



Town of North Canaan

Board of Finance

March 20, 2024

Present: Chairman Doug Humes, Chris Sorrell, Bill Minacci, Bryan Johnson, Brian Allyn Sr.

Chairman explained that there is no public comment during or about the budget presentations.

Chairman began the meeting at 7:00pm

Dr. Roy presented the school budget to the board. She met with the chairman about a month ago. Within the paperwork is information on how well the students are doing. Note that out of the last 5 budgets 2 have had decreases. They try to be fiscally responsible. Some increases are simply due to contracts. The substitutes line is increased as they try to get more subs. There was a discussion regarding nature's classroom. The cost is \$420 per student with the student only having to cover \$100 of that. The School Based Health Center will be part of the school which will cover some medical care without a cost to the school. Trash removal is changing and there was a discussion regarding that. New AC/heating units were discussed. There is a large number in the heating oil line because of the new storage tank starting at zero. The NCES budget has a 2.49% increase over last year.

Sam Herrick came before the board to speak about the Region 1 budget. He explained the enrollment shift. North Canaan went from 116 students to 102 students. There was a discussion regarding pupil services. Initially the renovation loan was thought to be borrowed at 4.75% but he found out today that it will be 3.5% instead which is not yet reflected in the budget information. The budget is on the Region 1 website with a large banner on the top. Budget hearing is April 4 and the vote is May 7.

Selectman Ohler presented the municipal budget. The selectmen tried to hold the line fairly drastically this year with the hope of restructuring the regional education formula basing it on the grand list per town instead of enrollment. There are some cuts. The Executive Assistant is large increase due to the more robust position with increased hours. They focused on trends in general expenses for items that were budgeted higher than need be. Election miscellaneous expenses is large due to the early voting for the primary and general election. Poles will have to be open and staffed for anyone who wants to vote early. The State gave towns \$10,000 for this, but the Secretary of State recognized this was not enough and is seeking more money for the towns. Elected positions stayed flat on salaries. There is a 4% increase for non-elected. Selectman Ohler explained that the solar project at the transfer station is in its 3rd and final round of attempting to get state funding. The company has been told if they are not successful with this round, the town wants to void the contract. Selectman Bunce wants to try adding sand to the salt during the winter to decrease the amount of salt used and to save money. There will be cost to clean up the sand after winter. Chairman Humes mentioned using something from Allyndale which is environmentally friendly and not needing as much clean up. Employee pension line may change depending on

negotiations with the town crew. Resident trooper costs are up and likely push back about renewing the contract will occur. The vote will be before the budget vote and there will be 2 possible budgets ready with and without the resident trooper in them. Because the MIRA contract is ending in 3 years it is not clear what the transfer station will look like. Women's services line is zeroed out as a duplicate because it is now Susan B Anthony line. There was a discussion regarding the Fire company and their request to increase their line from 85,000 to 130,000. They anticipate having to replace the ladder truck in 7 years at a projected cost of \$1.5 million. They are putting together an appeal campaign. The company will hold the price for 3 years. Selectman Ohler wants there to be a true partnership between the town and the fire dept. Overall decrease to budget is \$24,566.00.

Mr. Allyn made a motion to accept the tax collector and the treasurers reports. Mr. Sorrell seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Treasurer time: Emily Minacci nothing to report except that the audit is still ongoing.

Selectman's time: nothing to report

Public Comment: There was a question regarding what the town does besides little league for the kids in town. Selectman Ohler explained the sports fall under the recreation commission. There was a question on whether there was any way to make cuts to the municipal budget by doing more things online. Selectman Ohler stated that efficiencies were considered.

The board will have a budget workshop on April 3 at 7:30pm and will meet on April 10.

Mr. Allyn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned 8:19pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ayrslea A Odell

Recording Secretary