

**CANAAN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, August 1, 2017**

Scott Borthwick called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM at the Canaan Meeting House. In attendance were Selectmen Scott Borthwick, Dave McAlister, Al Posnanski, Town Administrator Mike Samson and Administrative Assistant Sharon Duffy. Others: Bob Scott, Ellie Davis, and Dave Shinnlinger.

Dave McAlister moved and Scott Borthwick seconded to approve both the minutes from 7/11/17 and 7/18/17 as amended. All in favor.

Budget vs. Actual/2018 Budget

The board went over different lines of interest. In general a few budget lines are overspent at this time, but will even out before the end of the year as more revenue comes in. There is still some discussion about will happen with the line item for highway salaries. Eddie Provencial is slated to retire this year, but he may still work 2 months part-time in the summer and be on call in the winter. His retirement will reduce that line, but at this time it not clear how much. For the projected 2018 budget, foreseeable increases will include welfare rents, highway salt, highway reconstruction, insurance, and fuel. The water and sewer department will not have enough in revenue to fund capital reserves, but John Coffey expects to save money as a result of dewatering sludge and from the energy conservation measures they are taking now.

Road Block Grant from Surplus/CIP-Fuel Depot-Hammer/Prospect Hill Engineer

The town has just received a \$135,000 block grant that can be used toward infrastructure or roads. After discussing options, pros and cons, and hearing from Bob Scott, there was a consensus that \$65,000 would be spent on Jones Hill, \$10,000 on a fuel depot for the town highway garage (to preclude having to provide identity cards to every fire fighter to use the new system at the state highway garage), \$32,000 for engineering and culvert work on Prospect Hill. Al Posnanski moved and Dave McAlister seconded that the town would go with Michie for engineering work on the Prospect Hill Culvert. All were in favor. The engineering would be done this year, and the culvert work would be done next year. Bob Scott would also like to purchase a hydraulic hammer for the excavator. The town has owned this piece of equipment which was damaged last year. The alternative to owning is leasing which can cost \$4,700 a month. It is a very fragile tool to operate and maintain, but renting the tool means that the department often cannot deal with rocks that need to be broken up in a timely matter. The board wants to consider this option a little longer.

Apportionment Committee Report

The last committee meeting was July 31. In that meeting a vote was taken to see where committee members stood on the issues. Two members were absent. The vote showed that the group was in favor of an apportionment breakdown of 95%/5%. This breakdown is actually worse than leaving the funding entirely based on Average Daily Membership. Some committee members voted this way because they thought it was better than nothing. Catherine Mulholland stated that she understood after the vote the implications of that choice, and regretted voting that way. The Valley News called Mike Samson to garner his input for an article they were writing. He gave them statistics about how the different options on the table would affect each of the five town, and how it is important to look at attendance numbers and tax numbers from simultaneous years to be able to get an accurate picture. The committee had been presented with mixed data which skewed the actual results of impact on each town. There will be another meeting. It is possible that the vote will be reviewed or held again.

Vacation: to be discussed in non-public

Police Negotiations:

The board and police union have been unable to reach a mutually amenable time at this point based on dates suggested by the select board. There is 30-60 more days before the contract needs to be submitted. At this point Mike will ask the union to suggest 3 dates, and the board will try to make one of them work.

Comcast Negotiations

The Comcast Contract is up for renewal. There was a consensus that the town should begin renegotiations.

Other Business:

Biweekly Pay: Samson provided an explanation that going to biweekly pay would be helpful to free up more time in Gloria’s schedule to handle new bookkeeping responsibilities. The workers would receive an advance warning to help them to prepare financially for the change. The highway workers have expressed their dissatisfaction toward switching to biweekly pay. The board, in general, is in favor of the change but wish to discuss it with more employees before they make a final decision.

Transfer Station: An employee at the transfer station expressed concern about access to a power switch once it begins to snow. The board agreed that like any other equipment there, it is the expectation that the transfer station crew will keep access open with regular shoveling. There has also been some confusion about when the “yellow” transfer station stickers expire, and the new “pink” ones are needed. The pink ones are needed beginning Sept. 1, but people may start having them beginning Aug. 1. The employees have been notified of the rules.

School Apportionment: Dave Shinnlinger asked if the board ever talked with the state representatives for the school in Concord. Mike has written to them and called them. It has not helped. Mike explained that the problem is bigger than just state aid. The default budget is significantly higher than last year’s budget. Until the budget is controlled, the increasing tax problem will not be fixed.

Non-public Session: Dave McAlister motioned and Al Posnanski seconded to go into non-public session at 7:08. All in favor.

At 7:35, the board returned to public session. Dave McAlister moved and Al Posnanski seconded to seal the minutes of the non-public session. All in favor.

Mike Samson brought up the a request to clarify the vacation carry over policy for employees. After reviewing the policy and current practices Dave McAlister motioned and Al Posnanski seconded to allow the Highway Superintendent and the Police Chief to carry the normal 40 hours of unused vacation time and an additional 40 hours of vacation time, if requested by the Police Chief or the Highway Superintendent, and provided further that they use or lose the second 40 hours within 90 days. These 2 positions are being allowed an exception because of the inflexibility of their job, the excessive use of uncompensated overtime hours and seasonal need that distinguishes the management from line employees. Motion passed unanimously.

At 7:40 Al Posnanski motioned and David McAlister seconded to adjourn. All in favor.

Scott Borthwick, Chairman

David McAlister

Al Posnanski
Canaan Board of Selectmen