

## **Campton Board of Selectmen**

### **BOS Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, February 15, 2023**

The Campton Board of Selectmen met at 6:00 pm Wednesday, February 15, 2023. Present were Selectman Mort Donahue, Vice-Chair Dan Boynton, Selectman Nik Coates, and Selectman Craig Engel. Also present were Campton Town Administrator Corey Davenport and Minutes Recorder Natasha Egger.

Members of the public present were the Alternate of the Planning Board, Jake Tuck, Zoning Board Alternate, Janet Lucas, CIP member, Jim Butler, Climate Advisory Committee, Sherrill Howard, HEB Engineers Eric Grenier, Road Agent Ronald Farnsworth, and Kevin Colburn.

On Zoom: Donna Hiltz, Thomas Anninger, and Anne Anninger.

Vice-Chair Boynton opened the meeting at 6:00 pm. The Board reviewed the manifests, signed permits & warrants.

### **Road Goal Discussion & Goal Setting**

Eric from HEB Engineers introduced himself to the members of the public and briefly explained the background of what HEB has done for the Town. Eric went on to explain what he would present to the Board that evening. Eric had sent the Board an email, and it was printed for their packets. The email addressed several topics and was meant to get the Select Board thinking about some important issues. One topic to discuss was the Board's road strategy. Did the Board want to attack the worst roads first, the roads with the most traffic or the highest volume of heavy traffic? Another important topic was whether the Board wanted these gravel roads to be paved. Eric explained that the construction of a gravel road that would be paved was designed slightly differently. The next topic that Eric felt was important was how the Board would fund the projects. There were a few different avenues that Eric presented. The main ways to fund projects of this size were to get a bond or try and fund a capital reserve account to tackle projects over time. The best option for Campton would depend on the feedback from the community. Eric then spoke about the need to continue to fund road maintenance. Eric cautioned that reconstruction could sometimes lead to a neglect of maintenance. The idea is to adequately maintain the roads in good shape and target some projects to improve the condition of other roads. Eric mentioned while the highway department will be busy with yearly maintenance, the Town may want to consider hiring out the reconstruction projects. Ron agreed that he does not have the equipment or personnel to do a major reconstruction project. The Board considered the advice and agreed that a full reconstruction would need to be done by a subcontractor. The last item Eric wanted to discuss was the timeframe of projects of this size. Eric told the Board that he would normally begin planning for a project a year in advance. This would mean that a project for 2024 would be started in the summer of 2023. Eric indicated that the RFP would likely be put out in the fall of 2023. The Board

thanked Eric for all of his thoughts and information. Eric turned it over to the Board for discussion about goals, staffing, funding, and other topics.

### **Road Goals Discussion**

**Selectman Coates:** Selectman Coates opened the goal discussion by expressing his belief in preserving our good roads. Eric agreed that preserving good roads is usually the most cost-effective way to set up a road strategy. If the good roads are neglected, they will inevitably need to be reconstructed. Selectman Coates also felt that most of the roads should be kept gravel. He felt that the road should mostly remain gravel, reducing construction costs. Selectman Coates discussed his concern that the financial cost might be a challenge. He seemed to favor using capital reserve funds to make road improvements. He thought the Board would better understand the citizens' appetite for these costs and improvements at the Town Meeting. Finally, Selectman Coates wanted to express his concern for the Highway Department to keep up with yearly maintenance on all the roads. He recommended that we discuss the department's needs in depth to determine if there are additional staffing needs.

**Selectman Donahue:** Selectman Donahue agreed with many of the points made by Selectman Coates. Selectman Donahue wanted to reiterate that he is a proponent of fixing the ditching. Eric agreed that you could improve a road when the ditching is proper. Eric did caution that ditching can only help a road so much. At some point, the only way to improve the roadway would be to do a rehab or reconstruction.

**Selectman Engel:** Selectman Engel started by saying that he felt a ditch project only, was not a good use of funds. He believes that the roads should be reconstructed, including ditching. His concern is that ditches will fill up with material over time. Ron confirmed that we could not maintain all of our ditches annually. Selectmen Engel and Coates asked Eric about pricing for reconstruction. Eric indicated that he could only give rough estimates as it would depend on several factors. He said a rule of thumb is a full reconstruction would be around one million dollars per mile. He added that roads in decent condition might not need a full reconstruction and might cost around \$400,000 per mile. Selectman Coates broke down the HEB report with the cost estimates provided. He estimated that a rough 20-year plan would be to raise \$1 million per year, and the roads should be fixed at the end of that 20 years. He stressed that this was a very rough plan and that more details would need to be worked out.

**Selectman Boynton:** Selectman Boynton would like to get the Highway Department up to where they need to be. He hoped that a reassessment and adjustment to the Highway Department would be done in one to two years. Based on what was presented, the Town must hire more staff and get the equipment they need to do their job properly. Selectman Boynton also expressed that he would like to see most of the worst roads taken care of in the next five years. The Board discussed some strategies to tackle that goal. Finally, Selectman Boynton agreed in the road strategy that this would have to be a two-pronged approach. The subcontractors would focus on rebuilding, and the Highway Department would focus on maintenance.

The Board decided that more meetings were needed and that they needed to refine some of their goals more, but they agreed on some rough goals at the end of their discussion.

### Consensus of the Goal Setting and Strategies

1. The Highway Department needs to be analyzed and adjusted according to the findings.
2. Consider using subcontractors to haul materials during the summer months. This will require an RFP to find subcontractors.
3. The Board would like to review the Highway CIP budget. The Board can work the new purchases into the existing plan if additional equipment is needed.
4. The Board agreed that a contingency plan is needed if the Town says no to the proposed figure.
5. The Board wanted to try and develop a long-term plan for the next 15-20 years
6. Finally, the Board asked Selectmen Engel and Donahue to review the Highway Department's storage needs with the CCDC

### Privilege of the Floor

Vice-Chair Boynton wanted to hear from the audience members present and gather some public input.

**Jake Tuck:** Jake stated that hiring or retaining sub-contractors is a good idea. He mentioned several benefits to subcontracting as opposed to owning equipment. One thought was the Town would not have to worry about the costs of broken-down equipment. Jake also recommended an excavator instead of a backhoe, as it is much easier and faster to ditch. Jake also mentioned that material removed from the ditching could be given to interested citizens. This might cut down on travel time for the Highway Department. Ron said that he usually tries to find people nearby but is not always successful. The Board mentioned that the Highway Fill Waiver should be available on the website, and a post or two should be made to see if we can create a list of places to dump fill. The landowner would need to sign off on a fill waiver, as this would protect the Town. The Board thanked Jake for his input.

**Kevin Colburn:** Kevin introduced himself to the Board and explained that he is a Road Agent in Holderness. Kevin told the Board that he used the materials Eric from HEB was discussing. He said he had seen great results using fabric under the roads. Kevin also expressed that ditching is key with dirt roads. Finally, Kevin also felt that Jake Tuck is correct regarding road equipment and subcontractors. He mentioned that he uses the grader to ditch most of his roads but that an excavator would be much faster than a backhoe. Kevin also agreed that using subcontractors to maintain a steady flow of materials will help tackle projects much faster.

**Sherrill Howard:** She wanted to thank the Board and the Highway Department for putting out signs early this year to help the roads. She felt everyone's opinions were tremendous and agreed that the Highway Department needs more help.

Selectman Coates wanted to plan for the next few meetings. The Board agreed to meet on Wednesday, February 22, 2023, at 6 pm. The Board expressed interest in getting the word out and seeing if more citizens are interested in participating in the conversation. The Board asked Ron and Corey to be prepared to talk about the Highway Department's needs at the next meeting.

Selectman Coates motioned to go into a Non-Public Meeting in accordance with RSA 91-A:2, II (L) at 7:35 pm. Selectman Engel seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows, Selectman Engel, Aye, Selectman Boynton, Aye, Selectman Coates, Aye, Selectman Donahue, Aye.

The Board came out of the Non-Public Meeting in accordance with RSA 91-A:2, II (L) at 8:21 pm.

Selectman Coates motioned to go into a Non-Public Meeting in accordance with RSA 91-A:2, II (A) at 8:22 pm. Selectman Engel seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows, Selectman Engel, Aye, Selectman Boynton, Aye, Selectman Coates, Aye, Selectman Donahue, Aye.

The Board came out of the Non-Public Meeting in accordance with RSA 91-A:2, II (A) at 8:34 pm

Selectman Engel motioned to seal both sets of non-public minutes, and Selectman Coates seconded that motion. The roll call vote was as follows, Selectman Engel, Aye, Selectman Boynton, Aye, Selectman Coates, Aye, Selectman Donahue, Aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Tasks to do:

- Town meeting scheduled for 2/22/23
- Advertise to the public about the roads
- Tracking method for time on the roads

Respectfully submitted,

Natasha Egger

Minutes Recorder