

Canaan Budget Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 10, 2020
Fire Station, Canaan, NH

Attendees: Budget Committee members: John Bergeron, Ellie Davis, Nathan Deleault, Stephen Freese, Cindy Neily, Al Posnanski (Select Board liaison), Mike Riese, Denis Salvail, Sadie Wells, Karen Wolk; Town Administrator Mike Samson, Police Chief Sam Frank; recorded by Roger Lohr.

Approved Minutes

1. Call to Order

Committee Chair Sadie Wells called the Canaan Budget Committee meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

2. Police Department Budget

Police Chief Sam Frank stated that the police department budget was somewhat identical to last year and there is a 1% increase for salaries while the union contract is to be negotiated. The CIP will cover acquiring new equipment. Retirement will increase. Frank stated that he would like to add an officer to the department staff, but this is not in the budget. The change in FICA was updated by a formula to be more accurate and there is currently one less officer on the staff. There are two part timers but they have not had many hours.

The committee asked about the hybrid police cruiser that was acquired. This year saw fewer arrests but Canaan has some of the highest arrest statistics in the region. The prosecutor costs are based on the hours worked on Canaan cases and trials are to begin within a month.

3. Minutes Approval

Al Posnanski made a motion which was seconded by Denis Salvail to approve the August 27, 2020 Canaan Budget Committee meeting minutes as submitted and amended. Approved by all voting committee members. The change was on names in a motion.

4. Proposed Canaan 2021 Budget Update

Town Administrator Mike Samson distributed three documents and gave an update of the significant variances in the proposed 2021 Canaan budget.

The revenue increase is \$200,000 on a \$4,500,000 revenue budget. There will be \$150,000 needed to fund the Capital Reserve. There is a health insurance increase of about \$16,000 due to a price increase and added staff. The tax rate is an estimated increase of \$7.46, which is an increase of 3.43%. Taxes on a \$200,000 home would be \$780 higher as the proposed budget stands at this time.

The document regarding insurance was reviewed and it showed an anticipated rate of increase to be 4%. Comparative insurance statistics between 2010 and 2021 were reviewed, which showed the average annual increase in health insurance while the town staff increased from 20 full time employees to 22.5 in that period. The cost of individual employee insurance was \$12,363 in 2010 and \$18,935 in 2021.

There will be a \$10 sticker sold to residents for access to the trash facility, which is the first time that there will be a charge for the service. There will be a higher rate for commercial trash stickers. Other dialogue involved the library budget and the SRO for the school.

The task force to consider health insurance did not meet due to the COVID circumstances but once things normalize this task force can be organized.

Some of the budget increases were reviewed and they included:

- *a database cleanup in Executive;
- *payroll increase in TA;
- *salary increase and training in tax collector where a replacement will be involved with \$12 million of town income and will need to be licensed by the state DRA and DMV;
- *property tax delinquencies have been lower than anticipated about 3-4%, which is consistent with a normal year; tax collection is about 2% ahead of last year;
- *data processing will have some equipment replacement;
- *Legal enforcement actions on violations for code and building permit problems, junkyard, etc;
- *Personnel health insurance and workers compensation increases; a couple of workers compensation claims were mentioned;
- *Government buildings has deferred some maintenance projects such as painting;
- *Police department was covered earlier but there was a discussion about equipment, cameras, and other topics;
- *Fire department will increase for a truck warranty and equipment will be acquired through the CIP;
- *Emergency will have an increase in dispatch and other options for dispatch locally are under consideration;
- *Mechanic had a loss of an employee who saved substantial money and there is an advertisement to fill this position; three highway department workers are doing the mechanic work currently.
- *Transfer station is up \$45,000 and some of the budget will come from savings and revenue from stickers and equipment sale. The dump is open 22 hours per week. The recycling position will be shared with the water/sewer department and some of the responsibilities were reviewed.

Samson reviewed the status of some of the town projects and their various funding application processes. He has been appointed to a broadband project in the region to be initiated by the end of 2021 that would increase bandwidth speed transfer in Canaan from 20-30 megabytes to 100 megabytes.

5. Adjournment

Al Posnanski made a motion which was seconded by Denis Salvail to adjourn the meeting. Approved by all voting committee members. The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 PM.