

Selectmen's Meeting
January 9, 2006

The Selectmen met at 5:30 p.m. at the Campton Fire Station to discuss the 2006 proposed budgets for the Campton Thornton Fire Department, and the Solid Waste and Transfer Station. Campton Selectmen present were: Charles Wheeler, James McGarr and Charles Cheney. From the Thornton Selectmen: Arthur Gross, Ralph Perron, and Lee Freeman. The Town of Ellsworth was represented by Leonard "Buddy" Clayton. The Campton Thornton Fire Commissioners present were Richard Giehl, Daniel Morel, Clifford Eastman and Nancy Byerly. Also present was Thornton Town Administrator Candy Andrew, Fire Chief David Tobine, Deputy Chief Michael Piazza, and members of the public.

Chief Tobine was requested by the Commissioners to present the 2006 budget. The Chief began by advising us that the Department had 563 calls this past years, and there was an increase in building fires this past year. He could not get into the reasons for the increase as some involved arson. He indicated that there were some overages in some of the line items this past year including the fuel and equipment maintenance. The Department had waited until the end of the year before purchasing some items out of the equipment line item so they were able to keep within their bottom line by not spending down this line item. Chief Tobine than indicated that he had to bring up a subject that some may not want to hear, but an issue that needs to be addressed. Over the past year, the Chief or one of his firefighters has had to respond to 138 calls alone. 31 of these calls were fire calls. 344 calls were received from the hours of 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday thru Friday. He indicated that the Department cannot reply on just himself and the call company on daytime calls. A lot of the call company personnel work out of Town during the day or cannot leave their jobs. He feels that the time has come to recommend that the Boards consider adding another full-time position to the Fire Department. The Chief has been full-time since 1999, and the Towns and calls have grown to the point where he needs to have someone else available to go out with him during the weekdays for calls. Chief Tobine would like to see \$26,823.26 added to the budget which would cover the hiring of a firefighter for 26 weeks the first year, including health insurance and retirement expenses. The annual total including these items would be approximately \$53,646.00 including 250 hours of overtime. The 26 week figure includes 125 hours of overtime. He is basing this on an hourly wage of \$12.02 an hour, and the insurance expense based on a family plan. The person hired would be a firefighter/EMT, and would not be a Deputy Chief or an officer. He would like to see members of the call company given first preference for the position, but the person applying for the position would need to pass a State entrance exam, and there is other written and physical criteria that must be met as well. Selectman Wheeler commented that 138 calls was a lot of calls to go out on for one person, and supported the idea. Selectman Perron also stated that it was time for another person. One by one each Selectmen favored the idea, and the Commissioners all agreed as well. Selectman Cheney questioned

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whether the hourly rate was high enough, and Commissioner Giehl indicated that his truck driver makes more than \$12.00 an hour. The Boards decided that the figure added to the budget should include enough money to allow a rate of between \$14.00 to \$16.00 an hour. They also discussed coverage of health insurance beginning after a 30 day period. The Boards also agreed that the figure would be added to the existing budget, and not a separate warrant article. Selectman Wheeler made a motion to include this position in the Fire Department budget, and this was seconded by Selectman Clayton, all Selectmen present voted in the affirmative, none in the negative. The Chief then went over the rest of the budget. There is a 4% COLA increase for the Chief. Commissioner Nancy Byerly commented that the Fire Chief's salary is still way behind what the two Town's Police Chiefs make. The health insurance line item went down, because the Chief explained that he has gone from a family plan to a two-person plan - no more kids at home. Health and safety was up because he wants to have his people get TB testing this year, as it has been seen around again. He decreased his equipment budget by \$3,000. Selectman McGarr questioned why he would decrease it when he did not get to purchase everything he planned for last year. The Chief explained that he could get what he needs with this amount, and pointed out that last year's figure included a defibrillator which runs around \$10,000, and they didn't need one this year. Training is up because the cost of the classes have increase. The firefighters go to the classes on their own time so he feels that at least the department should pay for the classes. Equipment maintenance was up to cover the compressor to fill the air bottles which actually helps the department overall. Vehicle fuel and utilities were up due to the increase in energy costs, publication up due to the increase in software support, and the audit expenses increased slightly. The costs for the leases on the fire trucks and SCBA equipment are set amounts. Selectman Wheeler commented that these were all items out of anyone's control. The Chief was thanked for presenting his budget.

The Solid Waste and Transfer Station budget was next. David Hilliard was unable to attend tonight to present his budget as he was in the hospital. Thornton Selectman Arthur Gross went over the budget. The only increases in the budget was a 3.6% wage increase for employees. All other line items remained unchanged. David was able to negotiate a separate hauling contract for both solid waste and bulky debris which allows the disposal lines to stay the same. Selectman McGarr made a motion to approve this budget and with sincere gratitude to commend David Hillard for a job well done, and this was seconded by Selectman Wheeler, and voted in favor by all Selectmen present.

The Campton Selectmen then adjourned back to the Town Office to conduct the reminder of their weekly meeting. They arrived a little after 7 p.m. and went on to review and sign the manifest, and sign some Intents to Build, sign permits, and approved new residents.

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At 7:30 p.m. the Board met with Stephanie Elson, the Brown University Master's Student who has been doing a GIS mapping project for the past year. Accompanying her was her professor Dr. Steven Hamburg. Stephanie distributed a written report to the Board which discusses the information that this GIS mapping tool provides to the Town of Campton, which captures information from the past, present and future, and gives the Town Leaders, especially the Planning Board, a tool to guide them and discuss how the growth will effect the future of Campton. Stephanie's report looks at the current zoning and the GIS system can show on the maps where and what buildable land is left in Campton applying that zoning. She also did some analysis on population and housing implications. The maps within this program show the scenic areas, continuous areas of natural land cover, wildlife habitat, deer yards, wetlands, inactive and active gravel pits and quarries, drinking water resources, and hydrographic features. The report also contained charts depicting historic population, breakdown of primary homeowners, and those from out of state, current use land in and out, subdivision history etc. Steve Hamburg then used his property as an example to show what percentage of it would be considered buildable based on the slopes and setbacks. Having demonstrated what has been done, the question now was how to use this data, and keep it up to date so the money that has been invested will have been well spent, and this tool can continue to aid the various Town Boards in their activities. Stephanie had done up a list for the Selectmen to consider in their budgeting for 2006. This would include capital outlay for a laptop computer, printer and digital projector plus software to support it totaling \$9,000 for the first year. Under the operating part of this program, Stephanie suggests that a part-time professional GIS planner/technician be budgeted for. May Brosseau has expressed interest in learning how to print out maps, and enter data related to the Planning Board part of her position. This person would be able support and train her to do this work, and to provide the technical assistance necessary to keep the program working well. May, who was present at the meeting, indicated that she had spoken with North Country Council, who provides assistance to us as our Town is a member of their organization. They have a gentlemen in their office, James Steele who provides this technical assistance at \$50.00 an hour. He is currently working with personnel in the Lancaster Town Office. Steve Hamburg also advised the Board that his University also has some students available to continue the discussion on this material, and do some more research on different scenarios as to how changes in the zoning, lot sizes etc. could affect future growth, and would be able to do this for the Town for the fee of \$5,000. . One other matter that was discussed about this data is that like the tax maps, there should be a disclaimer on this material, citing that it is not a legal description, and is for advisory use.

Marsh Morgan was next on the agenda to discuss the information that was given to the Selectmen previously on proposed zoning ordinances for this year's ballot. Marsh explained that the Town Attorney had reviewed these changes proposed

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by the Planning Board, and his legal opinion was that these would be better served as being part of the Planning Board's Site Plan Review process. Attorney Bates indicated that the general rule with zoning ordinances is that they are permissive which means that unless a use is specifically permitted, it is prohibited. The proposed change to prohibit motorized raceways, businesses featuring live adult entertainment, and truck stops is unnecessary as they are already prohibited. The Board will still be having a public hearing on January 17th to discuss the changes for the building sizes, but it will now be under Site Plan Review. The Planning Board is looking at recommending that big box buildings be restricted as to the amount of square footage per lot. Marsh pointed out that for example Marshall's Department Store in Plymouth is 40,000 square feet, Hannerford's 57,000 and Handyman Hardware, 17,000 square feet. Jane Kellogg, a member of the Planning Board, explained that this was so they could have a site with some green area between each store rather than a strip mall site. This village type setting would fit more in character with the rest of the Town. Marsh pointed out that Dunkin Donuts has agreed to do their new store in a colonial style to fit the character of the Town more than their typical style building. Selectman Wheeler indicated that he was on the fence about this issue, and that he had heard opinions on both sides of the issue, but felt that we really do need commercial areas in Town. Marsh pointed out the advantage to not having too big a building is if a company goes out of business that they would come to the Town for an economic abatement, and that could impact the taxes.

Marsh then continued to go over the proposed 2006 budget for the Planning Board. The budget was down from last year with decreases in public notices, miscellaneous and no funding necessary for the Master Plan this year. There were increases in postage and public notices, and registry fees due to the increase in costs and Planning Board activity. Some of the GIS costs may be allocated to the budget, but the Selectmen need to review that first. Before Marsh left, he wanted the Board to know that he thought that Interim Road Agent Dick Giehl was doing a great job on his end of Town, and wanted to pass that along to the Board.

Ed Ash of Winterbrook Road was next on the agenda. Mr. Ash wanted to request that the Selectmen consider changing the yield sign at the intersection of Pinnacle Road and Winterbrook Road to a stop sign. He indicated that he has almost been hit there a few times, and it is dangerous, because most people just do not stop for a yield sign. Chief Warn was present, and he mentioned that he thought that it may already be in our Town Ordinance to have a stop sign there. Ann Marie looked it up in our manual, and Pinnacle Road is one of the roads that was designated for a stop sign. The sign will be changed as soon as possible.

The Board then went on to review their correspondence. DOT sent a copy of a

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letter advising us that they had forwarded some Nodal maps to the PD. Chief Warn explained that these were maps that helped identify the location of crash sites. Grafton County Commissioner Bill Gabler sent an email update on the fire at the maintenance barn in North Haverhill. It was determined that the fire was caused by a block heater on one of the tractors, and a substantial amount of damage was done. The Selectmen inquired as to whether Commissioner Gabler was going to be coming to see them about the Sheriff's budget. Ann Marie indicated that she had not been in touch with him yet. The Commissioners will be having hearings throughout the county on the Master Plan for the Grafton County Complex on Tuesday in Plymouth, Wednesday in Lebanon and Thursday at the Commissioners Office in North Haverhill. A letter was received the New Hampshire Town Clerk/Tax Collectors Joint Certification Program announcing that Town Clerk/Tax Collector Hannah Joyce has successfully completed her first year of classes with the program, and should be congratulated. Some information on grants for mitigation programs was received, and the Board suggested that this be forwarded the Conservation Commission. Ann Marie advised the Board that she had spoken to Attorney Bates about the Road Agent's position again, and he advised that we could place it on the warrant at Town Meeting this year to make it an appointed position as cited under RSA 669:17-b. If it passes, the person who wins the election in March would keep the position until the following March of 2007, and then the Board can appoint. Selectman McGarr made a motion to put this on the warrant this year, and Selectman Wheeler seconded it, with all three Board Members agreeing to it. Ann Marie also advised the Board that she had received an email from Donna Lane, and that the newspaper never published the notice for the public hearing on the Feasibility Grant so we can not go forward with applying for it until May. The Board discussed those taxpayers with agreements, and those who were not keeping up with them. Ann Marie advised that three of these taxpayers had never responded, and some don't respond, catch up for awhile, and then get behind again. The Board wanted letters sent out to them asking them to come in and speak with the Selectmen again.

Chief Warn then requested that the Board go into Non Public Session to discuss a personnel and legal issue with them. Selectman Wheeler made a motion to go into Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, 11(b), and RSA 91-A:3,11(e), seconded by Selectman McGarr, and voted in the affirmative by all.

With a motion from Selectman Wheeler, and seconded by Selectman McGarr, the Board voted to seal these minutes. This was voted in the affirmative by all.

Selectman McGarr had requested that Ann Marie look into the savings for going with a bi-weekly payroll rather than weekly and wanted to know what she found out. Our payroll company advises that we could save about \$438.00 a year, but cannot just change from weekly to bi-weekly without permission from the Department of Labor, and indicated that the reason has to be other than

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monetary. Chief Warn indicated that his people were the ones who originally requested to go from bi-weekly to weekly several years ago, citing that back then some of the employees had spouses who worked bi-weekly as well, and it was a hardship for them.

The Board then went on to other business. Selectman McGarr indicated that he was not going to sign the manifest as he feels that it is not right for someone to get overtime when there is a holiday or they are sick or take personal or vacation time. He felt that overtime should be only for actual time worked. Selectman Wheeler wanted to know if he would make a motion to change the Personnel policy. Selectman McGarr made the motion to pay an employee for overtime after 40 hours of actual time worked, this does not include holiday, sick, personal or vacation. Selectman Wheeler seconded the motion, and all voted in the affirmative. Ann Marie will distributed copies of the amended personnel policy to all employees.

Selectman Wheeler mentioned that he had put Terry Roper together with Mike Piazza, and they had met to go over the site for the Town Office and Fire Department buildings. He also indicated that she indicated that Mr. Haas would be willing to sell an additional acre of land to bring the total to 5 acres. The asking price would then be \$300,000.

Selectman Cheney indicated that he had seen Gary Benedix, and he had not heard from anyone. Ann Marie advised that she had left a message on his answering machine at work, and a message with his son, but had not heard back. The Commissioners had not ruled out completely the idea of Pikes' land swap. This would be helpful for the Highway and Police Building, but was not enough land to accommodate a Town Office or new Fire Station.

The minutes of the December 19th meeting were read and reviewed. Selectman Wheeler made a motion to approve them, seconded by Selectman Cheney, and voted in the affirmative by all.

Ann Marie suggested that the Board consider meeting next Monday even though it was a holiday. Since we had two holidays fall on Mondays in December, we had a lot to catch up with in order to be ready for budgets and Town Meeting. The Board agreed to meet next Monday.

The meeting adjourned at 10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Marie Foote
Administrative Assistant

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