

2006 Annual Budget Meeting
February 16, 2006

The Board of Selectmen held their budget hearing on the above date at 7 p.m. at the Campton Historical Building (Old Town Hall). Present were Selectman Jon Homer, Charles Wheeler, James McGarr and Charles Cheney.

At 7:00 p.m. Selectman Wheeler announced that the Board would open the public hearing for a bond issue and also acquisition of land. At 7:45 p.m., we will take up the Town's general budget. Chairman Wheeler explained that originally the Board had been working on a multi-purpose project to purchase a piece of land consisting of 5 acres on Vintinner Road, and to fund a municipal building project which would consist of placing a new Town Office and Fire Station on this land, build an addition to the existing Police Department, a Fire Station substation on NH Route 175, and turn the existing Fire Station into the Town Highway Garage. The Board worked with architect Michael Piazza on this project, and the initial cost came in at 4.7 million dollars. The Board met with Mike, and agreed that they did not feel that they could support this figure, and were not ready to go forward with this whole project. The Board would like to set up a 5 person building committee to spend the next year looking at different approaches to the Town's building needs. Selectman Wheeler went on to explain that back in August the Board had obtained permission to hold a special Town Meeting, and at that meeting were looking for voter approval to purchase a piece of land from Selectman Donald Johnson, Jr. This vote did not pass, and the land has subsequently been sold. The other piece of land that the Town had looked at during that time was being offered for \$575,000, and this land has again been offered to us at the reduced price of \$300,000. The Board would like to have the voters approve the purchase of this 5 acre parcel, and the money would be taken out of the Town surplus. The Selectman have also talked to Pike again, and they would be willing to sell us 2.7 acres surrounding our existing Fire, Police and Town Shed property. Selectman Wheeler explained that part of our Town equipment, and sand pile are actually on Pike Land. Pike is offering this land at \$45,000 an acre, and would also consider some tax breaks. The Board would ask voters to support a figure of \$100,000 for this land which also could be taken out of surplus. The Board are also asking voters to approve the building of a Town Highway Garage for \$190,000. This would be funded by a combination of surplus and a Capital Reserve Fund set aside for a Highway Garage. In addition to these three warrant articles, the Board will also be requesting that the Town approve a bond of \$320,000 to build a Fire Department on NH Route 175. The question was asked by Paul Yelle as to how big this building would be, and the answer was approximately 1,400 feet. Tim Kingston ask whether we had to purchase additional apparatus for this station. Chief Tobine said no, that we would keep two pieces of apparatus that we have now. One being a Pumper tanker and the other mostly likely the forestry truck. Selectman McGarr indicated that the project would be put out to bid. Sharon Davis inquired as to whether this included the land. The Board indicated that the Town already owns this land. Mike Piazza indicated that this figure includes a contingency fund of 5%, well, septic, electrical, and paving of the driveway. It was then corrected that the actual square feet of the building was 1,700 square feet at \$187.00 a square foot. Chief Tobine indicated that it had also been agreed to with

2006 Annual Budget Meeting
February 16, 2006

the previous owner of the property that the building had to fit in with the aesthetics of the residential neighborhood, and Mike had incorporated this in his design. Chief Tobine explained that this end of Town has developed rapidly, and there are a number of homes in the area. The fire trucks from the Central Station have to go down NH Route 175 as they cannot cross over the Blair Bridge because of the weight restrictions. It can take from 9 to 14 minutes to reach this end of Town depending on how quick some of the call company respond, and where the Chief is when the call comes in. Plymouth Fire is also on automatic response, but it still takes them up to 15 minutes to get there as well. Jane Stohn wanted to know if a traffic study had been done on this area. Chief Tobine indicated that there is good access from this property going both ways, and didn't think that a traffic light would be necessary. Other questions about the cost to operate and heat the building, could not be answered at this point in time.

Discussion then turned to the articles in reference to the land purchases. Tim Kingston asked about the amount that the Town has in surplus. Selectman Wheeler indicated that our current fund balance is \$973,000. Selectman McGarr indicated that the Department of Revenue Administration recommends that you keep anywhere from 5% to 15% of the total budget in surplus which we would be doing. The Board of Selectmen have exhausted all other avenues for land purchases. Pike is only willing to sell us the 2.7 acres around the existing buildings as they have their own plans for the future use of their larger piece of land. Marsh Morgan inquired as to whether the Water District was interested in selling their piece of land which Pike had shown interest in as well. The sale of the land to the Town is not contingent upon this, but Pike had included it in their original proposal. The District is not interested in selling this land, and Selectman McGarr indicated that it is probably better for them to keep it. This part of the hearing ended at approximately 7:30 p.m., and a refreshment break of cookies and coffee was offered to all those present. People who were interested in being on the building committee were advised to leave their name with Ann Marie.

At 7:45 p.m., the Selectmen opened the general budget portion of the meeting. Chairman Wheeler indicated that Ann Marie would read down a page, and point out any increases and the reasons why, and if anyone had a question, they would have the opportunity to at the end of each page. Ann Marie explained that under Selectmen and Town Clerk's budgets that the full time personnel were getting a 2% increase, and the part-time person \$1.00 more an hour. There were increases due to the amount of elections next year, 3 and possibly 4 elections. Also there was an increase in the Supervisor's section of the budget, due to their having to do a large amount of computer work to put the voter registration on the internet with the State so any fraud from same day voter registration can be avoided or eliminated. On page 2, the increases were again the 2% increase for the full-time people, and a \$1.00 more for the part-time person in the Selectmen's office. There was also an increase for the internet and support of the Town's website. Page 3 of the budget covered the legal fees which had to be increased from \$15,000 to \$50,000 due to two lawsuits filed against the Town in regards to Beebe River. The Board explained that this was all related to the

2006 Annual Budget Meeting
February 16, 2006

Community Block Grant that the Town applied for on the District's behalf for the water and sewer project. Sharon Davis asked if the Town's insurance carrier had been contacted in reference to these lawsuits, and the answer was yes, but they have not yet made a determination as to whether or not they would do this. Under the retirement, Ann Marie explained the increase was due to the increase in employer's portion on the Police Retirement, and the addition of two full-time added personnel for the Highway Department. Health insurance reflects this increase in personnel as well, but due to changing to a plan with a higher deductible and joining with the SAU's group plan, the health insurance has actually gone down. Page 4, the general buildings budget is up due to increases in fuel and electrical costs. Cemeteries are down slightly, and money will be appropriate for some more survey work at the Blair Cemetery. Marsh Morgan questioned whether anything was going to be done about the trees in the old Cemetery off of Industrial Way. Marsh indicated that there were a number of trees that need to be removed before they uproot the gravestones at that site. Selectman McGarr requested that Ann Marie put these comments in the minutes, and the Board will discuss it further. Page 5 covered insurance and advertising and regional expenses which are requested amounts each year for different agencies, and there were no questions in reference to these budgets. Page 6 covered the Police budget, and Ann Marie explained that the increases in their budget included a 2% increase for the Chief, and the other employees were not receiving an increase in wage per hour, but were increasing the number of hours worked. The fuel also had to be substantially increased to cover the rise in costs. Selectman McGarr also pointed out that there was an increase in officer's wages as the Town has recently hired a more experienced officer who lives here in Campton, and overall it saves money by not having to train someone. The next page of the budget dealt with the Fire Department. When the Campton, Thornton and Ellsworth Selectmen met to go over the budget for the Fire Department with the Commissioners and the Chief, they all voted to support the addition of another full time firefighter to the department. Chief Tobine pointed out that he has responded to 138 calls without any additional help being available to respond. If he is in another part of Town or the other end of Thornton, and a call comes into a residence on the Plymouth end of Town, it would take him quite awhile to respond. The question was asked whether this person would be a officer. The Chief indicated that he would be hiring a firefighter/EMT, not an officer. Ann Marie went over the Highway Department budget which includes increases in the Tar appropriation budget as the Road Agent had gone out with a Pike representative for all the road that need work on them, and this will just be the start of getting that work done. Road Agent Dick Giehl also included two full-time highway crew in the budget, and decreased the sub contractors budget so the Town's crew can do more of the general maintenance work. The next budget that brought some comments were the Solid Waste/Recycling. Tim Kingston questioned why we had to raise more money if we had not spent it all last year. Ann Marie explained that it is an intergovernmental agreement between Campton, Thornton and Ellsworth, and we are required to raise 64% of the total budget. Part of the reason, we underspent the budget, is because we get a credit on our last quarter's bill for the percentage of recycling revenue that we receive. Resident Jeff Kidney complained about the enforcement of recycling at the Transfer Station, and

2006 Annual Budget Meeting
February 16, 2006

indicated that he sees a lot of out of state people not recycling, and no one says anything to them. Selectman Jon Homer commented that he has seen the personnel speak to people on a number of occasions when he has been there to drop over his trash. It was also mentioned that there is a report from Transfer Station Manager David Hilliard in the Town Report that gives the figures for the revenue we receive in recycling, and the savings we realize each year. The budget also included some funds for a summer Parks and Recreation program again. Nancy Benedix has offered to run the program again as she did a few years ago. Sandy Kingston questioned where it would be held. Nancy was aware that if the Campton School got their renovation project approved at School Meeting that the Campton School would not be available, but indicated that in the past the Campton and Thornton schools have been able to work out using each others buildings when they had some renovation or repair work going on. Nancy had also approached Waterville Estates about the Community Center, but no one was able to give her a figure as to what they would charge. The Library budget included a 3% increase for the Librarian and some additional money for special programs in the summer. Librarian Corrina Arroyo had also requested that the Selectmen keep the Library in mind when they look at their building needs as the Library has its growing pains as well.

Other questions that came up during the meeting involved the parking lot at the Campton Historical Building. The pavement had been removed as it was in terrible shape from heavy trucks turning around in it all the time. Michelle Betts indicated that the Town has been very supportive of the Campton Historical Building, and was hoping that the Town could perhaps have the Highway crew help spread some hard pack when they get it in the spring. Lester Mitchell commented that there were too many junkyards in Campton, and when asked where he was talking about, he indicated all over Town. Selectman McGarr indicated that he had received some inquires as Health Officer, and look up the law and it reads that a person must have more than one unregistrable vehicle. Chairman Wheeler thanked everyone for coming, and ask that each person tell five people about the meeting, and encourage people to come out and vote on March 14th, and come to Town Meeting on March 15th.

The meeting ended at 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Marie Foote
Administrative Assistant