

**Town of Canton**  
**October 19, 2021**  
**Special Board Meeting 6:00pm**  
**Minutes**  
**Virtual Meeting Via Zoom**

**Present**

Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley, Council Members Bob Washo, James Smith, and Martha Foley Smith

**Also in Attendance**

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Karin Blackburn, Historian Linda Casserly, Justice Rachelle Foster, Justice Michael Morgan, John Gray, CPA, Attorney Eric Gustafson

Members of the Public: Paul Baxter, Thomas Graser, Michael Hammond, Susan Huntley, Karen McAuliffe, Bob Santamoor, Heidi Smith, John Taillon

**A. Call to Order**

- Mary Ann Ashley opened the Special Meeting at 6:04 p.m.

**B. 2022 Budget Work Session**

- This is the third budget work session.
- The Board was presented with a balanced budget at a tax rate of 2.8393 per thousand, maxing out at the full tax cap levy allowed.  
\$1,115,049, an increase of \$17,670 in spending.
- Taking the conversations from the last meeting:
  - DA/DB Fund: make it more balanced between the funds in projected benefits.
  - A Fund: Judicial: if the Board agrees to the 2nd part time position, we would need to override the tax cap and increase the tax rate to \$2.95, which would equate to a tax levy of \$1, 158,523.
  - B Fund: Recreation: if the Board agrees to increase recreation by \$4000, we will need to increase the sales tax revenue.
  - Review:
    - Health insurance costs are increasing. Projected total of health insurance costs is \$429,364. Projected contributions are approximately \$96,332.
    - Health Insurance costs for active employees will increase by 9%.

- Health Insurance costs for retirees will have an average of 6-7% increase, but we are waiting on final figures for prescription drugs.
- We needed to plan for 4 or 5 "potential" family plan costs. A family plan is \$34,600.
- Assessor: need to do a full revaluation of property. To do this in the future, the position needs to be full time and have clerical support. For 2022, propose keeping it part time until a board decision is made.
- Code Enforcement: in the process of a search.
- Court: requested additional funds in contractual and an additional part time position. In order to do this, we would need to override the tax cap and raise taxes by .16 cents/thousand.
- Historian: increase pay rates for the historian to \$20/hour and assistant to \$15/hour.
- Supervisor's Office: increase pay rate and hours for Confidential Secretary/Bookkeeper to \$20/hour at 19 hours/week.
- Veteran's: added \$2,500 to the budget.
- Highway: request for a \$200K piece of equipment that is needed, was not put in this budget. Construction costs were increased.
- Fire Departments: smaller departments: \$45,000 for the year. Canton Fire remains at \$117,000. One more payment to be made on Engine 7 for Canton Fire Department.
- Clerk's Office: recommendation for a part-time Deputy Clerk at \$20/hour up to 19 hours per week.
- Volunteer Transportation Center did make a request for \$2,106 to assist with operations. The Board may want to consider this as well.
- Board discussion and input:
  - Bob Washo initiated questions and discussion with Justice Morgan regarding the current Court Clerk and the requested second Court Clerk, and the increases in the Court budget.  
One thought from Committee, put the budgeted amount for Judicial income back at the historical high (\$140,000 or \$145,000).
  - Jim Smith commented that over the last three years, one of the issues is the dropped revenue, but administrative costs continue to climb. Jim asked Justice Morgan if the revenue streams will be turning around. Justice Morgan is hopeful, but there are hurdles.
  - Mary Ann recommends returning the Court revenues back to \$145,000.
  - Jim Smith would like more time to go through the entire budget on all accounts.
  - Jim Smith talked about Highway and the request for the loader. He reviewed the leasing options, budget details, and down payment

coming from the 20-21 budget for the Highway department to acquire this loader.

- Martha Foley Smith: the Recreation number was supposed to be up to \$4,600 and additional money for maintenance in the mechanical room and for skate guards. Mary Ann confirmed that the current budget for Recreation is \$132,201 and there is an agreement for the Pavilion floor, which there's two more payments on. The Canton Community Fund and St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau may be an option for Recreation as well.
- Jim Smith is proposing an increase for the smaller Fire Departments. The increase for last year was \$5,000, but for this year he'd like to see an additional increase of \$2,500 for 2022, which would represent less than a 3% increase in the fire line. All Board members support this decision.
- There will likely be one more work session and then we will notice the Public Hearing for the Preliminary Budget.
- November 11<sup>th</sup> Board meeting falls on Veteran's Day. Moving the November Board meeting to November 18th

### **C. Executive Session**

Upon majority vote upon a motion that identifies the subject to be considered, the Council will conduct an executive session to discuss any of the issues identified as proper by Public Officers Law 105 (1) (H) the proposed acquisition of property.

1. Motion to go into Executive Session at 6:36 pm made by Mary Ann Ashley, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob Washo. All in favor. Motion carried.
2. Motion to come out of Executive Session at 7:07 pm made by Bob Washo, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Martha Foley Smith. All in favor. Motion carried.
3. Motion to adjourn at 7:08 pm made by Dave Nelson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jim Smith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Karin Blackburn  
Town Clerk