

**CANAAN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2009**

The meeting was brought to order at 6:30PM by Chairman Bob Reagan. Selectman Scott Borthwick, Selectman Tim Lewis and Town Administrator, Michael Capone, were also in attendance. Others present and those who joined the meeting in progress: Al Posnanski, Ellie Davis, Phil Salvail, Phil Neily, Carol Goodman, Cindy Neily, Jim Rancore, Police Chief Sam Frank, Fire Chief Bill Bellion, Matt Wilson and Ellen Marie Wilson. Chairman Reagan led those in attendance in reciting our pledge of allegiance.

Minutes of October 27, 2009 Meeting

Michael noted one correction on page 2 of the minutes in the project updates section. He corrected the word "bids" to read "bid" The Board reviewed the minutes and voted the following: Selectman Borthwick moved and Selectman Lewis seconded the motion to accept the minutes of the October 27, 2009 meeting as amended. The Board voted 3-0 in favor of the motion.

Opening and Review of Sealed Property Bids

Chairman Reagan opened the 14 envelopes containing bids for property taken by tax deed. The bids received were as follows:

Map 5 Lot 33 Sublot 2 - Ralph Epifanio \$4499.52 plus a computer for the library

other bids for the lot: David Zani 1001.00
 Lear and Richard Timmons \$100.00

Map 17 Lot 85 - David Zani \$15001.00

other bids for the lot: David and Kamala Tupper 5600.00
 Mark Wilson 3359.00
 Lear and Richard Timmons 2500.00

Map 6 Lot 79 - Frederick Coley \$2356.00

other bids: none

Map 6 Lot 44A - Frederick Coley \$526.00

other bids: none

Map 12 Lot 2D - Andrea J. Dow \$14,000.00

other bids: David Zani 13001.00
 Todd Laquerre 8566.00
 Don Khoury 7111.13
 F S Enterprise 5220.00
 Mark Wilson 3559.00

Selectman Borthwick made a motion to accept the bid from Andrea J. Dow of \$14,000.00 for Map 12 Lot 2D. The motion was seconded by Selectman Lewis and voted 3-0 in favor by the Board.

Selectman Borthwick made a motion to accept the bid from David Zani of \$15,001.00 for Map 17 Lot 85. The motion was seconded by Selectman Lewis and voted 3-0 in favor by the Board.

Selectman Borthwick made a motion to accept the bid from Ralph Epifanio of \$4,499.52 plus a computer for the library for Map 5 Lot 33 Sublot 2. The motion was seconded by Selectman Lewis and voted 3-0 in favor by the Board.

Selectman Borthwick made a motion to accept the bid from Frederick Coley of \$2,356.00 for Map 6 Lot 79. The motion was seconded by Selectman Lewis and voted 3-0 in favor by the Board.

Selectman Borthwick made a motion to accept the bid from Frederick Coley of \$526 for Map 6 Lot 44A. The motion was seconded by Selectman Lewis and voted 3-0 in favor by the Board.

Michael informed the Board that he would notify the approved bidders of the vote and request they make payment in secured funds within seven days.

Chief Bill Bellion

Fire Chief Bill Bellion was present to express his concern to the Board with regard to budgets cuts proposed in the Selectmen's budget. He was concerned with eliminating the salary for the Emergency Management Director and Assistant Director. He asked the Board if there was any other information they needed with regard to those positions. He was concerned that the Board was eliminating the position.

Chairman Reagan noted that Chief Bellion was given an opportunity to address the budget at the October 7, 2009 Department meeting and did not do so. Chief Bellion responded that he did not anticipate that the position would be eliminated. Chairman Reagan noted that the position was not eliminated, the salary was reduced to a dollar.

Chief Bellion outlined the additional responsibilities the position carries and commented that he assumed those responsibilities because the Town's Health Officer did not step forward to do the job.

Chairman Reagan indicated that, given the financial pressures on the Town, reductions to the Budget would be necessary. This had been previously mentioned to Chief Bellion.

Selectman Lewis asked what the difference in responsibilities was between the Fire Chief and the Emergency Management Director. The positions appear to have the same responsibilities. He did not understand how this position became a salaried position when in 2005 there was only \$1 budgeted for the position. The Chief recalled that he was given the position when it was determined that it would be difficult for the Board of Selectmen to have responsibility for emergency management because any decisions that had to be made would require meetings to be posted.

The Chief again expressed his concern that the Health Officer had not adequately assumed the responsibilities for the position which required someone to step in to fill the role. He has concerns that this position would not be compensated.

Chairman Reagan mentioned that this was the Selectmen's budget and that the Budget Committee has the final say in what the amount will be.

Chief Frank expressed his concern that the budget committee had told them the opposite last year. Ellie Davis, a member of the Budget Committee, explained that the Budget Committee prepares the Budget for the Town Meeting and the Selectmen manage the budget after it is accepted by the voters.

Chief Frank stated that the Selectmen are trying to dismantle public safety in this Town. He does not think things are as bad as the Selectmen say they are and wanted to know what value the Board will place on public safety. He feels that public safety is being ignored. He expressed his concern with some of the changes to his budget and feels that he is losing money out of his budget every year. He mentioned that the money placed in the overtime line would not even meet his contractual obligations for holiday overtime.

Chief Frank also expressed his concern with funding for the Emergency Management Director. He feels that Chief Bellion is not adequately compensated for the position. Chief Frank felt that Chief Bellion should be receiving an additional seven to eight thousand dollars a year as a stipend.

Chairman Reagan verified that Chief Bellion was paid hourly for the calls he went on in addition to receiving five thousand dollars for the Chief's position.

Selectman Lewis asked how the Chief would classify the department. Chief Bellion noted that they are an on call paid department.

Chief Bellion expressed concern with some of the cuts proposed for the department as well. There was a brief discussion with regard to the fees charged for hydrants. Chief Bellion felt that he could live with some of the cuts, but it would be hard to maintain a rotation cycle on turnout gear and items like that with additional cuts. It would also be difficult to keep up with NFPA requirements for equipment. Selectmen Lewis asked if those NFPA standards were required or suggested. Chief Bellion replied that they are required.

Selectman Lewis asked what expenses the Association funds pay for. Chief Bellion noted that some of those funds had paid for equipment and repairs to vehicles.

Chairman Reagan once again expressed his concern that the Chief had not come to the Board sooner. Chief Bellion mentioned that if he had known about the cuts he would have done so.

Selectman Borthwick noted that the Board had asked the Departments to cut budgets by 10% and the Library was the only group that had done that.

Chief Bellion responded that he thought given the nature of what his department does, the Board felt the Fire Department might not be required to meet that goal.

None of the Selectmen recalled making that statement.

Chief Bellion expressed his concern that he would not have enough money in his budget.

Selectmen Borthwick asked where folks thought the money would come from to pay for all of this. Even with the reduction in the Department Budgets, given all of the State Budget woes and the problems in the economy area wide, we have all we can do just to keep people in their houses. We are not attacking public safety we are attacking the budget to control costs.

Chief Bellion expressed his concern that the Board is not letting the Department Heads manage their budgets. It sends a message that the Board does not trust the Department heads.

Chairman Reagan noted that it is a financial decision and is not about personalities. It is about the budget. Of the forty Towns in Grafton County, Canaan has the eighth highest equalized municipal rate. This is an impediment to growth.

Chief Bellion commented that recently he has seen businesses that are interested in coming to Town.

It was mentioned that the Fire Department budget will be discussed by the Budget Committee on December 3. Ellie Davis noted that there would be other opportunities to adjust the budget including deliberative session.

Chief Frank stated that the Board does not understand how much work employees do. The Board does not understand how much work Chief Bellion puts into his job.

Chief Bellion felt that there was no indication that he needed to make cuts in his budget. Chairman Reagan noted that at the August department meeting it was mentioned by the Board that they were looking at a target of a 10% reduction for the overall budget.

Chief Frank expressed his concern that he wasted his time preparing his budget because the Selectmen do not listen to the Department heads.

Chairman Reagan mentioned that the Selectmen listen to not only the Department heads, but the residents as well. He mentioned that it is still up to the budget committee to decide what the final budget that goes to the deliberative session will contain.

Chief Bellion asked who is going to update some of the emergency plans that need to be worked on next year. He would be reluctant to put in the time if he was not going to be compensated.

Chief Bellion asked the Board that if he were to go to the Budget Committee and get money put back into the Budget would the Board support it.

Selectman Borthwick said he would support the Budget Committee recommendation. The other Board members agreed.

Chief Frank again expressed his concern that the Board made the cuts without consulting with them.

Chairman Reagan asked that they take it up with the Budget Committee. The Board would support their recommendation. He thanked the Chief and those present for coming to the meeting.

2010 Budget: Continued Discussion

Michael noted that he had left this item on the Agenda in case the Board wished to continue any discussion on the Budget. He noted that the latest budget vs. actual figures indicated that with seven weeks left in the budget year, budget balances were above projections. The Board reviewed the Budget vs. Actual report and noted that most of the budget shortfalls were consistent with what had been developing during the year.

Chairman Reagan asked if there were any questions regarding the budget. Cindy Neily asked if the Board planned on paying the funding requests in the operating budget received from some of the Regional Associations. Selectman Borthwick noted that the funds allocated for those agencies would most likely be used to supplement the Welfare Budget. Chairman Reagan noted that it really comes down to "charity begins at home" and we need to support the Welfare Budget before we consider expanding our support.

Recreation Committee Appointments

Michael mentioned that six residents had expressed interest in being appointed to the Recreation Committee. Michael noted that the RSA governing appointments required that all appointees be residents and that they be appointed to staggered terms. Chairman Reagan suggested that they be appointed to one year terms and then decide at the meeting on November 18, 2009 how to stagger the terms. Selectman Borthwick made a motion to appoint Bev Chapman, Tom Guillette, Alonda Kaler, John Knott, Carol Medeiros and Wally Medeiros to the Recreation Committee for one year terms until such time as the individual members could decide the length of term they wished to serve. The motion was seconded by Selectmen Lewis and voted 3-0 in favor by the Board.

Other Business

Michael informed the Board that he had been contacted by H.E. Bergeron Engineers regarding construction of the River Road Bridge. Given the fact that they had yet to receive final approval from the State and Federal Government and the fact that we are going into winter season, they suggested we consider spring construction on the bridge to avoid paying additional fees for winter construction. Selectmen Borthwick asked if we could still go out to bid once we receive the go ahead. Michael replied that we could and in fact some other Towns have done just that. Michael mentioned that H.E. Bergeron had informed him that bids for other projects had been coming in below estimates. He also mentioned that the delay might help with cash flow since it would allow more time for reimbursements already submitted to the State to be paid out providing more up front money for the project in the spring.

Michael mentioned that the next Budget Committee meeting would be on November 19, 2009.

Michael also asked the Board if they wanted to include Cardigan Mountain School, Canaan Elementary School and Indian River School on the list of facilities from which the Transfer Station will no longer take recyclables. The Board agreed that the material should no longer be accepted and we should give them a changeover date so they can make provisions for handling their own material.

Michael also asked the Board if they were in agreement that C and D material and Bulky waste items such as furniture should be directed to Hammond Recycling. Taking those materials directly to Hammond's would save residents money on disposal costs and eliminate two more containers from the Transfer Station. The Board was in agreement that given the cost savings all around they should proceed with implementing a changeover by the end of this year.

Al asked about the backhoe at the Transfer Station. Michael asked Road Agent Bob Scott if the backhoe had been looked at. Bob mentioned that he was going to speak with Larry who would be looking into the cost for parts.

Al Posnanski asked if we needed to order more Transfer Station stickers. Michael mentioned that he would check, but did not think we needed any at this time.

Al Posnanski asked about the status of the new ordinances that had been discussed during some of the previous meetings. Selectman Borthwick mentioned that Chief Frank recently reported that he was working on drafts for review. Al Posnanski suggested that perhaps the Board set up a meeting with the Chief

Road Agent Bob Scott

Bob Scott was present to speak with the Board regarding the use of savings from his operating budget to fund the purchase of new equipment for the Highway Department. Among the items that Bob discussed with the Board were a replacement backhoe, a loader, another Dump Truck and a replacement for the Ford one ton. Michael mentioned that some of the information on the equipment was already in the office and that he would put it back in the Selectmen's in basket. Bob Scott noted that he could supply whatever additional material the Board needed to consider his request. The Board members indicated that they would review the information provided and discuss it again at a later meeting.

Selectmen Borthwick asked about the balance in the Highway reserve fund. Michael indicated that by the end of the year there would be about \$66,000 in the reserve fund.

Ellie Davis asked why the Grader was at the Transfer Station. Bob Scott indicated that it had broken down while doing some grading work and needed to be repaired in place. The part had arrived late this afternoon and would be installed on Wednesday.

Michael asked about a winter parking ban. He wanted to know if the Board wanted to enact one and if so, should we prepare signs to place around Town. Selectmen Lewis expressed a concern with trying to enforce the parking ban without an ordinance in place. There was some general discussion with regard to how to best go forward and what areas of Town could be posted. Michael noted that we will have to work on the ordinance in an effort to close the loop on enforcement. Al suggested a meeting with the Fire and Police Chief to move forward on this issue. Selectmen Borthwick noted that the Chief's were working on this. Michael said he would contact them to see where things stand.

Michael asked the Road Agent if there was salt in the sand that was put up at the Transfer Station for residential use. Bob said that there is some salt in the sand. Michael felt that we should indicate that so residents will be aware that it contains salt prior to placing it in their vehicles.

Non-Public Session (RSA 91 – A.3-c)

With no further business before the Board, at 8:30 PM Selectman Borthwick moved, Selectman Lewis seconded and the Board voted 3-0 by roll call vote to go into non public session to discuss a personnel matter. At 9:40 PM Selectman Borthwick made a motion to come out of non-public session. The motion was seconded by Selectman Lewis and voted 3-0 by roll call vote. At 9:40 PM Selectman Borthwick made a motion to seal the minutes of the non public session. The motion was seconded by Selectman Lewis and voted 3-0 by roll call vote. At 9:41 PM Selectman Borthwick made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Selectman Lewis and voted 3-0 by the Board.

Robert Reagan, Chairman

Scott Borthwick

Tim Lewis
Canaan Board of Selectmen