

Town of Canterbury
Selectmen's Meeting
December 19, 2022

Selectmen Present: Bob Steenson
Cheryl Gordon
Kent Ruesswick

Town Administrator: Ken Folsom

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 PM.

Administrative

Kent made a motion to sign Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$182,204.04. Cheryl seconded the motion. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

Cheryl made a motion to sign the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$61,573.07. Kent seconded the motion. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

The Selectmen signed:

- appointment slips for the Forest Fire Warden and Deputies.
- Intent to Cut – Tax Map 235 Lots 25 & 25-1
- Elderly Exemption – Tax Map 233 Lot 2
- Letter to Homeland Security – re: Hazard Mitigation Plan submittal

Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes of the December 5, 2022, meeting. Bob made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Kent seconded the motion. All in favor by roll call, motion carried

Appointments

Town Clerk Tax Collector Sam Papps

Sam distributed the list of outstanding taxes. The voting machine may need to be replaced in 2024. Since an election will be held in January 2024, the Board asked Sam to keep them updated as it may need to be included in the 2023 budget.

The Board thanked Sam for attending.

Road Agent John O'Connor

John updated the Selectmen on vehicle maintenance. The old trailer at the transfer station has been moved in preparation for the new container being shipped.

The Board thanked John for attending.

Police Chief Mike Labrecque

Mike distributed the department's monthly statistics. Mike reported that Officer Katelyn Mills had submitted her resignation. A brief discussion was held on creating a contract for any new officers that the Town puts through the academy.

The Board thanked Mike for attending.

Fire Chief Mike Gamache

Inspections have been completed at New Freedom Academy and the temporary pump enclosure at Shaker Village.

One member completed FF2 training, and two are in the Advanced EMT school.

The grant request for the Fire Truck has been turned down; the median age of engine requests is 30 years old, and ours is only 26 years old. He is planning on applying again in 2023.

The department has completed two SCBA training and has scheduled an ice rescue training on January 7, 2023, with Loudon and Boscawen.

Mike reported that they responded to a vehicle accident on Interstate 93; a family was trapped in the car. The jaws of life were used to free them. The family sent a thank you card and gift basket to the station.

The Board thanked Mike for attending.

Budget Committee Members Tyson Miller, George Glines, Scott Doherty, and Calvin Todd attended the meeting. Also present were Department Heads, School Board Member Randi Johnson, Treasurer Al Edelstein, and Library Trustees.

Ken presented an update on the Broadband project. The State will be issuing the second round of grant money. Ken has been in contact with Bryan Christianson of Comcast, and he assures that Canterbury is on the top of their list of towns.

Ken gave a brief overview of the 2022 budget and the more significant increases proposed in the 2023 budget. Bob outlined that healthcare, personnel, and energy costs are the three most significant increases. Their overall objective is to bring the budget as close to flat last year as possible.

Bob updated the Committee on the Shaker Regional study committee. The committee has gone as far as possible and have not come up with a definitive conclusion. The Selectmen will submit a warrant article to fund consultants to assist them and re-authorize the process.

Bob explained that, in his view, elected officials are not employees but receive a stipend. The only elected officials that receive compensation are the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, who has regular office hours and can be considered an employee, the Board of Selectmen, and the Treasurer. There are two directions, 1) zero out all elected officials, apart from the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, or create a stipend for other elected officials such as the Planning Board and

Zoning Board of Adjustment. George explained that the Selectmen position is an important job. There is a lot involved, and he feels that the compensation should stay and is opposed to not paying the Selectmen. Tyson was also in opposition. Calvin asked what other towns do. There is no consistency in other towns.

The Board reviewed the proposed budget with the Committee.

Executive – proposed increase of 5.2% (health care and wages)

Financial Admin – 4% increase (health care and wages)

General Government Buildings – 14% increase (electricity, heat)

Cemetery – 10% increase (Headstone repairs)

Police – 6.8% increase (fuel, health care, and wages)

Fire – 5% increase (fuel, health care, and wages)

Highway – 13% increase (fuel, health care, and wages)

Solid Waste – 18% increase (wages)

Library – 19% increase (health care, additional retirement, and wages)

Bob explained that the Selectmen have spent a lot of effort keeping the town government part-time and asked that the Library Trustees meet and review the proposed wage line and not come in with a 21% increase. Rachel submitted a wage comparison to Library wages in the State of NH. Kent explained that the library had a 20% increase last year and is asking for another 20%; it's too much of an increase over two years. The difference between the 2020 library budget and the 2023 proposed reflects a 46% overall increase. The Selectmen asked Rachel and the Trustees to review their budget.

The Selectmen explained the potential warrant articles.

- Fire Truck
- Highway Truck
- Skag Mower
- Town Hall Floor

Calvin suggested that the Board get a price to install a new hardwood floor over the existing one. Ken will contact Konopka for pricing.

The Selectmen thanked the budget committee members, department heads, and trustees for attending.

The Selectmen will have a budget work session on January 5, 2023, at 1:00 pm at the Sam Lake House.

The next regular Selectmen's meeting will be held on January 9, 2023, at 5:00 PM at the Meetinghouse.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Stout
Administrative Assistant