

**Town of Canaan
Board of Finance
Special Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 30, 2026 – 6:00 PM
Town Hall – 108 Main Street, Falls Village, CT 06031
In-Person and via Zoom**

Attendance

Members Present

In Person: Chairman Ginger Betti; Members Amy Wynn, Martin Deeg, Andrea Downs, Thomas Wilson

Via Zoom: Karl Munson

Absent:

Alternate Members Present

In Person: Hazel McGuire

Via Zoom: None

Absent: John Haddon; Vanessa Pereira

1. Call to Order

Chairman Betti called the meeting to order at 6:06:00 PM.

2. Seating of Alternates-None

3. Public Comment- None

4. Board of Selectman 2026-2027 Budget Presentation

- First Selectman Barger presented the FY 26–27 proposed spending plan, emphasizing that it “**maintains our essential services, addresses rising costs, and prioritizes long-term investments in our infrastructure.**”

General Overview

- **2.5% salary increase** for all town employees, except the three Selectmen, who declined raises.
- **Fuel oil costs increased**, but the town locked in a favorable rate of **\$2.74/gal** last November.
- Budget reflects “the cost of doing business” across departments.

Selectmen’s Budget

- New **\$1,500 Special Events** line for America’s 250th celebrations.
- New **\$2,500 Town Bus** line for maintenance/insurance of the donated bus.

Town Hall & Administrative Lines

- **Legal expenses** increased to **\$2,500** after last year's actuals approached \$4,000.
- **Board of Finance** stipend miscalculation noted; a **\$20** discrepancy will be corrected.
- **Tax Collector** and **Treasurer** lines show modest increases tied to software and banking costs.

Elections

- The **Registrar's** projected increase reflects potential unfunded state mandates related to **early voting**, as well as the possibility of **two primary elections**.
- The prior year's expenses were unusually low due to the absence of a primary election and the receipt of **\$5,000 in state grants** awarded to the Registrars for Early Voting.

Insurance & Benefits

- Health insurance up substantially due to one employee joining mid-year and switching to a **family plan**.
- Employees currently contribute **0%** toward premiums.
- BOF raised concerns about equity, sustainability, and the need for **formal eligibility policy**.
- Selectmen will consult legal counsel; existing 2017 personnel policies will be reviewed.

Public Health & Social Services

- **HYSB contribution** increased from \$4,000 to \$5,000; cost to keep a clinician at Kellogg is **\$17,000+**.
- **Mental Health Services** request was reduced by \$3500 after determining some clients were from North Canaan.
- **Chore Service** and **Northwest Transit District** usage increasing.
- **Nutrition program** stable; usage fluctuates year to year.

Non-Municipal Appropriations

- All level-funded except the **Library**, which requested an additional **\$2,500**.

Public Safety

- **Constables** reduced by \$900 due to one-time equipment purchase last year.
- Fire Commission budget remains flat; internal reallocations offset rising ALS costs.
- BOF warned that **ALS costs will rise significantly next year** due to regional provider changes.

Capital & Reserves

- **Heavy Equipment Reserve** +\$5,000
- **Truck Reserve** +\$20,000
- **107/108 Main Street Maintenance** +\$2,500
- These increases reflect aging equipment and rising replacement costs.

Public Works

- Average wage increase **3.73%** based on pay scale.
- **Overtime and de-icing materials** increased; town hopes to buy salt in bulk for better pricing.
- **Uniform cleaning** costs up due to vendor pricing.
- Landline retained due to OSHA requirements.

Recreation

- Request to increase salaries by **\$2,500** to support longer pool season and staffing.
- Chemicals, programs, and maintenance lines increased modestly.
- Goal: expand programming (summer, winter, sledding, etc.).

Waste Management

- Tipping fees volatile; major uncertainty due to statewide MSW system changes.
- Town pursuing membership in the **Northwest Regional Refuse Authority (NRRA)** to stabilize long-term costs.
- Food scrap collection expanded to reduce tonnage.

Education

- Region One assessment expected to **decrease** due to very small incoming student cohort.

STEEP Grant

- Town has **\$25,000 match** already set aside.
- Legal review may be needed for compliance; increased legal line supports this.

Building Inspector

- Current inspector retiring; recruitment underway.
 - No immediate budget increase anticipated.
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Notes

The Board of Finance will continue to review the budget, with an **upcoming meeting** scheduled on **04.09.26 at 6:00 pm** to discuss the **Board of Education** portion of the spending plan.

BOF requested updated **revenue projections** and follow-up on **health insurance policy** before next meeting.

5. Public Comment

A resident noted that while the Town does maintain documentation of health insurance policies, the records have not been updated since 2017.

6. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:11 pm: Wilson; second: Downs; Vote: Unanimous

Attachments:

2026-2027 Proposed Municipal Spending Plan

Motions – Special Meeting

March 30, 2026 – 6:00 PM

#	Motion / Action	Made By	Seconded By	Vote	Notes
1	Motion to Adjourn at 7:11 PM	Wilson	Downs	Unanimous	—

Respectfully submitted, Patti Fife, Recording Secretary