

Canaan Budget Committee Meeting
Thursday, October 6, 2022
Canaan Police Dept EOC, Canaan, NH

Attendees: Budget Committee members: Ellie Davis, Nathan Deleault, Dave McAlister, Cindy Neily, Mike Riese, Sadie Wells, Karen Wolk. Town Administrator Ned Connell, Town Treasurer Deb Tenney, former TA Mike Samson; Committee Members not in attendance: John Bergeron, Dan Collins, Denis Salvail; Public: Angie Robinson, Salvatore Percia, Thomas Oppel; 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. New Town Administrator Ned Connell was introduced.

2. Minutes Approval

Sadie Wells made a motion which was seconded by Karen Wolk to approve the September 15, 2022 Canaan Budget Committee meeting minutes as submitted and amended.

Discussion: The chair name was replaced in the document. **Approved by all voting committee members.**

3. Proposed 2023 Budget Expense Review

Town Administrator Mike Samson gave an overview of the preliminary 2023 Canaan Budget Expenses by account. The Northeast CPI is 7.4% and town employees will receive a minimum pay increase of that rate. Variances and notes about the budget expenses include:

3A. Electricity and fuel - \$100,000 includes a substantial electric rate increase and an increase in fuel that may be reduced in 2023 depending on a variety of factors;

3B. The tax collector account may be reduced.

3C. Data processing anticipates an increase of \$2,000. There is a police system that will be set up.

3D. Assessing may change but is still uncertain.

3E. Government building expenses will be reduced.

3F. Cemetery will increase for a new riding lawn mower. The CIP asset acquisitions compared to departmental purchases was explained.

3G. Treasurer, Deb Tenney commented about the GFOA training (government finance officers Assoc.) that will be \$300-500.

3I. Insurance will have a placeholder until Nov-Dec when rates are updated.

3J. General government - office supplies increase.

3K. Police - new police chief contract to be finalized; there is a high salary range in the Upper Valley. There will be a reduction for equipment until the cruisers are acquired.

3L. Ambulance – the amount is uncertain but there could be an increase in payroll for per diem staff to cover the transport service and emergency hours. There is a business plan for the transport service and the early returns show that the service will provide income (\$1,000 net in the first week). An incentive to cover reimbursement for training was authorized by the Select Board.

3M. Fire – increase in equipment of about \$35,000.

3N. Building inspector – increase with new staff. Samson explained the occupancy permit and issues associated with town standard building codes.

3O. Emergency Management – plans for mitigation and emergency operations need to be done.

3P. Mechanic – the salary is still uncertain and there was a discussion about market rates for salary and the difficulty hiring to fill the position. A question was raised regarding comparable salaries within the Canaan town staff positions. The cost of health insurance was also discussed.

3Q. Highway – there is a placeholder for the road agent salary; there is an effort by a neighboring town to lure Canaan highway staff by offering higher pay; there is a placeholder on fuel and electricity; Samson explained the need for accelerating the town road paving schedule and \$50,000 has been suggested for road paving for each of the next three years; Samson explained the road salt situation whereby the town currently has a significant supply; there are uncertainties about expenses associated with culverts and gravel.

3R. Street lighting will be impacted by the increased rates for electricity.

3S. Transfer station – there is no change in payroll and expenses are dependent upon the trash and recycling systems that are deployed. The transfer station trailer situation was discussed.

3T. Health – the town health officer addresses health code violations.

3U. Welfare – Federal funding for housing has continued but rent assistance may not be continued in Canaan. An issue was raised about the increased cost of fuel and food and whether that should be incorporated in the proposed welfare budget; it was suggested that home weatherization programs should be considered; there was a question about whether the welfare budget will reflect the potential for an increased number of people in need associated with rising costs.

3V. Recreation – there is a nonlapsing account for recreation; a new recreation director has been appointed and she is looking into grants; there will be a need to cover the cost of the recreation director and the swim program in the future.

3W. Library is expected to have increases but the proposed budget for the library has not yet been received.

3X. Capital Outlay Equipment has a line item loan to acquire a new grader. The Cozy Corner transaction was explained and it currently has proceeds of \$66,000. Another part of the corner sale will have to be voted on by the town electorate. The CIP has been restructured to address the rising costs of equipment for the highway, police and fire departments.

3Y. Government building is still pending.

4. Proposed 2023 Canaan Budget Revenue Review

The preliminary 2023 Canaan Budget Revenue was reviewed by Town Administrator Mike Samson. There is a 1.5% increase on new construction related to property taxes. The Transfer of Trustee Trusts will take \$220,559 from Capital Reserves and deposit \$420,000 from the unassigned fund balance. The total budget this year will raise \$4,946,340 and \$124,341 will go into the unassigned fund balance; \$50,000 will be from underspent expenses, and \$200,000 will be from the current use change for a total of about \$324,000 for possible unassigned fund balance input.

5. Adjournment

Sadie Wells made a motion which was seconded by Nate Deleault to adjourn the meeting.

Approved by all voting committee members. The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 PM.

The next Canaan Budget Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 20, 2022.