

TOWN OF CANAAN
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
November 15, 2007
REVISED AND APPROVED MINUTES
Canaan Fire Station

Members present: Eleanor Davis, Denis Salvail, Shirley Packard, Russell Lester, Dave Barney, Jeff Majewski, Steve Purcell, Marty Pusey, David McAlister – Committee Chair, and Selectman Robert Reagan. Also present were Dexter Bucklin, Sam Frank, Matt Wilson, Amy Thurber, Beth Wolf, Joanna Carr, Cyndy Neily, and the minute taker, Christi Berube.

David McAlister called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. and took attendance.

Approval of Minutes

Committee members reviewed a draft copy of the November 1, 2007, minutes.

MOTION by Jeff Majewski and seconded by Shirley Packard to accept the minutes dated November 1, 2007, as corrected.

Dave Barney suggested that the statement on page two regarding pay for the Lake Hosts should read “the volunteer match rate is approximately \$18 per hour”.

Jeff Majewski clarified on page two that “residents pay for a lot of taxes that they do not necessarily use directly”.

Shirley Packard’s name was corrected on page five and Russell Lester’s name was corrected on page six.

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO 1 ABSTAIN [Marty Pusey]

Dave Barney requested that the minutes be posted on the town’s website. The minute taker offered to start correcting the minutes and forwarding them to Dave Barney for posting.

Budget Review

Dexter Bucklin explained the following adjustments made by the Board of Selectmen regarding the 2008 budget worksheet dated November 15, 2007: line item 01-4155.10-210 PA Health Insurance on page four was adjusted from \$313,500 to \$318,500 to account for the town’s “insurance buyout” policy, which was mistakenly omitted from the personnel policy; line item 01-416.10-520 INS Property & Liability on page five was adjusted to reflect the verbal quote of a seven percent increase from Local Government Center; line item 01-4312.20-110 HW FT Salaries on page eight was adjusted to \$240,000 to account for the heavy equipment operator position that was eliminated during the current year’s default budget; and line items 01-4324.10-390 and 01-4324.40-390 were increased to account for recently received changes in tipping fees.

PA Budget:

MOTION by Russell Lester and seconded by Steve Purcell to approve the adjusted bottom line figure of \$375,350 for the 2008 PA budget.

Dexter Bucklin explained that the \$313,500 figure only accounted for the current coverage of existing employees.

VOTE: 6 YES 4 NO [E. Davis, D. Salvail, J. Majewski, and S. Packard]
MOTION PASSED

Insurance Budget:

MOTION by Russell Lester and seconded by Steve Purcell to approve the adjusted bottom line figure of \$40,440 for the 2008 insurance budget.

VOTE: 9 YES 1 NO [S. Packard]
MOTION PASSED

Police Department Budget:

MOTION by Russell Lester and seconded by Jeff Majewski to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$449,613 for the police department budget.

Dave Barney asked why the Board of Selectmen chose to adjust the line items from what the department head had recommended. Dexter Bucklin responded that part of the difference is that the Board of Selectmen chose to allocate the overtime, holiday, and oncall pay differently. Dexter Bucklin also explained that all figures for full time salary lines were calculated according to the 2008 Wages handout.

Sam Frank explained that funds still exist in many of the budget line items since he has minimized any purchasing this year due to the default budget.

Sam Frank summarized that he needs \$9,000 in additional funds next year in order to rectify the pay discrepancy that a patrolman position is earning more per hour than a sergeant position with supervisory responsibilities.

Russell Lester asked what will happen if the proposed budget is defeated again. Sam Frank responded that the employees need to be taken care of and that he will cut the supplies and equipment purchasing if needed.

VOTE: 5 YES 5 NO [D. Barney, J. Majewski, S. Packard, R. Lester, and R. Reagan]
MOTION FAILS

MOTION by Denis Salvail and seconded by Marty Pusey to reduce the PD Outside Duty Salary line item by \$20,000.

There was general discussion and consensus that the town administrator should provide information to the Budget Committee regarding a revolving fund for the outside duty revenue for review.

VOTE: 6 YES 4 NO [D. Barney, R. Lester, S. Purcell, and R Reagan]
MOTION PASSED

Sam Frank clarified that the police department has three tazers at this time and that seven more are needed.

Jeff Majewski suggested that funds should be allocated to rectify the pay discrepancy between sergeant and patrol positions. Jeff Majewski offered to make a motion to include these funds if the correct budget figure is calculated. There was general consensus to table a vote on the recommended motion until Sam Frank has calculated the appropriate line item figure.

Mechanic Budget:

MOTION by Shirley Packard and seconded by Russell Lester to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$131, 934 for the mechanic budget.

Shirley Packard asked whether Larry Brabant burns used oil at the garage. There was general discussion that storing oil in an open barrel is illegal and that the garage can only store a set volume of used oil.

VOTE: 8 YES 2 NO [E. Davis and D. Salvail]
MOTION PASSED

Road Agent Salary line items:

MOTION by Russell Lester and seconded by David McAlister to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$49,925 for the Road Agent salary line items.

VOTE: 9 YES 1 NO [E. Davis]
MOTION PASSED

Highway Budget:

MOTION by Russell Lester and seconded by David McAlister to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$365,000 for the highway budget.

Dale Morse expressed concern that the Board of Selectmen's recommendation of \$12,000 for the supplies line item is not enough since the blades for the plow trucks will cost \$7,000.

Russell Lester explained to Dale Morse that his department head budget should have recommended \$240,000 for the HW FT Salaries line item since the salary for the heavy equipment operator position was removed during the adjustment to the default budget.

A vote was not taken on this motion.

MOTION by Dave Barney and seconded by Russell Lester to increase the HW supplies line item from \$12,000 to \$17,000 for the 2008 highway budget.

VOTE: 9 YES 1 NO [S. Packard]

MOTION PASSED

MOTION by Dave Barney and seconded by David McAlister to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$370,000 for the highway budget.

VOTE: 8 YES 2 NO [S. Packard and D. Salvail]

MOTION PASSED

Highway Budget [line items 01-4312.10-390 through 01-4312.42-610]:

MOTION by Russell Lester and seconded by David McAlister to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$460,000 for the highway budget.

Dale Morse asked why the allocation for the road salt was reduced when the cost has increased \$5 per delivered ton.

The vote was tabled at this time.

MOTION by Dave Barney and seconded by Eleanor Davis to increase the HW Road Reconstruction line item from \$150,000 to \$200,000.

Dave Barney suggested that additional funds are needed now that a road maintenance plan exists.

Russell Lester suggested that additional funds may not need to be appropriated if the block grant funds are being encumbered for next year.

Jeff Majewski suggested that any recommendation for additional highway reconstruction funds should be requested in a warrant article.

Eleanor Davis suggested that the additional highway reconstruction funds should be allocated for in the operating budget at this time in case a warrant article is not drafted. The funds can be removed anytime during the budget review process.

VOTE: 4 YES 6 NO [D. McAlister, D. Salvail, S. Packard, J. Majewski, S. Purcell, and M. Pusey]

MOTION by Russell Lester and seconded by David McAlister to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$460,000 for the highway budget.

VOTE: 7 YES 3 NO [M. Pusey, E. Davis, and D. Barney]

MOTION PASSED

MOTION by Jeff Majewski and seconded by Dave Barney to recommend that the Board of Selectmen establish a warrant article of \$50,000 for highway reconstruction.

VOTE: 7 YES 3 NO [S. Packard, S. Purcell, and R. Reagan]

MOTION PASSED

Police Budget:

Sam Frank summarized that \$213,002 needs to be allocated in the HW FT salaries line item in order to rectify the pay discrepancy between the sergeant and patrol positions.

MOTION by Dave Barney and seconded by Jeff Majewski to increase the PD Salaries FT line item from \$210,535 to \$213,002.

VOTE: 7 YES 3 NO [S. Purcell, D. Salvail and E. Davis]

MOTION PASSED

MOTION by Dave Barney and seconded by David McAlister to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$447,880 for the police budget.

VOTE: 7 YES 3 NO [S. Packard, D. Salvail and E. Davis]

MOTION PASSED

Emergency Management Budget:

MOTION by Jeff Majewski and seconded by Dave Barney to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$51,120 for the emergency management budget.

VOTE: Unanimous in the affirmative

MOTION PASSED

Library Budget:

MOTION by Dave Barney and seconded by Jeff Majewski to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$123,500 for the library budget.

A vote was not taken on this motion.

MOTION by Steve Purcell and seconded by Russell Lester to reduce the proposed 2008 library budget from \$123,000 to \$117,200.

Beth Wolf clarified that the library has received grant funding and a generous gift from the Friends of Mascoma for book purchases and that the \$6,300 server will most likely be purchased with this year's budget funds.

Dexter Bucklin noted that the insurance costs for the library budget needs to be adjusted.

VOTE: 9 YES 1 NO [S. Packard]

MOTION PASSED

MOTION by Steve Purcell and seconded by Russell Lester to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$117,200 for the library budget.

VOTE: 8 YES 2 NO [S. Packard and D. Salvail]

MOTION PASSED

Fire Department Budget:

MOTION by Russell Lester and seconded by David McAlister to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$80,785 for the fire department budget.

VOTE: 8 YES 2 NO [D. Salvail and E. Davis]

MOTION PASSED

Transfer Station Budget:

MOTION by Russell Lester and seconded by David McAlister to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$223,733 for the transfer station budget.

Dexter Bucklin noted earlier in the meeting that an invitation for bids has been placed regarding hauling services and tipping fees.

VOTE: 8 YES 2 NO [E. Davis and D. Salvail]

MOTION PASSED

Recreation Budget:

MOTION by Russell Lester and seconded by Marty Pusey to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$27,135 for the recreation budget.

Dexter Bucklin explained that there is an agreement that the personnel at the Transfer Station will be collecting the trash from the parks and beach next year.

Dexter Bucklin also explained that the \$17,000 in the REC Hourly PT line item includes funds for field maintenance and for summer programming.

VOTE: 8 YES 2 NO [D. Salvail and E. Davis]
MOTION PASSED

Debt Service Budget:

MOTION by Dave Barney and seconded by Jeff Majewski to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$242,526 for the debt service budget.

Eleanor Davis requested a copy of the debt service schedule.

VOTE: Unanimous in the affirmative
MOTION PASSED

Improvements Other Than Buildings Budget:

MOTION by Russell Lester and seconded by David McAlister to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$1 for the improvements other than buildings budget.

VOTE: 9 YES 1 NO [E. Davis]
MOTION PASSED

Water and Sewer Budget:

Dexter Bucklin summarized that consideration is needed as to whether the water and sewer rates should be increased for next year.

Russell Lester suggested that the total water and sewer budget figure should be cut at this time since more funds have been appropriated than needed during the past few years. Dexter Bucklin responded that he would not advise cutting the water and sewer budgets at this time due to the current water and sewer studies and the culvert repair needed on Orange Brook.

MOTION by Denis Salvail and seconded by Eleanor Davis to reduce the total water and sewer budget figure of \$155,249 to \$135,249.

There was general discussion that it is technically the Budget Committee's responsibility to fill out and submit the MS-7 form.

VOTE: 8 YES 2 NO [D. Barney and J. Majewski]
MOTION PASSED

Ambulance Budget:

MOTION by Dave Barney and seconded by Russell Lester to approve a 2008 budget appropriation of \$55,000 for the ambulance budget.

VOTE: 7 YES 3 NO [E. Davis, S. Packard, and D. Salvail]
MOTION PASSED

Other Business

Russell Lester noted that the warrant articles need to be available before the Public Hearing.

Shirley Packard requested a copy of the SB2 timeline for budget preparation.

Dave Barney asked when the Board of Selectmen will complete their recommendations for capital item purchases. Dexter Bucklin responded that deferring capital purchases until another year may be appropriate.

David McAlister noted that the next meeting is scheduled for November 29th. The agenda will include review of revenues, the default budget, and capital item recommendations.

There was general reference made to the public minutes dated January 4th, 2007, whether the Budget Committee took any action regarding the default budget last year.

There was general discussion whether lease purchases should be presented in warrant articles or in the operating budget and then whether lease purchases become part of the default budget.

There was no Chairman's Report or Selectmen's Report provided at this time. Robert Reagan noted that there have been several angry residents at the past Board of Selectmen meetings.

Dexter Bucklin noted that Mr. LaBie, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Hudgens, and Mr. Rudder have applied for the opening Selectmen position.

MOTION by Steve Purcell and seconded by David McAlister to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 P.M.

VOTE: Unanimous in the affirmative