

CAMPTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, November 20, 2023

Board attendees: Chair Sharon Davis, Selectman Craig Engel, Selectman Mort Donahue, and Selectman Dan Boynton

On Zoom: Vice Chair Nik Coates

Public attendees: Campton Administrator Corey Davenport was present along with Ron Farnsworth, Emily Nichols, Justine Pare, Dede Joyce, Nancy Mardin, Jack Hutchins, Jake Tuck and Paula Woodward as members of the public.

Call to Order. A regular meeting of the Town of Campton Board of Selectmen was called to order at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, 20 November 2023 by Chairman Sharon Davis in the Campton Town offices and via Zoom.

In Public Session a motion was made by Selectman Engel to go into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A: 3, II (a), (b), &(c). Selectman Boynton seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Selectman Donahue, aye; Selectman Engel, aye; Selectman Boynton, aye; and Chair Davis, Aye. The Board came out of non-public session at 5 p.m.

New Business

Budget Work Session:

Campton Historical Society: Dede Joyce and Nancy Mardin were in attendance to present the historical society's funding request. They mentioned that there were no major changes and that they were requesting \$7500 for regular maintenance of the buildings. General discussion ensued regarding the needs of the Historical Society. Long-term needs include repairs to the chimney, attic, interior windowsills, and replacement loam. There was a discussion about the capital reserve fund for the Historical Society. Corey confirmed that there was approximately \$33,000 in capital reserve funds. There was discussion about the roof, but there is no immediate need for repair/replacement. The Historical Society asked the Board to consider adding \$2,500 annually to the capital reserve fund for longer-term projects. The Board agreed with the recommendation and asked Corey to make those changes.

Chairman Davis said there had been public inquiries regarding political booth(s) at Old Home Day. The Historical Society mentioned that they had heard those concerns and had voted not to allow political tents anymore.

Planning & Zoning: Jade Hartsgrove was present via Zoom to discuss the Planning and Zoning budgets. The major increase in the planning budget was \$11,000 which was a placeholder for impact fees. Jade is exploring third-party companies regarding impact fees and

that is roughly the amount that was quoted last year. The other major increase was the \$5,000 set aside for membership dues to North Country Council. The Board asked if they could assist with developing the impact fees. It was determined that they might be able to assist, but it would likely be an additional fee.

Selectmen Boynton and Engel asked questions about the value Campton will receive from membership in North Country Council. Selectman Coates responded that member dues pay for support of the region of some 40 communities. When a *member* community submits a funding proposal, it is placed higher on the consideration list than non-members. North Country Council also grades requests for the State 10-Year Road Plan. This means that projects recommended by the Charrette will be graded higher if Campton is a member. Campton can also receive comprehensive traffic counts and master planning at a reasonable cost. The council also provides technical assistance regarding conservation and energy planning. Ms. Hartsgrove will contact North Country Council in the coming week to inquire further.

Personnel & Buildings: Mr. Davenport stated there were no major changes to the personnel budget. There will be increased health and dental costs. A little more was spent than budgeted in 2023 for health retirement savings, so this item was increased by \$2,000. The “merit” line item will be removed since the Town chose to establish a step program.

Line Item 4194, electricity rates, decreased by a small amount in 2023. Mr. Davenport is exploring opportunities to obtain a better provider.

Custodial costs were increased to account for increases in dumpster costs as well as an increase in the cleaners. The cleaners worked for a much cheaper rate than normal in 2023, and Mr. Davenport discussed a new price for 2024 to thank them for working with the Town. Mr. Davenport increased the 2024 budget a little to allow for the services. A general discussion took place regarding landscaping and cleaning services in the future. Selectman Boynton suggested adding a town position responsible for these services and some plowing in the winter. This topic was tabled until 2024. Regarding yard care (4194-008), Selectman Davis asked that the budget be increased from \$18,000 to \$20,000.

Capital Reserves: Mr. Davenport presented the recommendations from the Capital Improvement Committee to the Board. Mr. Davenport explained several proposed changes to the Board. The first proposal was an increase to the highway heavy equipment fund so that the truck purchases could be made on time. Mr. Davenport then discussed the need to put in \$15,000 to the technology fund to help pay for a new server and there are a few computers that need to be replaced soon. There was a reminder that the Board had previously agreed to a new fire truck purchasing schedule, which meant that the fire department vehicle fund would need to be increased. The next fund discussed was the solid waste disposal fund. The CIP Committee recommended that \$25,000 be put into the fund again in anticipation of projects happening at the transfer station. Finally, the road fund was discussed. The CIP Committee recommended a reduction back to \$250,000. The Board discussed this topic for several minutes. The Board wondered if splitting the costs between the highway budget and a warrant article would be better. Selectman Coates cautioned to keep this item all in the proposed budget or all as a warrant article. The Board was curious how much of the \$750,000 would be

spent. Mr. Davenport will know in December precisely what was spent on road reconstruction and paving in 2023 and how much is left over.

Review Manifests, Sign Permits & Warrants. Selectman Boynton made a motion to approve November 6, 2023 Public Minutes, & November 6, 2023 Non-Public Minutes. The motion was seconded by Chair Davis and the Board unanimously approved the motion.

Summer & Winter Maintenance RFP Results. The two proposals received were discussed. The winning proposal was very detailed in the services to be provided. The Fire Department's main station would not be plowed and is not included in the contract by their own request. Selectman Engel made a motion to accept the proposal sent in by Tuck Home Services. The motion was seconded by Selectman Donahue and unanimously approved. Jake Tuck was present and answered a few questions.

Town Administrator Update:

Mr. Davenport reported that the small fire truck had been purchased. It will be delivered around March 2024. The final cost came in at approximately \$451,000.

The Community Power Committee will provide two upcoming public presentations. Selectman Boynton requested that one of the meetings be held during a Board of Selectman meeting. Chairperson Davis will recuse herself from that portion of the Selectman's meeting due to her position as chairperson of New Hampshire Electric Co-op board of directors. The Board agreed to have the public hearing at the beginning of the next Selectmen's meeting.

Mr. Davenport believes that approximately ten non-profits have requested town funding. He has reached out to schedule a non-profit night. He anticipates that most will be in attendance at the next BOS meeting.

Mr. Davenport gave an update on the step program implementation. He recommended performing the 2023 staff evaluations using the current merit-based system. Starting January 1st 2024, employees will be placed on the step scale, which will be reflected in the 2024 budget. He will present a draft to the Selectmen showing the step placement of all employees at the next meeting. Reminders of staff evaluations will be sent to all department heads beginning this week.

Campton Village Precinct Lights & Sidewalks. A lively discussion regarding the Campton Village Precinct (CVP) lights and sidewalks took place with numerous considerations. The Board discussed the purchase of a sidewalk plow vs subcontracting it to work out. They discussed the cost of electricity, cost of staffing, etc. It is anticipated that the Precinct will present a petition warrant article to transfer maintenance and ownership of the lights and sidewalks. Staging such a transfer of ownership will be necessary due to planning and budgeting issues. Suggestions of partial transfer until 2025 and 2026 were discussed. Further discussion is needed.

Privilege of the Floor.

Several high school students were present. Chairman Davis solicited their opinions about the public process of the Selectmen's meeting.

Tax Rate Setting.

The tax rate is increasing to \$28.77 per \$1,000, up to \$3.50. The Town's portion of the increase is primarily due to road reconstruction. Discussion ensued about whether to apply some portion of the undesignated fund balance to reduce the tax rate. Mr. Davenport presented documentation that he produced to show the impact of putting money against the tax rate. His caution was that once you reduce the tax rate with the undesignated fund balance, you have to do it every year or risk a large increase. The Board discussed using the undesignated fund balance for the roads or other major projects rather than reducing the tax increase by a small amount. Chairperson Davis asked for a motion. Selectman Boynton made the motion to approve the tax rate of \$28.77. The motion was seconded by Selectman Donahue and the Board unanimously approved the motion.

Board Concerns and Directives.

Selectman Donahue asked Mr. Davenport to report to the Forest Service that logs are still hung up on the dam. Selectman Donahue would like to see something done about them.

Selectman Engel reported that Campton Design would be ready to give a report on results in January. The Board thanked him for his time on this matter.

Selectman Boynton would like to set up a meeting with the recreation committee to set goals. He asked about the interest of a citizen who had come into an earlier Selectmen's meeting. Mr. Davenport said he had been in contact with the individual and that they were unfortunately too busy to join the recreation committee.

Chairman Davis reported that the contractor had been doing a good job cleaning the covered bridges. Mr. Davenport said that he had spoken with Mr. Graton about an annual schedule for cleaning the bridges. In addition, he will apply for a grant to apply no-char on the interior braces since several of the interior braces have had to be replaced due to bridge strikes. The Board felt that a Spring cleaning schedule made more sense to eliminate winter salt and debris. Mr. Davenport said he would contact the Gratoms to see if that schedule was possible.

Adjournment. There being no further business, Chairman Davis adjourned the public meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Corey Davenport
Town Administrator