

Town of Canaan Board of Finance

Regular Meeting

Monday, March 12, 2007

6:30 P.M.

Town Hall, 108 Main Street, Falls Village, CT

Present: Chairman Charles Lemmen, Kent Allyn, Tom Christian, George Elling, E. Frederick Petersen and Alternate Patrick Hafner.

Absent: Denise Cohn and Alternates Stephen Koshland and Scott Macchi.

Also Present: First Selectman Patricia Allyn Mechare, LHK Principal Maria Bulson, BOE Members Mary Elling and Beckie Seney, and Terry Cowgill, *The Lakeville Journal*. Later Selectmen Charles H. Lewis and Peter G. Lawson, LHK Tech. Coordinator Jane McDermott, BOE Chairman Andrea Downs, and Paul Bartoliomi, *Channel 6 Public Access TV*.

Chairman Lemmen called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. Patrick Hafner was introduced and welcomed as a new BOF Alternate member and former Alternate Kent Allyn was welcomed as a new Regular member.

Public Comment: None

Secretary's Report:

The February 5, 2007 Special Meeting minutes stand approved as published and the February 5, 2007 Regular Meeting minutes stand approved as published.

Treasurer's Report:

The February 2007 report was made available by the Treasurer prior to the meeting (attached). T. Christian asked if a surplus is expected in the Road Maintenance Line. First Selectman Mechare indicated that, although the last several weeks have necessitated O.T. hrs. due to icy road conditions, some surplus is anticipated. **F. Petersen made a motion to receive the Treasurer's Report. T. Christian seconded. Passed unanimously.**

Tax Collector's Report: The February 2007 report was distributed (attached). **A motion to receive the Tax Collector's report was made by T. Christian. K. Allyn seconded. Passed unanimously.**

Board of Education Financial Report:

The YTD Budget vs. Actual report through February 20, 2007 was distributed (attached).

A motion to receive the BOE Report was made by G. Elling. T. Christian seconded. Passed unanimously.

First Selectman's Report:

- STEAP Grants

107 Main Street – Kent Allyn has submitted for consideration a proposal to be hired as Clerk of the Works for this project. Fred Laser has done a comprehensive project manual; some refining is yet to be completed. The project should take 3 to 4 months and the \$275,000 should cover all outside work and perhaps some inside repairs needed as a result of roof leaks.

Emergency Services Building Project – Route 7 – The Building Comm. opened bids for clearing and grubbing site-work and made a recommendation to the Fire Department for a contractor. After voting on Thursday, the Fire Department will forward their final recommendation to the BOS for action. Mechare has written to the State project contact asking for a one-year work extension. Slow arrival of State money has hampered timely work progression.

- The BOS will have the proposed 2007/2008 Spending Plan available for BOF members a week prior to the upcoming March 26th BOF Special Meeting.
- Projected Expenses that Exceed the Budget –
The potentially biggest to exceed for the 2006/2007 budget is the pool. The status of the lumber (donated vs. purchased) is not yet clear, therefore the final cost to finish cannot yet be fixed. It could be between **\$35,000 - \$40,000** or **\$70,000**, depending on the wood issue.

Transfer Station – The DEP re-licensing required a topography re-survey, now complete. Ed Fenn, P.E., must do a new Mylar to reflect all required survey stamps and information. The final cost for these unanticipated DEP requirements will be about **\$4,000**; Transfer Station Manager Fred Palmer expects surplus in the current Transfer Station Line to cover part of this.

Cost for the Tax Assessment Reval. – Currently we have \$45,000 in the Revaluation Fund. The amount *Visionary* will require is \$79,500, so we are approximately **\$35,000** short. T. Christian asked for a schedule of payments to *Visionary* for BOF planning purposes.

Johnson Feeder Road Project – The State DOT indicates the total cost at \$361,000. While money has been set aside for the Town’s portion of the project, the town will need an additional **\$23,000**, according to the State. The Town’s overall portion is estimated at \$107,800. The project will run about two months. BOF member, T. Christian asked Mechare to research the timeline for total project payments that the Town will be required to make “up-front”, before then being reimbursed by the State.

- Rollovers – The Assessor requests that unexpended funds this year and each year be rolled-over into the Revaluation Fund. The DPW Manager expects to ask that unexpended Road Maintenance and Deicing Funds go to the Heavy Equipment or Truck Reserve Accounts. Also the Salt Shed Acct. does not currently have enough to cover a new salt shed (the State mandate requirement for this is being researched). The Fire Commission unexpended funds will be needed for the Fire Truck Reserve Acct., the *newest* fire truck being a 1984 model.
- C. Lemmen asked about the Beebe Hill/Deer Road-NW Conservation District Drainage Study and any plans for implementation by the BOS. Mechare indicated that the recently received study was reviewed by IWC, and then given to Geo. Anastasio, Chairman of that area neighborhood group, for dissemination among residents there. Mechare noted that the project would be very expensive, is mostly on private property, and that no action has been recommended by the BOS to date.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Canaan BOE Chairman Andrea Downs, assisted by Principal Maria Bulson and Technology Coordinator Jane McDermott, presented the proposed spending plan for 2007/2008 (attached), which was made available to the BOF prior to the meeting; each Series was reviewed line by line. McDermott provided a separate sheet (attached) of the Proposed Expenditures for Technology in detail.

Some items of change, or items questioned and discussed:

- A new item will be unemployment compensation payments made for substitute teachers, depending on hours worked.
- There are currently 14 teachers: 10 fulltime and 4 part-time.
- The *Laidlaw* bus contract has changed hands to *Allstar* as transportation provider. Principal Bulson indicates that the remaining two-years of the bus contract will be honored by *Allstar*. There will be less use in 2007/2008 due to the proposed all-day kindergarten, but three 8th grade students will be transported back and forth to HVRHS for math daily. Sam Herrick is helping to negotiate this.

- Contract negotiations for Certified Staff this year realized a cost saving by going from a 3-yr to a 4-yr contract. Contracts still to be addressed for the new budget are: the principal's, non-certified staff, and school nurse's.
- REAP Grant monies will be dropping-off and will need to be offset by future budgeted increases. They have been used primarily for staff development over the past several years
- T. Christian asked that the amount expected to be received from the Title One Grant, approximately \$12,000, be indicated in the proposed budget, as recommended by the Town auditor.
- The school will no longer offer physical exams for students joining sports, however a certain amount of funds will remain in the budget to help those students who cannot otherwise afford their physical exam.
- The new Middle School Athletic Director has called for use of certified officials, only, to referee school games - two/game. This has added a great cost to the sport's program.
- Off-level testing for the CT Mastery Tests is no longer a school expense.
- There will not be contract negotiations next year, so legal costs go down.
- Region One is part of an energy consortium, *Constellation New Energy*, so the projected electricity cost is helped.
- Building Improvements – The back portion and other end of the building will be painted. Storm windows will be applied to the main offices for energy savings and comfort-sake. Intercoms will be installed in bathrooms for emergency lockdown procedure communication safety. Library ceiling tiles are dislodging and will be replaced for safety-sake.
- Board Errors and Omissions Insurance costs are higher. First Selectman Mechare will check again with CIRMA to see if the BOE can be included with the Town Policy for a savings.
- A number of new textbooks were purchased last year, so that line is lower than might be expected for the coming year.
- The projected school enrollment for fall is 100 students.

Chairman Lemmen reminded all present that there is a workshop at the next Regular BOF Meeting on Monday, April 9th to look at the School and Town Spending Plans and a **Public Hearing on both Thursday, April 19th and Town Meeting to vote Thursday, May 10th immediately followed by a Special BOF Meeting to set the mill rate.**

Our next meeting is a Special BOF Meeting on March 26th for presentation of the Municipal Spending Plan by the BOS.

Adjournment:

T. Christian made a motion to adjourn at 8:09 P.M. F. Petersen seconded. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Margo B. Lewis
Recording Secretary