

Canaan Budget Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 15, 2022
Canaan Police Dept EOC, Canaan, NH

Attendees: Budget Committee members: John Bergeron, Dan Collins, Ellie Davis, Nathan Deleault, Dave McAlister, Cindy Neily, Mike Riese, Denis Salvail, Sadie Wells, Karen Wolk. Town Administrator Mike Samson; Executive Assistant Sharon Duffy; Public: Angie Robinson, Salvatore Percia; recorded by Roger Lohr

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Committee Chair Dave McAlister called the Canaan Budget Committee meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Minutes Approval

Sadie Wells made a motion which was seconded by John Bergeron to approve the April 21, 2022 Canaan Budget Committee meeting minutes as submitted and amended. Discussion: There was a request that the document include the discussion that occurred during the process to appoint the new committee member at the meeting. **Approved by all voting committee members with 1 abstention (Dan Collins).**

3. Use of Zoom to Broadcast Canaan Budget Committee Meetings

The Committee discussed continuing the Zoom broadcast of the Canaan Budget Committee meetings. It was stated that there had been very few Zoom participants for the Budget Committee meetings. The cost of offering Zoom to the public was limited to the annual cost of the Zoom subscription paid by the town and the cost of Sharon Duffy's time to monitor and set up the Zoom broadcast as well as recording the meeting using Zoom.

Some Committee members felt it was important to offer Zoom participation because the public has become accustomed to it and if it was eliminated there might be a perception that the committee was being less transparent. Other Committee members wanted to save the expenses associated with Zooming the meetings.

Sadie Wells made a motion which was seconded by John Bergeron to continue offering Zoom for Canaan Budget Committee meetings and have a member of the town staff operate it at the meetings. The motion failed with 5 in favor (Bergeron, Collins, Neily, Wells, Wolk) and 5 opposed (Davis, DeLeault, McAlister, Riese, Salvail).

While all Canaan Budget Committee meetings may not be recorded or have Zoom available, there was a Committee consensus to offer an "on demand" Zoom option that would be posted as an offer on the town website whereby a request for Zoom availability would need to be made 48 hours in advance of the Committee meeting. In the case that a request for Zoom was made, Sharon Duffy would contact the Committee chair to inform him that there was a request for Zoom. Additionally, there would be a link to the Zoom recording of the meeting, if it was available. The two public attendees expressed support for maintaining consistency and continuing the Zoom broadcasts.

4. 2023 Canaan Budget Expenses Overview

Town Administrator Mike Samson gave an overview of the preliminary 2023 Canaan Budget Expenses. The Northeast CPI is 7.4%. The key factors in a \$500,000 increase in budget expenses include:

- *Salary increases - \$200,000 including \$33,000 for a part time staff position;
- *Equipment upgrades - \$100,000 this year for highway and fire department trucks;
- *Electricity and fuel - \$100,000 includes a substantial electric rate increase and a 25% increase in fuel that may be reduced in 2023 depending on a variety of factors;
- *Health Insurance – 5% placeholder increase in premiums which could result in a \$15,000 budget increase and it is applicable for a half year;
- *Paving – \$54,000 because road construction paving has lagged in Canaan;
- *New town positions - \$15,000 to cover the building inspector and health officer.

There has been Select Board guidance on the preliminary expenses which total about \$500,000. This amount is a 10.3% increase above last year's expenses and the total preliminary expense for the town budget is \$5,378,000. There is a separate accounting of the town budget expenses that include library, water/sewer, and the emergency service. There was a discussion about the emergency transport service that holds promise for covering expenses for the emergency services line item.

5. 2023 Canaan Budget Revenue Overview

The preliminary 2023 Canaan Budget Revenue was reviewed by Town Administrator Mike Samson. There has been a 1.5% increase in taxes associated with new construction in Canaan. The "Current Use Change" in the amount of \$250,000 will be put in unassigned fund balance. There was an unanticipated receipt of \$136,000 in Shared Revenue Block from the state that will be allocated to two trucks for the town. Samson discussed the equipment acquisition strategy using the CIP account.

There was a discussion about the sale of recycled materials (\$30,000) and 25% (\$7,500) will be set aside for transfer station equipment acquisition. There also is a grant program available in the spring for the transfer station compactor and truck.

Samson highlighted the annual transfer from the Trustees of the Trusts and the anticipated surplus amount \$354,000 that would be in the unassigned fund balance.

There was a statement regarding the Goose Pond land and the associated pond water issues that could impact land values there.

There was an increase of 7.87% of new taxes that would be needed for the proposed 2023 Canaan budget and this would amount to a \$73.08 increase in annual taxes on a \$150,000 valued home.

6. Adjournment

Sadie Wells made a motion which was seconded by Dan Collins to adjourn the meeting. Approved by all voting committee members. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

The next Canaan Budget Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 6, 2022.