

Campton Township
Annual Town Meeting
Highway Department
April 13, 2021
7:00 P.M.

1. Call to order: Clerk Johansen called the Town Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He welcomed the electors to the meeting.

2. Pledge of Allegiance: Clerk Johansen asked Alex Rottmann to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge was recited.

3. Election of Moderator: Clerk Johansen said nominations are open for moderator of the meeting. Al Rottmann said I nominate Barb Wojnicki for Moderator. Clerk Johansen said thank you. Is there a second? Mike Carlson said I'll second it. Clerk Johansen said thank you. Are there other nominations? (No response) Is there a motion to close nominations? Mike Carlson said I move to close nominations. Katy Bolger said I'll second. Clerk Johansen said thank you. All those in favor of Barb Wojnicki as Moderator say aye. (The ayes were heard) Those opposed? (No response) Barb, you're the Moderator.

4. Moderator's Oath: Clerk Johansen swore in Barb Wojnicki as Moderator.

5. Moderator's Salary: Moderator Wojnicki said she was going to waive the salary.

6. Approval of 2019 Minutes: Joe Garbarski moved to save the approval of those minutes to the next annual meeting since we just completed that meeting a few minutes ago, and vote on them next year. Katy Bolger seconded the motion. Moderator Wojnicki said all those in favor say aye. (Ayes heard) Opposed? (No Response) Motion passes.

7. Supervisor's Annual Financial Report: Supervisor Kubar stated:

Town Fund beginning balance on April 1, 2020 was \$433,169.17; total Town Revenue was \$756,386.11 plus expenditures of \$682,153.47. The total Town Fund ending balance on March 31, 2021 was \$507,401.81. Al Rottmann moved to approve the Town Fund. Mike Carlson seconded the motion. Moderator Wojnicki said all those in favor of approving the Town Fund say aye. (Ayes heard.) Opposed? (No response.) Motion passes. Thank you.

Road and Bridge Fund beginning balance on April 1, 2020 was \$1,544,545.53 plus total Town Revenue of \$2,216,951.47, plus expenditures for the year of \$1,641,429.98 with total fund ending balance on March 31, 2021 of \$2,120,067.02. Al Rottmann moved to approve the Road and Bridge Fund. Katy Bolger seconded the motion. Moderator Wojnicki said all those in favor of approving the Road and Bridge Fund say aye. (Ayes heard.) Opposed? (No response.) Motion passes.

Capital Improvement Fund beginning balance on April 1, 2020 was \$135,887.71, plus revenue of \$33,853.68, less expenditures of \$77,833.04. The ending balance on March 31, 2021 was \$91,908.35. Katy Bolger moved to approve the Capital Improvements Fund. Mike Carlson seconded the motion. Moderator Wojnicki said all those in favor of approving the Capital Improvements Fund say aye. (Ayes heard.) Opposed? (No response.) Motion passes.

Open Space Fund cash and investments beginning balance on April 1, 2020 was \$4,791,057.72, plus total revenues of \$4,999,254.34, less expenditures of \$5,213,493.58. The Open Space cash and investments ending balance as of March 31, 2021 is \$4,576,818.48. Al Rottmann moved to approve the Open Space Fund. Katy Bolger seconded the motion. Moderator Wojnicki said all those in favor of approving the Open Space Fund say aye. (Ayes heard.) Opposed? (No response.) Motion passes.

8. Comments By Supervisor: Our Town Meeting last year was canceled because of the COVID pandemic. We had a flat tax base in 2020 but were successful in maintaining and operating all our programs including our parks and open spaces. We will finish the year with a surplus of \$58,000 for the Township and \$300,000 for the Highway District. The Open Space Fund will finish the year with a surplus of \$130,000. A lot of this was because of things not happening, or of things being delayed.

I want to thank **Josh Nelson** and **Tom Serewicz** and their staffs for undertaking difficult projects in addition to their normal responsibilities. Based on COVID restrictions placed on public areas, both Tom and Josh had to spend considerable effort in monitoring open space areas for compliance as well as disinfecting areas and equipment that may come in contact with the public and our employees.

I want to thank the many volunteers and scouting organizations that have spent countless hours in support of Campton Township programs and projects.

This year I'd like to recognize four Eagle Scouts that did some great work this year. **Stephen Carlson, Troop 13**, did work at Gray Willows Farm. They restored the stone patio on the west side of the Fessenden house. That

involved moving a lot of large stones, recontouring the soils, and putting the stones back. **Trenton Turner, Troop 80**, constructed chimney swift towers at Gray Willows. **Logan Keen, Troop 13**, restored the floors in the horse stalls and the main barn at Gray Willows. And **Alex LoFaso, Troop 80**, restored the main barn doors of the large barn at Gray Willows. Since 1992, over 43 Eagle Scout projects have been completed in Campton Township covering a wide range of construction and restoration projects. On behalf of the Township, I'd like to thank all the Eagle Scouts who have completed projects for the benefit of Campton Township residents.

Other highlights include the **Whitney Schoolhouse** which was lowered and put on a new foundation in July of 2020.

The Township was successful in refunding our 2011 General Obligation Series 2011 Bonds and issue new General Obligation Bonds, Series 2020. The amount of the series for the 2020 refunding bonds \$4,470,000. The sale will result in a savings of \$379,664.33, worth \$371,000 on a net present value basis or 8.4 percent of refunded principal. The taxpayers of Campton Township will realize these savings.

Last year and this year the Township saw record number of residents using our facilities. The Township applied for and received funding reimbursement under the CARES Act. We received \$33,462 for additional labor and supplies to ensure our facilities were disinfected for public use.

Our **wetlands banking program** had a successful performance this year. At the Headwaters Conservation Area, we had an additional 7.56 credits released in August and another 9.6 available for sale. We had one sale of \$137,000, and the Township gets 20 percent of that which goes into our restoration program. At Gray Willows we had 7.7 credits available, and nine sales of 6.3 credits. That was \$569,000, and our portion of that was over \$100,000. We have 9.6 credits available to sell right now.

And tonight, we'd like to acknowledge the service and contribution of one of the Township's long-time employees, Gayle Garbarski. Come on up. Gayle is celebrating her 20th anniversary with the Township this year. Actually, it's May 21st. You've been an important part of the growth and running of the Township. You have seen the Township Open Space grow from one park to almost 1400 acres today. You've seen the Township staff grow to over 42. And tonight, we'd like to present Gayle with a gift of appreciation for all her services. We have a nice plaque. (Applause.) Mr. Garbarski, I think that's the nicest plaque the Township gave out. Ms. Garbarski my goodness, thank you. Mr. Kuper thank you both.

9. Presentations:

Assessor's Report – Al Rottmann said the Assessor's office added \$11,220,051 in new value in 2020 consisting of new construction and improvements to existing homes. 33 permits were issued for new single-family residences, 12 more than in 2019, and 158 permits were issued for other types of new construction such as additions, garages, decks, pools, etc. There were 476 property sales in 2020, up from 416 in 2019. Of those sales, 403 were single family residences and 56 were sales of buildable lots. There were sales of 10 farm parcels and 6 commercial properties. One sale was a property that was or is currently exempt. The average sale price for a single-family home in Campton Township was \$438,335. This is an increase from \$407,482 in 2019 and \$411,125 in 2018. As of December 31st 2020, there are a total of 7,240 parcels in Campton Township, represented by 6,386 residential parcels, 479 farm parcels, 174 commercial or industrial parcels, and 201 are exempt properties.

Highway Commissioner's Report – Moderator Wojnicki said Sam isn't here. Clerk Johansen said the report is in the book on page 21.

Open Space Update - Josh Nelson said it's been a fantastic year in the parks. We've seen attendance go through the roof. When the lockdown hit in March there wasn't a lot for people to do, so they got out into the parks. We added Whitney Park and we continued to develop other sites, especially we've been focusing on Gray Willows.

At **Corron Farm** we wrapped up our Illinois Clean Energy Grant that we partnered with the Corron Farm Preservation Society on. That targeted restoration work throughout the wetland units.

We're really chasing Reed Canary Grass and giant Ragweed out there. Since that work has been done, we've seen a tremendous improvement in the health of that system.

We had a fantastic burn season this year. We got some of the first fire that has been seen in the woodland units. We've been putting a lot of effort into our clearing efforts, opening up, and trying to remove some of the invasive brush. We starting to see our spring ephemerals coming in, and a lot of unique species coming up.

We are going to push our seed harvest program really hard to get diversity out into the restorations, plus continuing with Reed Canary Grass and giant Ragweed control.

We have a grant we are working on with the Corron Farm Preservation Society to design and install educational signage in the woodlands this summer.

And thanks to a productive burn season, we're going to be chasing our woody species throughout the prairies. There's a lot of Callery Pear at Corron Farm which is really trying to take over, but we're slowly winning the battle.

Gray Willows has been the target of a lot of work, especially with the wetland bank as well as some grant funding there. We received a \$13,000 grant in partnership with Ferson Creek Elementary School PTO to plant a Children's Prairie along the road there. That's been a great partnership.

We also got some of the first prescribed burns ever at Gray Willows. We had the majority of the savanna unit burn as well as some up by the camp ground. We did a lot of burning through the wetland restorations.

It was a great year for research as well. The Monarch corridor was planted through a cooperative grant with the Conservation Foundation a few years ago. A group, the Modern Joint Venture, came down from Minnesota to survey our unit for Monarch habitat, and it's basically the best site they tested in the Midwest region. They tested 25 different sites. We had the highest densities of milkweed, the highest number of flowering plants, and the highest number of Monarchs, and that's compared to long-term establishes sites. This is only a two-year restoration. In theory, it should only get better from here.

A lot of other studies are showing success in restoration. We just had a report yesterday that we have nesting Sandhill Cranes out here. So, fingers crossed that that comes out successful.

As John mentioned we did have a lot of Eagle Scout projects targeting Gray Willows. There are more coming up including landscaping around the Fessenden House and repairing and repainting the outside of the house.

At **Anderson Park** it's a pretty heavy maintenance year with invasive species control and burns throughout the site. One project we're hoping to do this year is to get a baseline study of species diversity throughout the three main prairie units.

Across the road at **Brown Road Meadows**, we've had a fantastic garden season. The biggest draw so far has been the raised garden beds. We are wait listed two years in a row on that. We have an Eagle Scout lined up to build a dozen new beds so we can continue to grow that program. We're seeing a lot of gardeners going away from the traditional plots in favor of the raised beds.

Harley Woods has been where we've spent most of our winter. We have partnered with the Open Space Foundation on another Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation Grant. This is the 3-to-1 cash match, which the Foundation has fulfilled and raised the necessary funds for the full match. As well as the volunteer hour match, which we are now 50 hours away from our

400-hour goal on that. Most of that has been spent up on the main woods portion this winter, clearing invasive brush. Volunteers, staff, contractors have been working hard, and it was a landmark moment when we finally broke through to Beith Road and could step out of the woods on to the pavement.

So, we have completed the understory clearing with some mop up, but we are set for invasive species control this spring and large canopy thinning next winter, and already we're seeing significant improvement, a lot of good native plants are starting to come up just with that little bit of work

We are installing some new trails to increase access. In addition, the Open Space Foundation obtained a grant for \$5,500 to design and install educational signage throughout the site. That will be happening this summer.

Headwaters was the target of a lot of our summer work last year. Back in the spring of 2020 we got one prescribed burn in before COVID shut everything down. So that's where we spent a lot of time up north chasing woody species in the prairie, Crown Vetch, and then Willow control this winter down the wetlands. Looking forward, we're trying to build on that, focusing on enrichment and control of those woody species.

At **Poynor Park** we're continuing maintenance including Willow control in wetland units as well as enrichment throughout the whole site, but especially the disc golf unit. Wild parsnip control is one weed control to focus on here.

Our **Seed Harvest Program** started in 2017 and has been going on for about four years now. We hit 100 pounds of harvested live weight seed this year. Late this season we purchased the Forest Preserve's Mechanical Seed Harvester. It's basically a 4 foot mini-combine that we have dragged behind the tractors for seed from the prairie. That gets us a high volume in a pretty efficient manner. We are pushing \$30,000 worth of harvested seed and donated seed this year, which is huge. Our overall seed budget was \$15,000 this year, and we couldn't do the restoration work we do without the program or without the volunteers that do the work, and also without the help of Midwest Ground Covers.

I mentioned Our **burn season**. We have about 1,200 acres not counting easements. This year we posted about 65 percent natural areas burned.

So, all of this wouldn't be possible without our **Volunteers**. A lot of that comes from our **Eagle Scout** projects. We had an **Intern from Wheaton College** recreate the Ferson Creek water study done a few years back. He logged over 300 hours this summer on that, not just doing the study, but also leading classes about the study, working with other interns and teaching skills. He set a high standard for future interns. Our **Volunteer Stewards** go above and beyond. They don't just come out for one event and you never see them again.

They're out there all the time, giving their time. We've had over 500 hours logged this year. All in all, we saw almost 2500 hours, and this represents about \$65,000 in value to the Township, which is huge. They make things happen.

And I want to take this moment to recognize one of our volunteers whose schedule conflicts with this meeting and cannot be here, but I want to tell you about him. This is **Josh Sullivan, our 2020 volunteer of the year**. He comes out to everything. He's on our burn crew, he comes out to seed harvest, he is one of our bird monitors who goes out on his own to monitor bird populations in the forest, and he comes out for brush clearing days when it's 10 degrees and snowing. He's out there hauling brush with the staff. Really whenever staff hears Josh is coming everyone is happy because they know the day is going to be a productive day. So, in recognition of Josh's support, I've got a plaque to give to him at a later date, and I'll thank him then.

Our **project supporters** include the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation or ICECF.

Our **grant supporters** include the ComEd Green Region that gave us a grant for us doing restoration along Tucker Run, one of our creeks at Gray Willows.

Our **sponsors** include the Maple Park Fire Department that donated fire equipment including four whole sets of fire gear that's worth over \$2,000. That's a huge help when we are trying to run these programs.

I do have some **recognition I want to do here for our supporters**. It's great when the people I recognize can come up and actually be here. **Ferson Creek Elementary School** has adopted Gray Willows Farm as part of our Adopt a Park Program. They helped us get a grant for the Children's Prairie. Every Year the fifth-grade class makes a donation, a table, or trees, or some other item, to improve Gray Willows. They're always there helping us promote our events. You know, they're a great partner. This last year we haven't seen as much of them as we'd like because of the shut down; but hopefully moving forward, we can take it back up. So, on behalf of the Township, thank you for your support. (Applause.) Ms. Puri: Thank you.

Finally, I want to thank **Matt Zerby and Wasco Nursery** for their continued support of our program. It's their busy time of the year so Matt could not be here so we'll catch him at a later time. They have always supported us either with material donations and discounts, or words of advice. Matt leads some great classes to help support our program and reach out to the public. Anytime I have a question about how to prune a tree or what's this weird thing growing on this bush, he's right there with an answer and he will even come

out and take a look. So, thank you Matt and Wasco Nursery for your continued support. (Applause.)

So, all in all, this year, we saw about \$80,000 in support from outside agencies. Without the support and the volunteers, we wouldn't be where we are at.

Moderator Wojnicki: Thank you Josh, that was great. Good Update.

10. Comments by Electors: No comments.

11. New Business: Clerk Johansen, you're up Joe.

Campton Township Open Space Foundation Presentation- Joe Garbarski, so what seems like just a few minutes ago, this is to John from me, as the Executive Director of the Campton Township Open Space Foundation "Attached please find our check for \$2,500 as our donation to the Campton Township Open Space Program, and we are pleased to be able to do so." So, John, there's an actual check in here. It's not one of those big ones that we had before. So, you do have to cash it.

And we work a lot with Josh. I can tell you that he does a fantastic job for the Township, and this little bit is to help in those endeavors, and we're actually pretty proud for forming the not-for-profit foundation. It's a 501 (c) (3).

Many of you who are sitting on extra money, Tom and Alan, we would love to have more donations to help in that regard. Thank you. (Applause.)

Moderator Wojnicki: Anybody have a camera? I thought I saw one.

Clerk Johansen: Thank You Joe.

Mr. Garbarski: You're welcome.

Moderator Wojnicki: All right. Thank you, Joe. Excellent.

12. Annual Meeting – Set Date: Moderator Wojnicki said we need a motion to set the date for next year's Annual Town meeting. Al Rottmann moved to set next year's Annual Town meeting on April 12, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. Moderator Wojnicki asked for a second. Mike Carlson seconded the motion. Moderator Wojnicki asked all those in favor say aye. (Ayes heard.) Opposed? (No response.) Motion passed.

13. Adjournment: Moderator Wojnicki asked for motion to adjourn. Katy Bolger moved to adjourn the meeting. The Moderator asked for a second. John Kubar seconded the motion. Moderator Wojnicki asked all those in favor say aye. (Ayes heard.) Opposed? (No response.) Motion passed. We are adjourned. (Off the record at 7:47 p.m.)

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard Johansen

Clerk