

MINUTES  
Annual Budget Hearing  
February 7, 2011

The Campton Board of Selectmen met for two public hearing for the proposed 2011 budget. The meeting was held at the Campton Historical Society with approximately 15 people, public and Town employees in attendance in addition to Selectmen Sharon Davis, Charles Wheeler, Charles Cheney, Craig Keeney, Marsh Morgan, and the Town Administrator.

At 6:30 p.m. Chair Sharon Davis called the first public hearing to order which was to discuss the bonding for the repair and restoration of the Blair Covered Bridge. Chair Davis indicated that this has been a long process, and the Town had finally received word that we had received the federal grant back in June. The Town now needs to have the ability to pay any bills for the contractors and materials until we receive reimbursement from the Federal and State grants. The purpose of this bond is to give us that funding ability in anticipation of our grant funds. The federal portion of the grant is \$1,724,000.00, the state portion of the grant is \$423,889.06 and the Town's portion is \$105,972.27. The Town has its money in place from the bond we got back in 2009, and at present we have set that money aside in a separate account. The total project at this point is \$2,253,861.00. Since all the money is in place, this bonding will not affect the tax rate. Attorney David Barnes from the Bond Council is putting together the wording for this warrant article which be voted upon at Town Meeting.

Selectman Keeney explained the timeline of the project. Originally we had hoped to receive word of this grant last April. The Town officially got notified in June, and the Selectmen met with Nancy Mayville from DOT, and a municipal agreement was put together. This agreement was sent to the Town in early fall, and returned immediately by us. It was then scheduled to be signed by Governor and Council which just happened on January 19<sup>th</sup>. At this point, Selectman Keeney indicated that after talking with our Project Manager Matthew Moore, it does not look like the project will go out to bid until October meaning actual construction will not happen until 2012.

A question was asked about the safety of the bridge until that time by James Aguiar. Road Agent Butch Bain indicated that he has been screwing down loose planks periodically and in the spring anticipates having to replace some of these planks. Selectman Keeney indicated that a few months back an oversized truck had entered the bridge and damaged some knee braces on the bridge. Stan Graton of 3G Construction, an expert builder of covered bridges checked the bridge and advised Selectman Keeney that the damage had not compromised the structure of the bridge. Selectman Cheney indicated that there had been some discussion about putting some kind of barrier across the opening of the bridge so oversized vehicles could not enter the bridge.

At 6:45 p.m. the first public hearing was concluded. Chair Sharon Davis indicated that since the second hearing was scheduled for 7 p.m., we would take a break and enjoy some refreshments.

At 7 p.m. Chair Davis indicated that the Town Administrator, Ann Marie Foote would present the Town Department's budget at this time.

Ann Marie indicated that before she got into the individual budgets that she first wanted to thank the Department Heads for working with her in putting this budget together for the Selectmen's review. She also wanted to point out that while the totals of appropriations reflects an overage in bottom line that a large part of this is because of the bond which shows on one side of the balance sheet as an expense and the other as income so it is essentially a wash. Together with other estimated revenues which go towards lowering the amount of taxes to be raised, she also pointed out that the Selectmen are using \$100,000 from the fund balance for the money to be raised for the Capital Reserve Fund for the Municipal Building. The result being an actual drop in the amount of taxes to be raised by approximately \$82,000.00.

Ann Marie then proceeded to go over each page of the individual budget lines, and answered any questions after each page. It was pointed out that no employees were receiving any raises or cost of living this year. Employees are now paying 7% of their health insurance. Most departments were leveled funded, and the only increases were items that we had no control over. The lease of the modular for the Selectmen's office was put back in the General Building Fund rather than a separate warrant article which is required the first year of a lease so this line item is up this year. The Town Clerk/Tax Collector's budget showed a slight increase because of increased fees to the State. She issues dog, marriage, fishing, and OHRV licenses which a portion of this goes back to the State, and this can only be estimated, but it has increased for last year. The Highway budget is down because a lease/purchase was paid up this year, but a separate warrant article is on for a new 6 wheeler truck for a four year lease/purchase. This amount is actually less than the last lease so the Highway budget is still down slightly. Due to the economy both Planning and Zoning budgets have been decreased. On the other hand, the welfare budget had to be increased. Fire Department was increased due to a full complement of full time staff. Also Call Company was up by 18% in 2010 so adjustments were made for this year's budget. Full time members of the Fire Department will also begin paying 7% of their health insurance in July.

Capital items in the budget include a new cruiser, a Ford Crown Vic, and a much needed new server in the Town Office. The present server is over 9 years old. Some Capital Reserve Accounts were put back into active funding this year for the Fire Department as the Town of Thornton is going with their CIP plan to put money in these funds rather than do a lease purchase. Since we are in an Inter-governmental Agreement, we cannot enter an agreement with just one Town participating. The Selectmen also funded and want to ask voters to set up a new Capital Reserve Fund for office technology. Under Advertising and Regional, we saw a drop as the Town decided not to continue membership in North Country Council. We also did not fund the Mid State Health as we did not receive a request from them. The Board did decided to put a warrant article in for the Pemi Bridge House to give them funding in the amount of \$1,000.00.

The budget hearing ended at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Marie Foote  
Town Administrator