

Canaan Budget Committee Meeting
Thursday, October 2, 2014
Canaan Fire Station, Canaan, NH

Attendees: Budget Committee members: John Bergeron, Scott Borthwick, Ellie Davis, Al Posnanski, Denis Salvail, Philip Smith Jr., Sadie Wells; Budget Committee members not in attendance: William Crowther, Patty Duszynski, Martha Pusey. Public attendees: Bill Bellion, Sam Frank, Joe Frazier, Vicky McAlister, Nelson Therriault, Matt Wilson. 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. Town Clerk

Town Clerk Vicky McAlister reviewed the budget in her area. There are increases for postage due to the certified lien mailings and the staff salaries are increasing 2% across the board in Canaan.

3. Fire Department

Chief Bill Bellion spoke about the Fire Department budget, which is dependent on the number of calls made. He is anticipating more calls in the coming year. The most significant increase in expenses is for the SCBA tanks but they are reapplying for FEMA grants to cover the costs. There will be an increase of \$2,000 in the chief's salary to compensate for the excessive time involved in the position.

4. Police Department

Chief Sam Frank discussed the proposed budget for the Police Department citing that the net will be no increase in the bottom line. He distributed a document that included charts and statistics on the number of arrests, calls, felonies, and a comparison with other police departments in the region. An additional full time officer is needed. He stated that the load of the police department is a challenge with the minimal staff level to accomplish the paperwork and court time as well as increase exposure in the community.

Town Administrator Samson said the Select Board asked for four conditions in exchange for the police department's additional full time officer including that he be fully certified, that the roster be reduced by two part time people, that 1,000 hours be cut from the part time employees, and that no additional cruiser be acquired. The chief stated that the part time staff includes the police department secretary. The committee also discussed police retirement funding issues. The chief salary will be increased in the budget to bring it more in line with other similar positions in the state.

5. Welfare

Nelson Therriault reviewed the Canaan welfare efforts reporting 41 cases that include 9 new cases. There are budget increases for fuel and rent as more people are in need of help and the cost of rent is higher.

6. Treasurer

Treasurer Joe Frazier has made access to the town accounting more accessible and next year's budget is very similar to this year. The accounting for the transfer station was discussed. The Treasurer was invited to attend the Canaan Budget Committee meetings.

7. Other Budget Discussion

Town Administrator Mike Samson reviewed the revolving accounts including the private duty and recreation department. In general, the private duty account offsets between income and expense. The recreation account has self funding programs and generates about \$5,000 annually for the Canaan Hall activities, which is used 2-3 times per week. There is currently \$22,000 in the recreation account, which is projected to end the year with a balance of about \$10,000. There is a need to increase the recreation department by \$4-5,000 per year.

Samson then reviewed the remaining proposed 2015 budget accounts that had not been looked at:

TA: The Town Administrator will receive a \$6,000 salary increase to bring the salary in line with other similar administrators in the state.

FA: There will be a reduction in the auditor services.

DP: There is a \$2,000 increase for computer repair support and software updates.

LE: The amount for legal court cases is increased by \$40,000 primarily for the electric case and there's a \$2,000 increase for the prosecutor expense.

PA: There is a significant \$53,000 reduction in health insurance and a workers compensation increase of \$3,000.

GB: The Government Buildings involves the town museum, library, exteriors of the police and fire stations and so on. There's a \$2,000 decrease in water and sewer. The inspection expenses are higher.

INS: An increase of \$3,600 for insurance premiums was cited.

GG: General Government has increases in office supplies, telephone/Internet expense, and advertising.

EM: Emergency Management will be looked at later in the budget process.

The Bridge Inspection will be restored and Street Lighting is up \$2,000.

TS: The Transfer Station has a reduction in hauling and an increase in part time staff and fuel costs. Al Posnanski was invited to work with the town administrator to align the semantics in the budget account documents.

REC: The Recreation Department director budget salary was increased by \$2,500.

The Committee discussed the Goose Pond funds that are used for education and the portable toilet. The Capital Reserves changes are based on the CIP Report.

The Water Server budget is reduced by \$17,000 and there's a salary increase for a part time employee for \$2,500. Capital Improvements for the sewer is reduced by \$12,000 while inspections are reduced by \$2,600 and contracted services are reduced by \$2,000.

Samson also cited the user fee increase \$125,000 and the septage increase \$19,500. The plan is to increase the water/sewer capital reserves without increase the fees.

Scott Borthwick reported that the Select Board will set the tax rate at the end of the month. The school budget was reported with a \$1.20 increase in the tax rate without including the school renovation project costs.

8. Adjournment

Denis Salvail made a motion which was seconded by Sadie Wells to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 PM.

Upcoming meetings: October 16, November 6 and 20, and December 4 and 18. On Wednesday, January 14, 2015 the Budget Committee will meet to vote on the Warrant Articles and then on Thursday, January 15, 2015 the Budget Committee will hold a public hearing.