

Canaan Budget Committee Meeting  
Thursday, September 21, 2017  
Canaan Fire Station, Canaan, NH

Attendees: Budget Committee members: John Bergeron, Ellie Davis, Patty Duszynski, Stephen Freese, Jamie Jukosky, Al Posnanski, Mike Riese, Philip Smith Jr., Sadie Wells; Budget Committee members not in attendance: Denis Salvail, Canaan Town position holders: Barbara Hayward, Vicky McAlister, Nelson Therriault, 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 and took attendance.

**2. Committee Discussion**

Town Administrator Mike Samson distributed two budget documents that included the 2017 Approved Budget, Year to Date Expended, 2017 Encumbrance and Balance, line item budget variances, and the proposed 2018 Budget for town expenses; and an overview memo citing unassigned fund balance, 1.1% increase in the tax base this year, and a list of significant expense variances.

Mike Samson explained the budget process in Canaan and stated that payroll will increase by 3%, but the proposed increase still must be adopted by the Selectboard. There would also be increases in retirement. Payroll has been juggled in some departments with staffing in the data processing, cemetery, and executive support. The fire chief has been underpaid and he will retire within a few years so there was an attempt to bring that salary up to be more comparable to other similarly sized towns. This staff salary issue is also a factor in other town positions.

A. Welfare: Nelson Therriault reviewed the welfare section of the budget. There were 29 cases in 2016 for assistance (rent, electric, fuel) and 72 people who needed help. In 2017 there have been 31 cases and 76 people to date including 14 new cases and 27 new people. Food assistance has benefited by aid at the pantries.

B. Town Clerk and Elections - Vicky McAlister reviewed the town clerk and election sections of the proposed Canaan budget for 2018. There are 3 elections next year. There are increases for mortgage search, software, and salaries. Mike Samson explained the "in and out" nature of money in some of the account activity. Ms. McAlister explained the mortgage process, liens, deed notices, and forbearance agreements. There is such activity on about 10-15 homes each year.

C. Cemetery

Barbara Hayward reviewed the cemetery section of the budget. There will be salary increases and a full time position during the summer. The in and out money was explained. The burial pricing, lots, and deeds were explained and the mapping project

was described. The funding for the mapping project can be encumbered and used for one additional year.

#### D. Planning Board

John Bergeron reviewed the planning board section of the budget, which is the same as the previous year's budget. Most of the fees are in and out money paid for various service fees. Mike Samson spoke about using Mosaic to provide layered plans which is used instead of the preferred GIS.

#### E. Treasurer

There is no significant change to the treasurer line item in the budget.

#### F. Building Inspector and Health

The building inspection and health sections have increased salary. It is anticipated that there will be changes in the permit system used in Canaan and Mike Samson spoke about the issue. In the health line item, the funding applies to state regulations on safety for example in daycare centers or rental unit landlord-tenant issues. They are 7-8 cases per year.

#### G. Budget Committee

The committee discussed the budget committee expenses for 2018 and it was suggested that since there will be fewer meetings, that the minutes taker be paid \$150 per meeting as requested.

#### H. Town Administration

Town Administrator Samson's memo on the year-to-year budget variances showing the most significant increases anticipated in the 2018 proposed town budget.

The increased health insurance and other insurance premiums are not known yet and more should be known in November. Samson explained that the town may not exceed the gross budget that is passed by voters and the budget has placeholders for some line items. No new budget purposes are allowed by state law. Funding can be moved around if necessary.

#### I. Financial Administration

Gloria Koch's position and significance on bookkeeping for the town were explained. She prepares for the audit work and provides information to the treasurer. It is important that she attend training for new state regulations and keep current with software contracts.

#### J. Assessing

The assessment department process is expected to be reviewed before November and there may be changes. The tax mapping is expected to be on line by the end of the year. Samson spoke about DRA valuation as a significant factor for Canaan taxes.

**K. Data Processing**

Sharon Duffey runs the town website and the flash email, which is subscribed by 900 households in Canaan. Some of her salary comes from the Administrative Support line item in the budget. She is also working on the town filing system to access all old documents so they are indexed in the computer. Allen Treadwell also works on IT in the DP equipment upgrades line item. There has been a need to replace computer equipment destroyed during electrical storms to the tune of about \$39,000.

L. Higher legal costs are anticipated as the utility assessment case continues with about a million dollars in revenue at stake annually. There is proposed legislation on this matter that would benefit the utility companies. Another legal area involves enforcement of violations pertaining to, for example junkyards and septic systems. More effective methodologies are needed to enforce rules on these matters.

M. Government Buildings has increased salaries and a separate line for cleaning to be done at all government buildings.

N. General Government has little changes on supplies, mileage, telephone, etc.

O. The Emergency Management will have an increase of dispatch costs from Hanover.

P. The Transfer Station has reduced expenses in processing and transportation using an outlet in Maine. Canaan has one of the largest net profits on recycling in the state. Certification requires training. Household hazardous waste was mentioned and the increased cost of fuel is anticipated.

Q. The Recreation budget covers about a quarter of the salary of the Director, (shared with Enfield). The recreation programs generate fees and additional netted funds can be directed toward the director's salary. The history of the Canaan recreation department was explained and successful after school programs were cited. The Lake and Goose Pond Recreation Association line items were cited.

**3. Other Business**

It was decided to table approval of the March Budget meeting minutes.

Budget Committee meetings are scheduled for October 19, November 16 (if necessary) and on December 21. The Warrant Articles and other items for the Public Hearing preparation will be on January 10, 2018 and the Budget Committee Public Hearing will be held on January 11, 2018.

**4. Adjournment**

**Sadie Wells made a motion which was seconded by Philip Smith to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.** The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.