

TOWN OF CANAAN
CANAAN SELECTMEN MEETING
May 1, 2007
Canaan Senior Citizen Center

Selectmen present: Robert Reagan, Kristina Burnett, and Jay Waldner. Also present were Dana Hadley, Grafton County Commissioner Martha Richard, Jim Miller, Phillip Salvail, Al Posnanski, Eleanor Davis, Edward Provencal and the minute taker Christi Berube.

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

Appointments:

The scheduled meeting with Paul Savchick regarding gravel deposits on town owned property was postponed. It was suggested that Road Agent, Dale Morse should be present when the Board meets with Mr. Savchick.

Dana Hadley welcomed and introduced Grafton County Commissioner, Martha Richard. She summarized the proposed county budget which has increased twenty percent. The increase is due to health care costs, state retirement costs; pass through from state government and updating the county jail. There was general discussion that county employees contribute fifteen to twenty percent of their health insurance premium. Consulting fees for a new corrections facility has also affected the county's expenses. Martha Richard summarized that the current proposal for the new jail is to have 240 beds.

Martha Richard summarized that the courthouse and various farm buildings are in need of repairs after many years of unbudgeted funds for repairs.

Martha Richard invited town officials and residents to attend the Public Hearing for the county budget on May 21st at 6 P.M.

Martha Richard explained that the county tax rate is set by the Department of Revenue and is based on the town's property values. Last year, \$365,000 was collected from Canaan residents at a 2.5% county tax rate.

Dana Hadley asked what educational programs are available to inmates. Martha Richard responded that inmates have the opportunity to complete their GED and that day reporting programs and work release programs exist.

Martha Richard listed the following services that were provided to Canaan residents: 5 cases of old age assistance at \$3,200; 13 cases of permanently to totally disabled assistance at \$13,000; 14 cases of immediate nursing care assistance at \$58,000; 6 cases of home care assistance at \$16,000; and \$19,300 in assistance was paid directly for qualified medical services.

Martha Richard also listed the following services that are funded through county budget funds and are available to Canaan residents: Better Beginnings, Grafton County Senior Citizens, Hannah House, Second Growth, Upper Valley Substance Abuse, Visiting Nurses Alliance, West Central Services, and WISE.

Martha Richard requested suggestions as to what products should be grown or introduced at the Farm in order to stimulate revenues since milk prices are stagnant. There was general discussion that privatizing the facility and/or producing a value added product such as cheese should be considered. Martha Richard explained that eight to ten positions exist at the farm as part of a structured work program for inmates. The commissioners also hope to add a program to teach inmates how to repair computers, that would teach marketable skills to an inmate.

Kristina Burnett asked whether any grant funding would be available to repair buildings at the Farm. Martha Richard responded that the need for a grant writer position has been discussed to be able to take advantage of any opportunity.

Martha Richard noted that she supports and advocates that products produced on the farm should be used at the county nursing home and the corrections facility.

Al Posnanski asked whether the size and design of the proposed corrections facility will enable the new jail to generate revenues from other counties. Martha Richard responded that the cost of construction at \$285 per square foot prevents any expansion beyond what the county's needs within the next twenty to twenty-five years but that the new facility will be constructed in such a way that new pods could be added at a later date.

Martha Richard provided Dana Hadley with a handful of discount cards that residents can use on any prescriptions that are not covered by insurance plans.

Martha Richard noted that the new "drug court" system will start this week as an attempt to monitor, frequently test, and counsel drug offenders and to eliminate the need to incarcerate non-violent offenders.

There was general appreciation expressed to Martha Richard for meeting with the Board of Selectmen and Martha Richard welcomed discussions and any questions that town officials or residents may have in the future.

Old Business:

Approval of Minutes

The Board of Selectmen reviewed the April 17, 2007, minutes.

MOTION by Kristina Burnett and seconded by Jay Waldner to accept the minutes dated April 17, 2007, as corrected.

Jay Waldner added the following sentence on page three: "Jay Waldner also informally discussed his bulletin board recommendation with the Historical District Commission."

There was general consensus to change "nursing home facility near Alice Peck Day Hospital" to "Harvest Hill" on page three.

Jay Waldner suggested updating the status on the barn preservation easement agenda item.

There was general consensus that the agenda item of Bomb Scare Training can be removed from the agenda at this time.

It was also noted that the status of the junkyard application agenda item should be corrected. The minute taker suggests adding the following sentence: "Pam Hoyt-Dennison granted authorization to distribute information and materials that were available at the seminar."

VOTE: Unanimous in the affirmative

New Business:

1. Board members reviewed a letter received from Roberta Berner, Executive Director of Grafton County Senior Citizens Council, regarding program adjustments due to the default budget. Dana Hadley suggested inviting the Board of the Senior Center to a future meeting in order to discuss and revisit the agreement for the Senior Center building. Robert Reagan added Senior Citizen property owners who qualify were given an increase in tax deductions and allowable assets.

2. Board members reviewed a notice received from the Attorney General's Office regarding 2007 Municipal Trustees Seminars.

3. Board members reviewed a letter received from NHDOT regarding final payment for Transportation Enhancement Grant.

4. Board members reviewed a letter received from NHDOT with an estimate for repair of bridge #087/092 on Goose Pond Road over Goose Pond Brook. Dana Hadley summarized that the town cost would be \$80,000 of the \$400,000 estimate. Dana Hadley requested approval from the Board of Selectmen to apply for bridge aid funds. There was general discussion that these funds would be made available in July of 2012 if the application is accepted. If the bridge worsens between now and 2012, then options including a "close order" will need to be considered. It was also mentioned that the bridge on North Larry Road should be addressed.

MOTION by Jay Waldner and seconded by Kristina Burnett to authorize the application for bridge aid funds from the State of NH.

VOTE: Unanimous in the affirmative

5. Maintenance Report for April 2007 from Tom Guillette. Dana Hadley summarized that the volunteer working on the Senior Center has agreed to complete the work by the end of June. Tom Guillette continues to work on the upgrade of the Town Office building.
6. Board members reviewed a letter received from Senator Gregg regarding storm of April 16th. Dana Hadley summarized that FEMA funds have been authorized and that he will be attending a meeting in order to learn how to complete the application. Eleanor Davis suggested that all town buildings should be thoroughly checked for storm damage before the application is submitted.
7. Board members reviewed a notice from the Department of Revenue regarding equalized assessment.
8. Board members reviewed copies of the following House Bills proposed: HB796, HB377, and HB98.
9. Board members reviewed a calendar of Local Official Workshops.
10. Board members reviewed a letter received Roberta Berner, Executive Director of Grafton County Senior Citizens Council, regarding the town's emergency response following the April 16th storm. Dana praised the many employees and residents who helped get meals to house bound residents and who checked on the well-being of residents. There was general mention of the telephone calls that residents received from the emergency response center regarding instructions for needed assistance.

Other Business:

Kristina Burnett informed board members that Lori Dacier has resigned from her executive director position of the Mascoma Valley Regional Health Initiative as of June 1, 2007, due to health issues. Dana Hadley offered to draft a thank you letter to Lori Dacier for her contribution to the Health Initiative and the Town of Canaan.

Kristina Burnett summarized that she attended the discussion at the Mascoma Valley Regional School Board meeting regarding Average Daily Membership. Kristina Burnett noted that Stella Butterfield provided an excellent presentation and handout, that she is well qualified to calculate the ADM figures, and that she offered her help to answer any questions or concerns at any time.

Jay Waldner informed board members that he attended a Recreation Committee meeting and that the following concerns were mentioned: the buildings at Williams Field need to be stained, the removal of the small building at the Remacle lot being purchased by the Town, trash barrels in the park and the light along the pathway to Depot Street.

There was general discussion that the school district currently uses the power source at the outbuilding in order to keep the buses charged during the colder months. Dana Hadley offered to contact the school district regarding this issue and to inquire about the parking of buses at Cozy Corner.

Dana Hadley said that trash barrels were distributed this week to public areas.

Jim Miller asked whether the headstone restoration project would have been funded by town funds or by cemetery trust funds. Dana Hadley responded that the town budget is required to appropriate cemetery funds and that the Cemetery Trustees reimburses funds but that the Town of Canaan does subsidize a portion of the cemetery costs each year. Dana Hadley clarified that the headstone restoration project was cut this year due to the default budget.

Board members reviewed a list of town property owners who have not paid outstanding tax bills and who are at risk of losing ownership of their properties.

Board members reviewed and signed the manifest.

Pending Items and Status:

Dana Hadley summarized the status of the following pending items:

1. Barn Preservation Easements – Status will be provided on the next agenda.
2. Update of Personnel Handbook – The committee members met again on April 18th with Barry Cox and this project should be finishing soon.
3. The update and codification of the Code and Ordinance Book is ongoing.
4. Survey Work at the Transfer Station – The attorney is working on title resolutions with Grafton Superior Court.
5. Junk Yard Application for Patrick Jameson – The application was sent to Paul Sanderson for review. Pam Hoyt-Dennison granted authorized to distribute information and materials that were available at the seminar.
6. The following have been selected for the Park Use Rules Committee: David Heath, Tom Guillette, Wally Medeiros, and Barbara Haywood. The first meeting will be scheduled in April.
8. Policy Committee Regarding Building Permits on Class VI/Discontinued Roads – Work is underway with the Planning Board Committee.
9. Investment Policy – Kendra Withington, Ruth Conwell and Dana Hadley are working on this item.

Al Posnanski asked whether plastic bags would be available for the roadside cleanup scheduled by the 4H Club on May 19th. Dana Hadley responded that they can be picked up at the Town Office.

Dana Hadley noted that department heads will be available at next week's meeting so that the Board of Selectmen can review budgets.

MOTION by Jay Waldner and seconded by Kristina Burnett to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 P.M.

VOTE: Unanimous in the affirmative

Respectfully Submitted,
Christi Berube, Minute Taker
Minutes Accepted by the Board of Selectmen on May 8, 2007