

2023 TOWN MEETING MINUTES
March 6, 2023

Moderator A. Morgan Wade opened the March 6, 2023, Annual School and Town Meeting at 6:05 P.M.

Moderator A. Morgan Wade introduced herself and said she was elected as the Moderator.

To open, the crowd began by stating the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moderator A. Morgan Wade stated that the meetings are governed by State Laws and the Robert Rules of Order and will modify if needed. Moderator Wade asked anyone with questions to come to the center of the room where the microphone was. Moderator Wade also stated to give your name so the clerk can take notes. "My goal is to help conduct the meeting, and you can always ask for a point of clarification. You can question and challenge me. Articles must be moved, seconded, and restated, and articles can be reconsidered to the point where they can be moved, seconded, and restated. Non-voters that want to speak should identify themselves and will be able to speak once we suspend the rules."

School Business was transacted.

After a short break after the school portion of the meeting, the Town portion began at 7:05 P.M.

Moderator Wade asked if voters would please speak loudly or come to the microphone when speaking. She also requested that all non-voters please state that they are non-residents when talking so voting residents could take priority.

“The legal voters of the Town of Canaan are hereby warned and notified to meet in the Canaan Memorial High School Gymnasium on Monday, the 6th day of March 2023 A.D. at 6:00 P.M. to transact the School business from the floor, and immediately thereafter, to transact the Town business from the floor:

ARTICLE I. To elect all Town Officers required by law:” Moderator Wade requested, with no objection, to not read the entire list of officers, which will be voted on at the Canaan Municipal building tomorrow, March 7, from 8 to 7.

Before reading the articles, Moderator Wade asked that the select board and clerk introduce themselves. Clerk Zachary Brown, Mark Bullard, Haven Haynes Jr., and Alfred Buckley.

Moderator Wade commented that she would read Article by Article.

ARTICLE 1. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan accept the provisions of 32 V.S.A. §4791 in regard to the collection of taxes by the Treasurer?

Odette Crawford motioned to open discussion on Article 1 and was seconded by Renee Marchesseault.

No discussion took place. Odette Crawford moved the question.

Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 1 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 2. Shall the Town of Canaan vote to apply any surplus from the current fiscal year to reduce taxes in the next fiscal year?

Odette Crawford motioned to open discussion on Article 2 and was seconded by Renee Marchesseault.

Michael Daley asked if the board had ever considered creating a similar fund as the school's (Tax Stabilization Fund). Haven Haynes Jr. stated that the town does have many matching funds set aside in the capital reserves for each department.

Chris Damato moved the question.

Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 2 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 3. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan raise and appropriate the sum of \$12,894.00 with revisions, if any, for the following agencies?

a.	Orleans Essex VNA & Hospice, Inc.	\$ 4,400.00	pg. 63
b.	Northeast Kingdom Human Services, Inc.	\$ 1,944.00	pg. 62
c.	Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging	\$ 1,500.00	pg. 64
d.	Rural Community Transportation	\$ 1,100.00	pg. 57
e.	Northeast Kingdom Learning Services	\$ 1,250.00	pg. 70
f.	Umbrella, Inc.	\$ 700.00	pg. 69
g.	Canaan Naturally Connected, Inc.	\$ 2,000.00	pg. 64
	AGENCY APPROPRIATION REQUEST TOTALS	\$ 12,894.00	

Moderator Wade asked that if there were no objections, vote for the total amount. No objections.

Michael Daley motioned to open discussion on Article 4 and was seconded by Nathan Freeman.

Odette Crawford stated that each appropriation amount was the same as last year.

Mason "Haze" Smith asked what Umbrella Inc was, and Moderator Wade read the description from their letter.

Kathy Smith moved the question.

Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 3 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 4. To determine if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$4,000.00 for the UPPER CONNECTICUT VALLEY HOSPITAL to help defray the costs of providing emergency and critical care clinic services. pg. 59

Renee Marchesseault motioned to open discussion on Article 5, which Daniel Wade seconded.

Odette Crawford commented that the \$4,000.00 is the same amount requested last year. The money is used for the emergency room, and she feels the voters should consider voting on this request again this year. The hospital appreciates the money they have received from the town in the past and hopes to do so again this year.

No further discussion took place.

Renee Marchesseault moved the question.

Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 4 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 5. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan accept the proposed Library budget, with revisions, if any, for the ensuing year? pg. 36

The motion was made by Daniel Wade and seconded by Chris Damato to open discussion on Article 5.

Sharon Ellingwood-White spoke and thanked the Townspeople for supporting the library this past year. Noreen Labrecque asked if she would be willing to give a highlight of the budget. Martha Vanderwolk also asked Sharon Ellingwood-White if the budget had any significant changes.

Sharon Ellingwood-White reported that the trustees had lowered the budget for the previous year. However, there were significant increases in heating costs, which Sharon reduced slightly by renegotiating the library's fuel contract. However, the price of fuel in the agreement still reflects the current inflation. Sharon also reported that salaries

increased as the trustees made a cost-of-living adjustment for the employees. To lower the budget, Sharon stated that they cut funding towards materials and supplies; books; postage; and programming to reduce the tax burden on the residents. Sharon also reported that the library was the Green Up coordinator again this year (2022) and was lucky enough to join the startup mentee program, which saw Jacqueline Giroux helping to plan the event in Canaan.

Chris Masson wanted to let Sharon know that he felt the library was the best thing in town and that the townspeople genuinely appreciated everything she did. Julie Giroux stated that Sharon was a true advocate for the library and the community.

No further discussion, Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 5 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 6. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan accept the proposed General Budget, with revisions, if any, for the ensuing year? (Includes Transfer Station and Police) pgs. 17-20

The motion was made by Daniel Wade and seconded by Gordon “Thomas” Trammell Jr. to open discussion on Article 6.

Moderator Wade asked if there were any objections to the Selectboard presenting the budgets. With no objections, Chairman Haven Haynes Jr. presented the general budget. Chairman Haynes noted that salaries for the employees increased to represent the cost of living increase, but select board salaries remained the same. Lister education/mileage increased as the town just came out of a reappraisal, and the new listers rely on training from a contracted source to understand the new legislative changes.

The county tax increased by approximately \$5000. The town has no say in this, and the Essex County judges decide this. Although the town can voice its opinions, they get no vote. VLCT dues and legal advice increased due to the need for more training, webinars, and in-person events.

Dispatch decreased due to the Dispatch center having enough capital reserves that they did not need to raise any further funds to go towards the reserves. Parks and trees increased as the town needed to trim trees in Fletcher Park before they became a hazard. Electricity for the parks increased as electricity was brought to the Beecher Falls park for the gazebo and flag pole. The only further cost for this park will be monthly electric bills.

The 45th Parallel increased by approximately \$12,000, which is according to calls and the need for more equipment, supplies, etc. The police budget is now solely comprised of the contract with the Essex County Sheriff’s Department. The town has contracted with them 25 hours per week at \$45 per hour. The cruiser has been sold, and all other costs

incurred by having a full-time police department have been eliminated. Streetlights increased in preparation for a possible rate increase.

Transfer station salaries increased to reflect the cost-of-living increase. Trucking has increased 25% from \$400 to \$500. The board purchased a dumpster for the C&D waste as the old one was having issues with the door latching and other issues. The old container has been sent out for repairs. The board has increased the price of the blue bags to \$21 to help offset the tax dollars needed for the transfer station. The board felt like \$21 was the max they could increase the bags before they became infeasible. The transfer station will also need some repairs to the roof in the upcoming year.

The board added electricity, electric doors, and security cameras to the recycling shed this year. Chairman Haynes asked if residents had any questions.

Tyler Gray asked why the Essex County Sherriff's costs increased. Chairman Haynes responded that the increase was due to them raising their hourly rates and starting at the end of March last year. Sharon Belleville asked why we have to pay more for their services. Why wasn't the county tax covering the costs? The board told her that when the department needs to cover other towns, it asks for more money to offset its costs. The county budget does not cover the total cost of the Sheriff's dept. Mark Bullard mentioned that Sheriff Colby has to fund a good portion of his budget through grants.

Scott Leigh asked if these grants could help offset the costs the town has to pay. Mark said that they would have to talk with Sheriff Colby. Julie Giroux wondered whether the department has consistent hours of coverage for Canaan. Haven said no, as they want to avoid becoming predictable. Renee Marchesseault asked if the town was receiving fines from the department. Chairman Haynes noted that the town does receive a percentage.

Odette Crawford asked if the board would review Revenues, so Chairman Haynes did a summary. Odette wondered if there was a surplus this year, and Noreen Labrecque said there wasn't.

Kim Sweatt moved the question.

Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 6 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 7. Shall the voters of the Town of Canaan accept the proposed Highway budget, with revisions, if any, for the ensuing year? pg. 32-33

The motion was made by Odette Crawford and seconded by Renee Marchesseault to open discussion on Article 7.

Mark Bullard presented the Highway Budget. He pointed out that repairs would need to be done to the Town Garage, which accounts for \$2,000 under repairs. The Grader will need new tires and repairs, accounting for the \$8,000. The backhoe has been paid off, and a \$1 buyout will come sometime in May. The Hall Stream bridge project should happen this year and will be covered under a 90/10 state grant.

Odette Crawford asked why this wasn't done last year. Mark reported that they didn't receive any bids the previous year; this year, they only received one. Mark said the board had met with the contractor to bring down the bid, as his initial bid included unnecessary items. Kim Sweatt asked if the bridge would be widened. Mark reported that the repairs would mainly be underneath the bridge, repairing the pier with the only above-ground work to install new guard rails. He also stated that the bridge would remain open during the work.

Daniel Wade moved the question.

Moderator Wade called for a vote.

Article 7 passed in the affirmative.

ARTICLE 9. To transact any business that may legally come before the meeting.

Odette Crawford asked why the town did not include an article to raise \$2,500 for the building capital reserve fund as they have done in the past. Noreen Labrecque answered that when the town was audited this year, the auditing firm said it wasn't necessary to include a warned article on the matter and include it in the budget. The board decided to include it in the budget and not have a separate warned article.

Noreen Labrecque informed the townspeople that the Selectboard was looking for ideas on how to spend the ARPA money. The money has been used for a new generator at the town office, a new generator for FD #2 and a waterline project in Ethan Allen park. The select board stated they wanted to use the funds to repair the town office. Al Buckley noted that the roof needed repairs, as many screws were coming out, and the facial boards around the building were starting to rot. Mark Bullard said they would also like to replace the windows and flooring in the building. Mark also said they would like to add lighting to the parking lot. Chairman Haynes stated that they have yet to be able to find contractors, and that is why the work has yet to begin.

Daniel Johnson asked why the Building Trades program couldn't do these projects. Some discussion was held on this topic, stating that the town needed insured contractors and that it is difficult for the building trades program to take on these side jobs.

Odette asked when the funds would need to be used, and Noreen stated that the deadline is 2025.

No other business to transact.

Odette Crawford motioned to adjourn the meeting, which Noreen Labrecque seconded.

The 2023 Annual Town Meeting adjourned at 7:55 P.M.

Submitted by:

[Redacted signature]

Zachary William Brown, Asst. Town Clerk 3/6/2023

Approved by:

[Redacted signature]

A. MORRIS KLADZ, MODERATOR

3/16/2023

[Redacted signature]

3/16/23

MARK BULLARD Select Board Chairman

**Canaan School District
Annual Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 6, 2023 – 6:00 PM
Canaan Memorial High School Gymnasium**

Moderator Morgan Wade called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Moderator Wade read through Article 1 in its entirety.

ARTICLE 1. To elect all Town School District Officers, as required by law.

Moderator Wade read through Article 2 in its entirety.

ARTICLE 2. Shall the voters of the Canaan School District authorize the Board of School Directors to borrow money for current operating expenses in anticipation of taxes?

A motion was made by Odette Crawford and seconded by Dan Wade to open discussion of Article 2.

Renee Marchesseault explained why this article is necessary.

A motion was made by Odette Crawford to move the question of Article 2.

Article 2 passed in the affirmative as written.

Moderator Wade read through Article 3 in its entirety.

ARTICLE 3. Shall the voters of the Canaan School District approve the school board to expend \$5,000,648 which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$21,447.68 per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 6.8% higher than for the current year.

A motion was made by Odette Crawford and seconded by Zachary Brown to open discussion of Article 2.

Renee Marchesseault presented the Budget for the fiscal 2023-2024 school highlighting major changes.

Article 3 passed in the affirmative as written.

There was no discussion.

Moderator Wade read through Article 4 in its entirety.

ARTICLE 4. Shall the voters of the Canaan School District authorize the Board of School Directors to deposit up to \$75,000 of any surplus funds existing at the end of the fiscal year, or such portion of any surplus funds as the Board deems appropriate, into the capital expenditure reserve fund?

A motion was made by Odette Crawford and seconded by Dan Wade to open discussion of Article 4.

A question was asked about the carryover from the previous year.

Article 4 passed in the affirmative as written.

Moderator Wade read through Article 5 in its entirety.

ARTICLE 5. Shall the voters of the Canaan School District authorize the Board of School Directors to establish a tax stabilization fund to lower homestead property increases in any year they increase by more than three percent and transfer the school board's approved unallocated general fund balance from the 2021-2022 school year?

Chairperson Marchesseault requested that the Motion be defeated until next year.

Martha Vanderwalk made a motion to amend Article 5 to read, "shall voters of the Canaan Town School District authorize the Board of School Directors to establish a tax stabilization fund to lower property tax increases in any year they increase by more than 3%" seconded by Dan Wade.

Motion failed to pass.

Haze Smith made a motion to amend Article 5 to read, "shall voters of the Canaan Town School District authorize the Board of School Directors to establish a tax stabilization fund to lower poverty increases." Seconded by Odette Crawford.

Motion passed in the affirmative.

Article 5 passed in the affirmative with amendments.

ARTICLE 6. To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Chris Masson mentioned that the ENSU building needs to be painted.

Dan Wade asked about the North Point CTE center in Colebrook and how it would affect Canaan's CTE program.

Principal Chuck Patterson and Chris Damato responded saying that the school would lose around \$26,000 in Perkin's Grant funding that it was receiving from New Hampshire.

Chris Masson asked for an update on the Connector project.

Nathan Freeman mentioned that he had been in touch with the Agency of Education and is awaiting approval of a bid waiver since only one bid was received.

Richard Marchesseault asked what the process for the bid waiver is and why we need one.

Facilities and Maintenance Director Scott Conroy iterated that if the waiver is not approved soon, it would affect the May-September construction window and the goal is to have the connector built before the start of the next school year.

Chairperson Renee Marchesseault said that when the project is in a place to proceed, a public hearing will be held.

On a motion made by Noreen Labrecque seconded by Dan Wade, the meeting was adjourned at 6:44 PM.

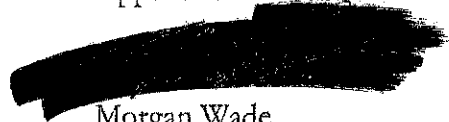
Submitted by:



Megan Chappell
Administrative Assistant

3/10/2023

Approved:



Morgan Wade
School Moderator

3/10/2023