

Canaan Budget Committee Meeting
Thursday, November 29, 2018
Canaan Fire Station, Canaan, NH

Attendees: Budget Committee members: John Bergeron, Ellie Davis, Stephen Freese, Jamie Jukosky, Al Posnanski, Mike Riese, Denis Salvail, Sadie Wells;
Public attendees: Canaan Town Administer Mike Samson, Claude Lemoi, Bill Bellion, Bob Scott, Sam Frank, Phil Neily; recorded by Roger Lohr; Committee member not in attendance Patty Duszynski, Philip Smith Jr.

Approved Minutes

1. Call to Order

Committee Chair Sadie Wells called the meeting of the Canaan Budget Committee to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Minutes Approval

Ellie Davis made a motion which was seconded by Al Posnanski to approve the October 18, 2018 Canaan Budget Committee meeting minutes as submitted. Approved by all voting committee members.

3. Budget Update

A. Overview

Town Administrator Mike Samson distributed the updated documents and he stated that the budget is \$3.8 million, which is a 4% increase. The increased expenses in the legal area continue due to the town's law suits. Health premiums are not final yet. The conservative estimate of 2019 revenue is \$4,216,000 and the budget proposal shows \$4,239,000 which is a \$22,000 variance. The unassigned fund balance will be added in the amount of \$417,519 over three years to help balance the capital reserves. He also referenced a fundraising subscription that is not included in the budget and is projected to be supported by about 25% of the households. The tax increase is projected to be about 3%.

The revenue increase includes about \$50,000 of motor vehicles taxes, and there are other additions associated with the block grants, FEMA, an increase in timber yield, and a late payment that did not arrive in the previous year.

B. CIP

Canaan's Capital Improvement Program was reviewed. It contains capital items submitted by town departments, with modifications by the CIP Committee. The advisory report identifies anticipated capital needs, and doesn't ensure that funds will be expended in this manner, since needs and priorities will change as time progresses. The reserve is stable and some of the CIP issues in the report are related to a variance in the six year purchase window for equipment. The town office is reaching capacity and has some legal and safety deficiencies and there is a \$300,000 item for the town office but a plan to start work is undecided at this time. A fire truck will need to be replaced and bridge work is included in the CIP.

Committee Ellie Davis spoke about what the voters will not vote on and clarified some items in the CIP. Other clarifications were discussed. Samson discussed the water/sewer rates and related issues such as equipment replacement in the system including the oldest pipeline. He also commented about road maintenance.

C. Emergency Management and Fire Department

Bill Bellion reviewed the emergency management area. The dispatch is projected to be the same as last year. In the fire department there will be budget increases in equipment and training, which were explained. The increase in the fire chief salary has been explained previously. A question about salaries was discussed.

D. Highway

Bob Scott reviewed the highway department budget. The increases include payroll related to overtime, and fuel expenses. Samson referenced the bridge replacement projects and roadwork for paving and dirt roads.

E. Police

Police Chief Sam Frank reviewed the police department budget which is similar to last year. Increases were associated with salaries, retirement, and equipment. The open positions have been filled. The prosecution and dispatch costs are proportional to the other towns in the region that use these services and Canaan has a high number of criminal acts for a town its size. The town is basically covered by 4 officers despite being one of the busiest departments in the region.

The committee discussed the causes of Canaan's crime problem and whether programming or funding would impact solutions to it. Samson cited positive prevention activities for youth and intervention. Drug abuse is an issue and treatment is one of the ways to address it. According to Samson it is estimated that about 15% of the population are using drugs and a higher percentage of youth are using them. He reviewed the healthcare issues that are related to drug abuse treatment and insurance coverage/health services for citizens that are unable to afford it. The chief and Samson commented that crime is also caused by societal problems such as dysfunctional family situations. The legalization of marijuana was mentioned as a concern.

F. Canaan Budget Committee Meeting Schedule

The Committee decided to schedule the next meeting for December 20.

3. Adjournment

Ellie Davis made a motion which was seconded by Denis Salvail to adjourn the meeting. Approved by all voting committee members. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.