

**Town of Canaan
Board of Finance
Special Meeting
Monday, March 31, 2008
6:30 P.M.
Town Hall
108 Main Street, Falls Village, CT**

Present: Chairman Charles Lemmen, Kent Allyn, Denise Cohn, George Elling, Fred Petersen, and Alternate Tracy Atwood.

Absent: Scott Macchi and Alternate Stephen Koshland

Also Present: First Selectman Pat Mechare, Selectmen Pete Lawson and Chuck Lewis, and Treasurer Linda Paviol.

Chairman Lemmen called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M. and asked Alternate T. Atwood to be seated for absent regular member Scott Macchi.

First Selectman Mechare distributed the proposed Municipal Budget for FY 2008-2009 prepared by the BOS and dated March 31, 2008, the Projected Revenue Worksheet, and the Projected General Fund Balance (all attached). She went through the budget in order of numbered departments giving comments on changes and new items and answering questions from the Board of Finance members.

Salary increases were generally put at 3%; the BOS requests that the Selectmen's salaries remain at current levels. In the cases of the Tax Collector and the Town Clerk, the 3% increase for both salary and certification lines are reflected collectively in the salary line. The Board of Assessors Asst. reflects a 3% increase for hourly wage (600 hours+), although the line does not change from last year. 1014 - Registrar of Voters - they did not have an hourly rate increase, but additional hours result in an increased salary line, along with other line increases, primarily driven by the "Vote America Act" requirements set by the Sec. of State.

Mechare distributed a proposed Highway Crew Payroll Step Program and NWCOG Municipal Wage and Salary survey for nine northwest CT Towns (both attached). The Selectmen are proposing the step plan for three fiscal years, a trial period to bring wages in step with surrounding towns; by comparison ours are currently lower, even considering the overall benefits package. Based on the new step program salaries, there is a 3.9% increase. The DPW Foreman will continue to be reviewed annually for increases.

Town-owned building lines related to fuel and electricity generally show cost increases.

The Dog Officer Fund is receiving the first increase in 7 years.

The new Social Services Director requested hourly wage vs. salary. There is a 3% wage increase, but because she projects fewer hours, there is a net line decrease.

1022 - A new line is added, Emergency Fund, to meet individual/family emergency fuel and rent needs beyond Town Fuel Fund donation reserves.

1028 – A new line is the Bulky Waste Building Reserve; a dedicated building is an expected requirement from the State within a few years.

3001 – A jump in the Deicing line for special salt, proven to more efficiently treat roads that retain ice throughout the winter (Johnson, Undermountain, Dublin).

4001 – Increases in program lines for various children’s activities, including the Children’s Theater productions. With the pool re-opening, the Rec. Comm. proposes to utilize the YMCA for summer pool management/lifeguarding/programming for a one-year trial.

6001 – Increase represents mainly “tipping” fees and some 3% wage increments.

The new budget estimate of expenditures is \$1,549,722.00. The BOS indicates that the percentage increase for the new budget is 2.19% – 2.2%. Some BOF members posed questions, with further discussion, concerning what method should be used to determine the stated percentage increase of the new budget, i.e. new vs. approved budget; new vs. amended budget; new vs. estimated expended budget.

There was no BOF action to instruct the BOS regarding the proposed 2008-2009 Budget.

Further BOF questions regarded the revenue forecast, the proposed DPW payroll step program, and the anticipated increased HVRHS enrollment figures in upcoming years and the advisability of “earmarking” a portion of the general fund surplus for future years’ tuition.

Chairman Lemmen distributed 2008-2009 Preliminary Numbers (attached) for estimating the mill rate and for consideration of surplus funds-use to offset revenue raised from property taxes.

Upon a request from the Treasurer, after conferring with the Town Auditor, **F. Petersen made a motion to replace the \$7,000 Historical Document Preservation Grant in Department 1010 Town Clerk, Estimate of Expenditures 2008-2009, with \$0.00. K. Allyn seconded. Passed unanimously.**

Chairman Lemmen will ask Region One Business Manager Sam Herrick for updated projected enrollment figures for HVRHS and reminded members of the Region One Budget Hearing this Wednesday, April 3rd, 7 P.M. at the HVRHS.

Lemmen noted that salary issues and any other matters relating to the Municipal Budget and review of the amended BOE Budget will take place at the next regular BOF Meeting, Monday, April 14th; the Board will then set a date for a Town Budget Hearing. A NWCOG Municipal Salary Survey was requested for study prior to the next meeting; Selectman Mechare distributed it.

Adjournment:

A motion for adjournment was made by D. Cohn. G. Elling seconded. Passed unanimously.
The meeting adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Margo B. Lewis, Recording Secretary