

**TOWN OF CANAAN
CANAAN SELECTMEN MEETING
January 2, 2007
Canaan Fire Station**

Selectmen present: Robert Reagan, Kristina Burnett, and Jay Waldner. Also present were Dana Hadley, David Heath, Eleanor Davis, William Bellion, Christi Berube, and other members of the public.

Robert Reagan called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Warrant Article for a Command Vehicle

There was general discussion and consensus to include a warrant article requesting the transfer of the Ford Expedition from the Police Department to the Fire Chief as a command vehicle. William Bellion explained that he would prefer to have a used vehicle at this time so that he can evaluate his usage and mileage of a command vehicle before requesting the purchase of a new vehicle. William Bellion suggested that a crew cab pickup with a cap may prove to be a better match after he builds a history with the Ford Expedition. It was suggested that the Town of Canaan could start reserving funds for the future outright purchase of a command vehicle. William Bellion explained that he carries a tremendous quantity of emergency supplies and equipment in his personal vehicle and that access to a command vehicle would be helpful. William Bellion added that no federal or state reimbursement funds were available during the past windstorms and floods since the truck that he was using was his own personal truck and not a town vehicle. Robert Reagan suggested that more taxpayers may approve the warrant article if the trade-in value of the Ford Expedition is known. William Bellion estimated that he uses 4,000 miles per year to fulfill his responsibilities as Emergency Management Director and Fire Chief.

Dana Hadley clarified that January 29th is the last day to submit warrant articles. Robert Reagan offered to help Dana Hadley create the final draft for the warrant.

Approval of the Minutes

The Board of Selectmen reviewed the minutes dated December 19, 2006.

MOTION by Kristina Burnett and seconded by Robert Reagan to approve the minutes dated December 19, 2006, as corrected.

The misspelling of "cooperate".

It was suggested that "U.S. Route 4" be added to the section regarding sidewalk maintenance.

VOTE: 2 YES 1 ABSTAIN (Jay Waldner)

2007 Warrant Articles

Dana Hadley noted that a few additional warrant articles have been added since the last review.

Warrant Article Regarding the Proposal for Anticipated Zoning Costs

Dana Hadley explained that the Budget Committee voted to remove from the 2007 budget all funds associated that had been included in the Planning Board budget in anticipation of costs associated with zoning and they further suggested that these funds be placed in a warrant article. The funds that the Budget Committee eliminated from the budget totaled \$5,999. As a result, Dana Hadley cautioned that the Planning Board budget could be overspent next year. Dana Hadley also commented that he is not confident whether the \$5,999 is an accurate figure for these anticipated costs.

Eleanor Davis explained that the Budget Committee took this action since the budget would be "padded" with additional funds if the proposal for zoning is defeated.

Selectman Jay Waldner was asked as the Selectmen's representative to the Planning Board to review and discuss with them the budgetary request.

Article 6

Dana Hadley suggested that this warrant article regarding property tax exemption may be needed due to the revaluation. Jay Waldner suggested that some calculations are needed to figure out what actions would reestablish the status quo.

Dana Hadley noted that many figures currently present in this draft of the warrant need to be updated.

Article 5

Jay Waldner suggested that the explanation should include an anticipated date of when a fire truck will be purchased.

Article 9

Dana Hadley noted that the Noise Ordinance Committee will be meeting on Monday to review the article before the Public Hearing on Tuesday.

Article 10

There was general discussion if a Public Works position was to be approved it might change the structure of the organization and require a foreman position would be needed in the Highway Department. It is possible that a foreman position could be filled by a current member of the staff. If that were to be the case it may be necessary to hire a laborer.

The differences between an appointed position and an elected position were discussed. There was clarification that the actions and responsibilities of the Road Agent are overseen by the Board of Selectmen but that the actions and responsibilities of the Police Chief are directed by statutes.

Robert Reagan commented that the Board of Selectmen would have the next year to advertise and review resumes and references for a new Public Works Director position if this warrant article is approved. There was general discussion that the person hired for this position should have the qualifications to provide input on building issues and sewer and water system issues. There was general consensus that some research is needed in order to appropriately title this position. Some titles suggested were Superintendent and Public Works Director.

Article 11

There was general consensus to discuss this article next week when Chief Sam Frank is present. It was suggested that the explanations of Articles 10 and 11 should include a date when the change is anticipated.

Article 12

Dana Hadley explained that a statute exists that permits an additional fee, of up to five dollars, on vehicle registrations if the funds are specified for a use (i.e. transfer station or side walk maintenance). Dana Hadley noted that there are approximately 5000 vehicle registrations done at the town office each year. It was suggested that calculations should be done as to how much side walk maintenance could be completed with the funds collected. Jay Waldner requested a copy of the statute. There was general consensus that the fee should not exceed two dollars.

There was general consensus to discuss Articles 13 and 14 at the next meeting when Chief Sam Frank is present.

Article 15

Jay Waldner said the correction for the Bear Pond Road layout is not necessary to be placed on the Town Warrant and the Board had general consensus to remove Article 15 from the warrant.

There was general discussion whether the Town of Canaan should purchase the Cozy Corner property. There was general consensus that a specific plan for usage is needed before taxpayers would approve the purchase. There was general agreement that the Cozy Corner property has parking that is a vital asset for the downtown area.

Jay Waldner suggested that a warrant article should be drafted regarding the establishment of a town meeting form of government. Dana Hadley suggested that moving the meeting date has advantages. Eleanor Davis commented that the current January deadline is difficult for the Budget Committee to meet and that a town meeting form of government would reestablish a February deadline.

Eleanor Davis suggested that starting the fiscal year on July 1st would eliminate the current practice of utilizing funds three months before the actual budget is approved. A July 1st to June 30th fiscal year would also coincide with the fiscal years of the State of NH and the school district. Dana Hadley clarified that an eighteen month budget would be needed in order to implement a change.

After some discussion regarding the advantages and disadvantages of Senate Bill 2, there was general discussion to draft a warrant article to propose a change to a town meeting form of government but that a proposal to change the fiscal year is too much to consider at this time.

Safety Committee

Dana Hadley summarized that the committee is currently drafting a manual and policy regarding building safety. David Heath requested direction from the Board of Selectmen regarding scope, purpose, and funding for this project.

Dana Hadley suggested that the committee should consider which training courses would benefit employees and the Town of Canaan. There was general discussion and consensus to invite a representative from Primex or Local Government Center for guidance on the project.

Kristina Burnett suggested that committees in other towns review accident reports as a way of addressing safety issues and preventing reoccurrences.

A review of the manual was tentatively scheduled for next March.

NH Public Works Training Council

The Board of Selectmen reviewed a letter dated December 18, 2006, from the NH Public Works Training Council regarding opportunities for hands-on training. Dana Hadley noted that the organization has a \$150 membership fee. There was general consensus to ask Earl Charbono whether he or the town employees have any interest in the courses that the council is offering.

Cyclical Revaluation Contract

The Board of Selectmen reviewed a five year contract with Cross Country Appraisal Co. for a cyclical revaluation. Dana Hadley noted that he is anticipating a technical release and approval from the Department of Revenue Administration. Dana Hadley added that this five year contract does provide a net savings compared to the last contract.

Jay Waldner asked if there were advantages for a five year contract. Dana Hadley responded that the contract locks the rate that the Town will pay and will be a valuable tool for budgeting.

Dana Hadley clarified that the contract language does not include the “pick-ups” (i.e. new construction, building permits, and subdivisions). There was general discussion and consensus to negotiate the inclusion of a letter of understanding that the contract includes the “pick-up” work.

Buildings Maintenance Report

The Board of Selectmen reviewed Tom Guillette’s report regarding building maintenance. There was general discussion regarding the poor condition of the museum pillars and the difficulty of securing a quote for repair work. It was suggested that Dana Hadley should consult with John Bergeron and Jim Garvin regarding repair options.

Board of Tax and Land Appeals

The Board of Selectmen reviewed the confirmation from the Board of Tax and Land appeals regarding the date that the 2006 Canaan Taxes were sent out. This is an important date should a tax payer apply for an abatement.

Local Government Center

The Board of Selectmen reviewed an invoice for 2007 services from the Local Government Center.

Evans Lane Property Issue

The Board of Selectmen reviewed a letter sent to Roger Grace from the NHDES in response to a concern raised by Mr. Grace regarding a failed septic system at the property next to his on Evans Lane. This property is currently vacant after a

foreclosure and is being marketed with a realtor from Warner, N.H. Dana Hadley added that he has spoken with the realtor regarding this issue and it is understood that septic system at this property will need to be repaired or replaced.

Other

Dana Hadley noted that the committee continues to work on the updates for the personnel handbook and that a meeting is scheduled on January 18, 2007, with Barry Cox of Local Government Center.

Dana Hadley informed the Board of Selectmen that he has been unsuccessful at finding a student intern from a law school to help him update and codify the Town Office's Code and Ordinance Book. Several community members were suggested for this project.

Other items noted on the agenda included: survey work is underway regarding the Transfer Station; mailings regarding the junk yard ordinance are scheduled for the week of January 8th; and a committee needs to be chosen to draft park use rules.

Dana Hadley noted that he is meeting with the department heads tomorrow to discuss their articles for the newsletter. There was general discussion that Tom and Myra Opiel have offered printing and mailing services for the newsletter but that no formal proposal has been submitted. It was suggested that the newsletter should include articles regarding the warrant articles.

There was general discussion regarding Earl Charbono's agreement with Richard Remacle to crush and reserve gravel for 2007 and the claim that some of this gravel was actually utilized in 2006. It was suggested that a consult may be needed with Bob Anderson at the Department of Revenue Administration. There was general discussion that the 2005 floods depleted the town's supply of gravel and that gravel has increased to nine dollars per yard.

Eleanor Davis informed the Board of Selectmen that the Budget Committee approved the following motion at their last meeting: "Motion by Martha Pusey and seconded by Dave Barney to request the Board of Selectmen to consult with Richard Remacle and the Road Agent regarding the delivery to the town and the use of highway materials in 2006 but not paid for or encumbered in 2006."

Jay Waldner commented that there is general consensus of the Board of Selectmen that materials should be paid for when acquired and that materials should be used in the budgeted year.

Eleanor Davis requested the approved figures from the Board of Selectmen for the following 2007 budget: the bottom line figure for the 2007 budget, the total for the ambulance budget, the total for the advertising and regional agencies budget, the total for the Budget Committee budget, and the total for the capital outlay budget. Eleanor Davis noted that the Public Hearing is scheduled January 11th. There was general discussion and concerns expressed regarding the amount of debt service that the capital outlay budget could create. The Board of Selectmen agreed to meet at 7:30 A.M. on Thursday morning to review the budgets listed above that have not been approved.

The following items were circulated for signatures from the Board of Selectmen: two purchase orders from the Road Agent; authorization for a timber cut; authorization for property abatements; and two manifests.

MOTION by Kristina Burnett and seconded by Jay Waldner to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 P.M.

VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted,
Christi Berube, Minute Taker
Minutes Accepted by the Board of Selectmen on February 6, 2007