

**CANAAN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, July 26th, 2011**

The public meeting at the Meeting House was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Reagan. Others present: Selectman Scott Borthwick, Selectman Marcia Wilson and TA Michael Samson. Members of the public included Ann Labrie, Ed Labrie, Noel Everts, Julie Smith, Dudley Smith, Elizabeth Chabot, Bill Chabot, John Carr, Al Posnanski, Steve Ward, Laura Aberri, Bill Monroe, Tom Dakai, Alisa Harris, Steve Harris, Dave Sagi, Aaron Allen, Andrew Mulligan, Charles Townsend, Rick Evans, and Daryl Burtnett (Nature Conservancy).

Minutes of June 12, 2011

Motion by Marcia Wilson to approve the minutes. Second by Scott Borthwick.

Unanimously approved.

Mascoma Headwaters Protection Project

Daryl Burtnett, NH Director of the New Hampshire Chapter of the Nature Conservancy spoke on behalf of the project. It will protect 13,000 acres of forest land in Canaan, Dorchester, Lyme and Hanover. The project will include 3 phases. Phase 1 will establish 4,215 acres of permanently protected legacy forest in Canaan and Dorchester. Phase 2 will protect 3,845 acres of working forest in Canaan and New Hampshire. An additional 7,300 acres will border the property creating a total conservation area of 20,000 acres. There are plans to sell the property to the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge for management. Conte currently has holdings in Jefferson, Whitefield, Columbia and Colebrook. There will be no harvesting in the legacy forest area and motorized snow mobile traffic would be limited to the class 6 road and existing trails through that area. Much of the legacy land was posted previously and will be opened to hiking and other low impact activity. Current use taxes will continue to be paid while owned by Nature Conservancy and the working forest will be taxed on current use. If Conte acquires the forest, they usually make payments in lieu of taxes that are similar in amount to current use taxes. The Conservancy will try to sell the working forest. The working forest will have recreation easements even if sold. Nature Conservancy needs \$2.5 million and they have a pledge of \$1 million and have raised an additional \$200,000. Samson indicated that the current owner David Roby pays about \$17,000 in taxes but that the largest amount of the tax is on buildings that would be sold separately. About \$9,000 of the tax is on buildings, \$6,000 of the tax is on current use lands that will continue to be taxed on current use and about \$3,200 of the tax is on what would be about 2,400 acres of wilderness land and might be untaxed depending on the eventual owner. Rick Evans asked whether the \$3,200 includes the tax on yield. The answer was no. That was not calculated. He indicated that the timber tax should pay an additional \$3,000 on the legacy forest area if it was to continue to be harvested. He also indicated that harvesting was a better forest management practice and asked why there couldn't be harvesting. Burtnett indicated that the wilderness area would foster different species than the working forest and that this was a goal of the Conservancy. He also indicated that there was not an absolute ban on harvesting and that there might be limited harvests are required for good

husbandry. Evans indicated that stopping the harvesting in Canaan and Dorchester would remove 500,000 board feet of lumber from production and 2,800 tons of chips and would eliminate jobs for a sawyer, biomass plant worker, logger and trucker. Burnett indicated that other jobs related to the preservation may be created. There were concerns raised about horseback riding and snowmobile trail access being allowed.

Street Light Reduction

Bob Reagan indicated that he had heard from David Zani who asked that the two lights near Papa Z's be maintained since there is considerable foot traffic to the store. He also indicated that the Carter's would like to keep the light near their farm on the corner of Canaan Street just before the Canaan Center intersection. There were no further comments on the proposed plan. Scott Borthwick moved to terminate the street lights as warned and as owned by the Town except for the two by Papa Z's, the light by Carter's farm and the light at the end of Fox Hill Road. Marcia seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Rapid Infiltration Beds

Samson reported that the first two beds were nearly constructed and that the inspection by the engineers of the first two would be completed next week and we would start using them at that time. The second two would start construct at that time as well. We should make the August 15th completion date.

Tax Revaluation

Samson had prepared a spreadsheet analysis of the property revaluation that was completed last week. Notices of the new values would be going out this week and there would be an appeal process that should be complete by the end of August. Overall, there was roughly a 11% decrease in taxable property. The tax rate will increase because the value of property overall decreased. Some taxpayers will pay less taxes and a small percentage will pay more. The spreadsheet indicated which properties would show an actual increase in taxes paid and which would show a decrease. Generally, any taxpayers with an increased value over last year or with a lower value but less than 11% lower will see an increase in actual taxes paid. Several properties had new construction or new subdivisions which resulted in these increases. Most of the increases were for properties that border lakes and ponds or for larger commercial property.

Old Home Days Open Container

In keeping with past practice, the Open Container prohibition will be suspended from 6 PM to 11 PM on August 6th for Old Home Days. Motion by Scott Borthwick and second by Marcia Wilson. Unanimous approval.

Other Business

Alisa Harris asked why the speed limit was reduced on Back Bay. No one could answer the question and Mike indicated that he would check on the change. Samson handed out the Budget vs. Actual for the Board's review and indicated that we would walk through it on August 9th.

At 8:25 PM Selectman Borthwick made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Selectman Wilson and voted 3-0 by the Board.

Robert Reagan, Chairman

Scott Borthwick

Marcia Wilson
Canaan Board of Selectmen