

Town of North Canaan

Board of Finance

Regular Meeting

April 14, 2021 via zoom technology

Present: Nancy O'Connor, Chairwoman; Bill Minacci, Chris Sorrell, Brian Allyn
Selectman Perotti, Whiting, Allyn, Dr. Roy, members of Rec committee

Call to order: 7:32

Mr. Allyn made a motion to accept the minutes from the March meeting as well as the budget workshop. Mr. Minacci seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

Mr. Minacci made a motion to accept the monthly financial report. Mr. Sorrell seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

Mr. Sorrell made a motion to accept the monthly tax collector reports. Mr. Minacci seconded the motion. Motion was approved. Jenn will be at the May meeting.

Brian Bartram, North Canaan's Region 1 representative gave an over view of his role and updated where things currently stand with the budget. Last Thursday night there was a public hearing where a draft budget was presented. Immediately following the public hearing a special meeting was held and a motion was made to send the budget to referendum on Tuesday May 4. The entire budget total is just over \$16million. This is a 1.58% increase. Of that total the high school portion is \$8,172,755. Mr. Bartram explained that the amount paid per town is decided based on the proportion of students going to the high school. North Canaan has 33% of the student population. However, voting is based on the population of the town according to census information which leaves North Canaan with a 21% vote. Other parts of the budget include shared services (central office) which is divided over the entire region 1 population. The same formula is applied to pupil services. This is all done according to statute. Maria Horn is investigating cost sharing. Mr. Ghi questioned if the possibility of cutting some of the programs with less participation in the future. Sam Herrick handles the projections for the next couple years. There was discussion about the number of students graduating and coming in from the elementary schools and about cutting programs. Mr. Bartram stated he was disappointed in the way the BOE handled the budget process.

Selectman's time: Selectman Perotti has nothing at this time

Treasurer Time: Emily has nothing at this time. Will work on getting the Mill rate amount

Members, Mailisa and Tammy, from the Rec committee presented before the board to discuss the budget. The 19/20 budget sports program was active thru March and the only sporting activities that were cancelled for that budget were spring softball and Babe Ruth baseball. The town pool had major

repairs done to it, including fixing the leaks and only was able to be open for a few weeks at the end of the summer. Last fall there were no sports activities. The budget also covers field maintenance (with the exception of the town mowing). There was no basketball, no ski club trips. The committee is beginning to organize softball and Babe Ruth baseball and get the pool open on time this year. The rec director, Adam Bunce, continued to have contact with other directors in regards to protocols during the COVID pandemic. Mr. Bunce has a part-time, salaried position. There is a master calendar available at the town hall which details each month what has been done. During the summer he is at the pool frequently, but not all day every day. He schedules the lifeguards. The budget really doesn't cover the sports teams, it covers things like electrical including street lights, security cameras, pool pump, water for the pool, pest control, etc. Mr. Sorrell mentioned that Salisbury offered programs like soccer and tennis and wondered why North Canaan hadn't = they were unaware this was occurring, but they did offer some programs thru the website. The fall programs are still unknown – they are following the school protocols. From 2017-2019 Mr. Bunce did not receive a raise, in 2020 he received a small raise and in 2021 a small raise is in the budget for less than 1%. Chairwoman O'Connor reminded the board that once the money is allocated to the committee they can spend it however they wish. Little League is not part of the rec department, but the electric for the field comes out of the rec budget.

Dr. Roy Principal NCES presented information in relation to the elementary school budget. The dollar amount remains the same. The expectation is that anything planned for this year will run next year. There was a discussion of the possibility of fall sports. The process at NCES for hiring new teachers begins with an internal committee and the posting of the position. Applicant is brought to the BOE for approval no matter what the position is. The contract determines the salary package. There was a meeting with the State Dept. of education finance officers and talked about the money received from the state. They reviewed the numbers and they are correct. There was a discussion regarding the underground tank and possibility of the project being less than anticipated. Dr. Roy explained where they are hoping to save money and where money has already been saved due to cancelled trips, staff travel, electricity, sports etc. She is hoping that will be a return of about \$300,000 to the town. Chairwoman O'Connor agrees it does help offset the Region 1 increase this year, but it cannot be counted on going into the future.

Chairwoman O'Connor asked to revisit the budget recommendations she brought to the board last month including establishing a roads fund with an initial deposit of \$100,000. Mr. Allyn mentioned repairing and/or replacing equipment. The loader would be about \$150,000. Selectman Perotti will call about financing. Discussion ensued regarding the mill rate and having to do a transfer from the general fund to partially fund the budget. We are looking at roughly a \$520,000 increase over last year's budget. If a mill is roughly \$300,000 it means taking \$220,000 from general fund to satisfy the bottom line. That is an increase of 1 mill for taxes to make it work.

Mr. Ghi stated he is in favor for the roads fund. He agrees that residents need to see something for their tax dollars. Chairwoman O'Connor explained putting money back into budget isn't an increase, it is putting the budget back to where it was 2 years ago but now things will happen with the money - **Mr. Allyn made a motion to take all of the recommendations made, send to selectman for their correction to budget and then get it back to board with updated numbers. Mr. Ghi seconded the motion. Motion approved.**

Education budget- no changes made –the board has the latest figures.

Next Meeting will be a zoom meeting on April 21 at 7:30pm to review the budgets.

Chairwoman O'Connor stated that item #8 will be tabled.

Mr. Allyn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Sorrell seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ayrslea Odell
Recording Secretary
