

TOWN OF CANAAN
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
January 10, 2008
Public Hearing
Approved March 20, 2008
Canaan Fire Station

Members present: Eleanor Davis, Denis Salvail, Shirley Packard, Russell Lester, Dave Barney, Jeff Majewski, Steve Purcell, David McAlister – Committee Chair, and Selectman Robert Reagan. Also present were Dexter Bucklin, Sam Frank, Al Posnanski, Brenda Souza, Matt Wilson, Phillip Savail, Cindy Neily, Jackie Lary, and the minute taker; Christi Berube.

David McAlister called the Public Hearing to order at 7:02 P.M. David McAlister asked audience members to sign the attendance sheet and to step to the microphone before speaking. Dave McAlister noted that any amendments or reconsiderations will be reviewed by the Budget Committee for recommendation after the Public Hearing is adjourned.

Copies of the 2008 Budget Worksheet dated January 10, 2008, and copies of the warrant articles were distributed for public review. David McAlister asked committee members to take turns and summarize each section of the proposed 2008 budget, as was assigned to them. Eleanor Davis explained that the figures presented in the 2007 Budget column is the default budget that was used last year and that the figures presented in the 2007 Budget Town Meeting column was the Budget Committee's proposed budget for last year.

Eleanor Davis noted the following: the EX Administrative Support line item includes funds for the webmaster and that minute taker; software and hardware costs have been reallocated in various sections of the budget; salary increases of three percent are included in the budget; the Town Clerk needs a new printer and headphone set in order to satisfy state reporting requirements; there are three elections next year to administer; and health insurance costs increased ten percent.

Jeff Majewski noted that the ambulance service had to hire a full time individual in order to guarantee day coverage.

Sam Frank asked whether a new position was established in the highway department. Dexter Bucklin responded no and explained that only current positions have been filled.

Marty Pusey noted the following: the REC Hourly PT includes forty percent of the town's mowing costs for the recreation fields; that she has a copy of the library budget if anyone is interested in knowing the breakdown of the budget figures; that the proposed library server will be purchased with last year's budgeted funds since a grant was received for book purchases; funds allocated for CUL Other Recreation are used for Old

Home Days; and funds allocated for PAT Patriotic are used for the holiday wreath and flags.

Russell Lester explained that figures listed under the DS Interest on Tax Ant Notes heading are funds that are borrowed to pay bills between the town's two tax collection periods. Brenda Souza asked how the town administration expects to pay back these larger loans when the prior administration has had a difficult time repaying smaller loans in the past.

Eleanor Davis noted that a public hearing for special revolving funds needs to be completed on a specific number of days prior to the vote. There was general discussion that Dexter Bucklin and Eleanor Davis have conflicting information and that legal advice may need to be requested.

Committee members reviewed the warrant articles. There was general note that Article 3 was recommended by the Budget Committee with a five yes and four no vote. The Budget Committee vote on Article 6 was revised to nine yes and zero no. It was corrected that the Budget Committee does not recommend Article 10 and that the vote should be corrected to five yes and five no. The vote for Article 11 was also revised to nine yes and zero no. The vote for Article 12 was also corrected to seven yes and three no. Eleanor Davis explained that a cemetery custodian is an appointed position under the direction of the Cemetery Trustees and that a cemetery agent is an elected position.

Sam Frank summarized that he is present to answer any committee member questions regarding the proposed article to make the part-time police secretary position a full time position. Sam Frank added that the position is not receiving a salary increase.

Sam Frank asked committee members to comment why they do not support the warrant article. David McAlister explained that he is not willing to set this position as a full time position with life insurance and retirement benefits at this time. Shirley Packard responded that she did not understand the \$1,950 figure proposed and no one was able to answer her questions. Marty Pusey responded that the proposal appears to be a special deal for one individual and that any proposal should be based on the need for the position. Eleanor Davis summarized that she has been misled and misinformed about extra hours paid to this position and that she can not support or trust most of the budget that has been presented to her. Russell Lester explained that the part-time position helps reduce the final budget cost and that the budget needs cost containment at this time. Denis Savail commented that the final budget figure is too high to accept and that he will not support another full time position.

Sam Frank noted that the police department has had a fifteen percent increase in workload with the same staffing numbers and that he needs additional administrative support.

Jeff Majewski requested that another vote to reconsider the recommendation be done. Jeff Majewski summarized that the number of hours presented in the warrant article has

been corrected since the first vote and that another vote should be taken with the correct information. David McAlister offered to reconsider the vote after the Public Hearing is adjourned.

There was general note that Article 14 was recommended by the Budget Committee with a seven yes and three no vote.

Al Posnanski informed committee members that recycled materials earned \$51,285 this year and that \$20, 958 of that total was actually received by the town. Al Posnanski noted that this information is not reflected in the budget. Al Posnanski added that the new compacter has increased efficiency since it enables more material to be packed per load. Marty Pusey commented that the report distributed recently was very comprehensive and helpful information.

David McAlister adjourned the Public Hearing at 8:14 P.M.

MOTION by Dave Barney and seconded by Jeff Majewski to recommend Article 13 on the warrant.

VOTE: **4 YES** [Dave Barney, Jeff Majewski, Steve Purcell, and Robert Reagan]
6 NO

There was general discussion and consensus that the Budget Committee will meet immediately after the Deliberative Session at the elementary school if any amendments are made. The Deliberative Session is scheduled February 2nd at 1 P.M.

MOTION by Jeff Majewski and seconded by Steve Purcell to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 P.M.

VOTE: **Unanimous in the affirmative**