there should be enough funding for at the same level as the previous year's budget.

The bridge repair account will put money in reserve toward replacing two bridges in the future. There is also an increase in street lighting.

There was a discussion about the transfer station account and the plan to haul recyclables to Portland, Maine. The recyclable materials can be transported fewer times per month in a larger trailer.

There will be increases in the water and sewer account to install a water line and toilet, and acquiring a skid steer. The forklift and two balers will be sold for funds to acquire the skid steer. Mr. Samson also commented about the hazardous waste collection doing well with 8% participation in the first collection and a second collection is scheduled in October.

On the recreation budget, there is a \$7,500 increase in the director salary that should be covered by recreation revenue. Enfield is also paying for half of the recreation director salary.

Mr. Samson also stated that the town of Canaan is debt free and the Budget Committee expressed appreciation to the Select Board for the accomplishment.

On the sewer account there is some training, an electricity increase, and more testing and inspection costs. There is an increase in expenses but revenue has increased to cover it. The water account has an increase in chemical expense and a decrease in the capital improvements. It will bring about \$40,000 in annual revenue to cover the increased expenses. The new laundering business did not get preferable water prices. The race track and industrial park will be new water customers. The Committee discussed the town's water capacity and future possibilities with regard to the pipeline size and replacement of old lines in town.

3. Committee Action

Scott Borthwick made a motion to amend the April 2, 2015 Budget Committee meeting minutes, which was seconded by John Bergeron. The motion passed unanimously.

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Scott Borthwick made a motion to accept the April 2, 2015 Budget Committee meeting minutes as amended, which was seconded by John Bergeron. The motion passed unanimously.

The amendment was to replace in the document heading the day of the meeting with Thursday.

Budget Committee meetings are scheduled for October 15, November 19 and a December date to be determined.

4. Adjournment

Scott Borthwick made a motion which was seconded by John Bergeron to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 PM.