

**CANAAN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2009**

The meeting was brought to order at 7:00PM by Chairman Bob Reagan. Selectman Scott Borthwick, Selectman Tim Lewis and Town Administrator Michael Capone were also in attendance. Others present: Ellie Davis, Al Posnanski, Matt Wilson, Wally Medeiros, Carol Medeiros, Joe Butterfield, Marvin Rocke, Helen Rocke, Elwin Neily and Philip Salvail. Chairman Reagan led those in attendance in reciting our pledge of allegiance.

Acceptance of Minutes of the March 31, 2009 Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes and voted the following: Selectman Lewis moved and Chairman Reagan seconded the motion to accept the minutes of the March 31, 2009 meeting as written. The Board voted 2-0 in favor of the motion with Selectman Borthwick abstaining.

Dorchester Selectmen – Discuss Fire Service Billing

Dorchester Selectmen, John Franz, Artie Burdette and David Conkey were present along with Dorchester Treasurer, Brian Howe to discuss the 2007 and 2008 fire service bills that Dorchester had recently received. Mr. Franz said they were not present to dispute the bills, as they have received and are very appreciative of the level of service provided. He presented the Board with a check for the 2009 billing. Mr. Howe explained that since the bills had not been received they were not able to encumber the funds. As a result, the appropriations for 2007 and 2008 had lapsed and the money returned to the general fund. Given their population and assessed value, if they were to appropriate the more than thirteen thousand dollars needed to pay the 07/08 bills in one year it would raise their tax rate by forty cents/thousand. They were here to ask the Board to consider allowing them to pay the 2007 bill in 2010 and the 2008 bill in 2011. Chairman Reagan asked if they could consider making an additional payment at the end of this year. Treasurer Howe noted that it might be possible if they had surplus funds, but they would not know until the middle of December. Selectman Lewis suggested that Michael contact the Dorchester Board in December to see what else could be paid against the outstanding balance. The members of the Dorchester Board thanked the Selectmen for their time and understanding. Michael noted that future fire billings would be submitted in advance of the budget process so sufficient funds could be appropriated.

Health and Safety Policy – Discussion/Adoption

Michael provided the Board with a final copy of the revised Health and Safety Policy for adoption. Having no additional questions from the Board or those present, Selectman Borthwick made a motion to adopt the revised policy. The motion was seconded by Selectman Lewis and the Board voted 3-0 in favor of adopting the revised policy.

Budget vs. Actual

Michael noted that fifteen weeks into the budget year we should have an average budget balance of 71%. The actual balance was about 74.5% so we are slightly above the average balance. Michael reviewed the worksheet noting that Police overtime, Welfare rent assistance and Welfare utilities assistance expenditures were running ahead of the average. Selectman Lewis thought that perhaps the Board should consider sending a memo to Chief Frank, suggesting he use part time officers to fill some of the overtime hours.

Michael also explained that the postage line has not been overspent despite the negative number in the column. What that represents is additional postage that has been paid for but is still in the postage meter. As the quarterly postage reports are run, that number will go down as postage is allocated to other departments.

Orange resident, Marvin Rocke asked about the expenses in the recreation budget. Michael explained that the \$315 was to pay the Town's portion of the portable toilet at Goose Pond. Michael did not have the detail for the electrical expense, but said he would check the bills. Mr. Rocke also expressed his concern with the amount of money that had been removed from the Recreation Committee budget. Chairman Reagan explained that the Recreation activities had been minimal in the past year and the Board reduced funding so they could keep money in other departments such as the Highway, Police and Fire Departments that were providing more essential services to the Town.

Ellie Davis asked about the water and sewer surplus accounts. Michael noted that there is a separate checking account for water and sewer expenses. There is also an account that held surplus water and sewer funds and was used to supplement shortages in the checking account for the water and sewer system. Funds from these accounts were also being used to pay for the two water and sewer projects presently underway.

Other Business

Michael mentioned that the Groundwater Discharge Permit Project had started this week. Wright-Pierce had begun collecting new boring samples and will be digging some test pits at the site.

Michael mentioned that the Board had received a request from the Old Home Days Committee, requesting permission to use the Town Common and surrounding downtown areas for the Old Home Days events. They were also requesting a waiver of the open container ordinance for the Dance on Saturday evening, August 1, 2009. Michael will prepare letters for the Board's signature, approving the Committee's requests.

Michael reminded the Board that the meeting to study Enfield's request to withdraw from the SAU will be held on April 29, 2009. Chairman Reagan will be representing the Board.

Michael informed the Board that the Auditors will be in next week to conduct a review of the 2008 financials. They will be working out of the conference room at the Town Office.

Marvin Rocke expressed his concern with taking down the cozy corner building. He noted that presently the building was used for storage and asked why it be needed to be taken down right now. The Board noted that they felt the building was a liability and that it should be taken down. There was a concern expressed by the Fire Chief with regard to the safety of the building, and most folks they had spoken with felt that it would not be worth putting any more money into the building. Selectman Borthwick noted that the original warrant article stated that the property should be used for the location of a community/youth center, but nothing about that building remaining permanently.

Mr. Rocke and Joe Butterfield also questioned the use of the third floor of the Library as a potential storage site. Mr. Butterfield mentioned that the third floor of the building was not capable of supporting much weight. The Board mentioned that they did not believe that was true any longer and Michael said he would look into the matter and confirm the safety of the building. Mr. Rocke asked the Board to reconsider their decision to take down the building. Elwin Neily suggested that the Board get a letter from the Fire Chief with regard to the condition of the building.

Mr. Rocke and Mr. Butterfield also expressed concern with the cutbacks in maintenance of Williams Field. The Board explained that the maintenance expense needed to be shared by some of the organizations that were using the field. It was the Board's understanding that in the past, the adult softball league had paid fees to help offset operating expenses for the field. The Board was going to explore what options would be available. Michael supplied the Board with a breakdown of the weekly grounds maintenance tasks performed by Tom Guillette. Tom thought the Board could use the information to assist them in their review of the costs associated with grounds maintenance.

There was also a discussion regarding the bath house at Canaan Street Lake. Mr. Rocke mentioned that in the past few years, a new septic tank and a new roof had been installed. Carol Medeiros noted that the building was in need of a new paint job and a few minor repairs and did not need to be torn down. Some of those present also expressed concern with having a portable toilet at the beach. They felt that it would be even more of a target for vandalism and could be tipped over or pushed into the lake.

The Board commented that they were concerned with ongoing maintenance of the building as well as vandalism. The placement of a portable toilet at the beach during the summer months would eliminate the ongoing upkeep of the bath house and eventually reduce overall expenses at the Town Beach. Elwin Neily suggested that perhaps the Board could try to have a portable toilet at the Beach for the summer and see how it works out.

William Gibbons was present to discuss a letter he had received from the Town regarding dumping at the Transfer Station without a proper sticker. He wanted to explain his side of the story. The Board asked if he had obtained a valid sticker and Mr. Gibbons said that he had. Board members noted that as long as Mr. Gibbons had a valid sticker, he would be able to use the Transfer Station.

With no further business before the Board, at 9:11 PM Selectman Lewis made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Selectman Borthwick and voted 3-0 by the Board.

Robert Reagan, Chairman

Scott Borthwick

Tim Lewis
Canaan Board of Selectmen