

Canaan Budget Committee Meeting
Thursday, November 3, 2022
Canaan Police Dept EOC, Canaan, NH

Attendees: Budget Committee members: John Bergeron, Ellie Davis, Nathan Deleault, Stephen Freese, Dave McAlister, Cindy Neily, Denis Salvail, Mike Riese, Sadie Wells, Karen Wolk. Town Administrator Ned Connell, Executive Assistant Sharon Duffy, John Hennesey, Bob Cushman, Mike Samson, Select Board member Dan Collins; 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. He welcomed Stephen Freese as the Committee's new liaison for the Select Board.

2. Minutes Approval

John Bergeron made a motion which was seconded by Sadie Wells to approve the October 20, 2022 Canaan Budget Committee meeting minutes as submitted and amended.

Discussion: Item 2 respectfully; item 4 replace employees with department; item 7 replace town with rescue. **Approved 7-0-3 (abstentions Deleault, Freese, Wells).**

3. Recording of Budget Committee Meetings

Chair McAlister made a statement regarding his appointment to the committee and chairmanship. There was a situation with the Select Board which requested recordings of the Budget Committee meetings held in April and October and those recordings were not made and do not exist so they were not available. There also was a recounting of Dan Collins resignation from the Budget Committee and his following dealings with Budget Committee secretary Ellie Davis. Recording of the Budget Committee meetings was a topic that was then moved later in the meeting agenda.

4. Fire Department

Fire Chief John Hennesey reviewed the Fire Department's proposed FY 23 budget. Installing LED lights should decrease the amount of electricity used compared to what it would be with the old lighting fixtures but expenses may increase due to a substantial increase in electric rates. There are increases expected in heating, oil, and fuel. There is a large increase of \$35,550 in the CIP for 11 new turn-out gear sets at \$2,900 each. These sets have a 10-year lifespan and it is preferable to purchase a few sets annually to avoid such a large one-time expenditure. Retirement was over-estimated in the budget line, and the Deputy Fire Chief line for FICA will be reviewed.

5. Highway Department

Bob Cushman reviewed the Highway Department proposed FY 23 budget. The winter sand expense is separate from labor and materials. The Road Agent salary has an increase of \$5,000. Contracted Services is for equipment rentals and it was requested that it be \$10,000. The salary line is for current highway staffing and there has already been some salary increases in the department so the budget may not reflect a 7.2% cost of living increase. The electricity should decrease in the amount used due to the LED light installation but the cost of electricity has increased substantially as has heating, gas and fuel costs. Road reconstruction will increase \$50,000. Road Salt is being replaced. The culvert line should be \$20,000 to acquire more culverts that are needed for Turnpike Road. There was a discussion about gravel.

6. TA Updates and Other Business

6A. The tax rate from the DRA is expected to be as projected and there were no other updates

from the Town Administrator.

6B. The Committee was informed that the new Town Administrator will continue using the former town administrator if and when help is necessary. The former town administrator has agreed to help when needed. TA Ned Connell will speak with the mechanic and review the mechanic budget for the committee's next meeting.

6C. The Committee was informed about the regularity of stolen street signs in Canaan.

6D. Meeting Recording

The Committee discussed using Zoom or a similar video recording to have a record of the Budget Committee meetings available to the public. Previously, the Committee had passed a motion to record the meetings when there was a request for the recording made at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. This had been done to save the town money.

John Bergeron made a motion which was seconded by Sadie Wells to approve the Canaan Budget Committee will use a Zoom-like recording and an audio recording to attempt to produce a recording of all Budget Committee meetings and these recordings would be made available to residents. The motion was approved 9-1 (Davis opposed).

6E. Select Board member Dan Collins reviewed his correspondence with Administrative Assistant Sharon Duffy and Budget Committee Secretary Ellie Davis to clarify his request for Budget Committee recordings. No further action was taken by the Budget Committee on this matter.

6F. The Budget Committee members expressed appreciation to Sharon Duffy for her support of the committee's work. She has submitted her resignation from the Administrative Assistant position.

7. Adjournment

Denis Salvail made a motion which was seconded by John Bergeron 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 scheduled for November 17, 2022. Topics covered to include mechanic, library, trustees of trust funds, water and sewer, health insurance.