

Charlemont Board of Assessors Meeting Minutes

Date: December 8, 2004

Present: Nancy J. Finn, Carol A. Rice and Michael E. Kane

The meeting was convened at 6:30 p.m.

A property owner had a 6:45 appointment with the Board to discuss use of a portion of his Chapter 61A land being split from the main portion and how it will be assessed. Detailed notes were prepared separately.

The Board reviewed and approved the minutes of the November 10, 2004 meeting. Minutes of the October 27 meeting were e-mailed to the website.

The Assessors reviewed and signed the Fiscal Year 2005 commitment and warrants dated November 30, 2004 in the following amounts: real estate \$1,725,214.82; personal property \$63,377.70; farm animal and machinery excise \$1,516.59; pro rata tax on new construction \$1,923.61; Franklin Regional Housing Authority in lieu of taxes \$868.32; and the Charlemont Sewer District late fees plus interest \$19,286.22. They also signed the certifying cover page for our commitment book.

Between meetings the bills for farm animal and machinery excise and the pro rata tax for new construction were computed and typed. Commitment pages were also typed. A personal property tax bill was prepared for the personal property amount for the RV that was pre-paid. It needed to be removed from the town books. All bills were forwarded to the Tax Collector in a timely manner. An administrative abatement was prepared for the personal property bill; the Board reviewed and signed it and the abatement certificate. The Board also voted and signed the monthly list of abatements for 2005 in December in the total amount of \$110.76.

All checks have been received for recording the FY 2006 Chapter documents. Mrs. Purinton will go to the Registry of Deeds soon to record the documents and do research.

The Appellate Tax Board cases were discussed. Mr. Bishop settled one case prior to the hearing date. The owner agreed to \$240,000 valuation for FY 2004 and 2005. Mrs. Purinton contacted Mr. Bishop to verify the amount and that it was for both years. The owner submitted a formal withdrawal form. An administrative abatement form was prepared for each year; the Board reviewed them and approved them. The certificates were also signed. A cover letter will be prepared for Mrs. Finn's signature explaining the certificates and notifying the owner that the property will need to be inspected prior to the finalizing of our FY 2006 valuations. The second case was not resolved because the owner wanted to go the Appellate Tax Board. Mr. Kane represented the Town and Mrs. Purinton also attended. The documents and testimony will be reviewed during the month and we will be notified of the decision. The materials from the hearing will be added to the file.

Roy Bishop called today to see how things are going. He asked about abatement applications requested; so far there have been 4 requested. He will keep in touch or we can contact him if we have questions or need assistance.

There were three personal exemption applications to be discussed. After review, all three were approved and signed. Mrs. Finn signed letters of explanation for several certificates and one denial. The Board then signed the FY 2005 personal exemption certificates. They will be mailed on Friday with

the reminder slip that half of the amount can be deducted for the first-half tax bill and the second half is applied to the spring second payment. One veteran's application is missing. Mrs. Purinton explained the circumstances to the Board. The Board voted to approve the exemption so that when it is submitted, members can come in and just sign it and the certificate. Since it was felt that they would like to assist in any way possible, it was requested that Mrs. Purinton contact the D.O.R. to see if there is a way to take action in a more direct way.

The question was raised about our assessment of gravel banks. A number of years ago when it came up, the Keane Company was our revaluation firm. Jim Keane said that because not all gravel pits operate all of the time and you have to know how much gravel was taken out and the quality of it, it is difficult to assess them. They have a residual land value. Mr. Kane suggested that the owners could be asked to submit an income statement that would tell how much was made on a gravel pit. The issue of personal property was also raised; some equipment may be leased rather than owned.

The Assessors reviewed one motor vehicle excise abatement application and approved it. They also signed the certificate. The warrant and commitment for 2004 excise commitment #6 dated December 6, 2004 were signed. The bills and commitment pages were forwarded to the Tax Collector in a timely manner. The Assessors signed 50 motor vehicle excise corrections to be sent to the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Many were returned to the Tax Collector by the Post Office due to P.O. being left off before the box number or a street address used rather than the post office box number. It is hoped that the vehicle owners will put the proper addresses when they next re-register their vehicles. Kathy Chadwick received a letter on-line regarding an excise problem. The letter was presented to the Board for discussion. Mrs. Purinton found the bills, which were committed in Charlemont since the address was on Deer Run Lane. A letter will be prepared for Mrs. Finn's signature requesting copies of the bills from the town in which he states he lived, certified paid by the Tax Collector. Also requested will be a copy of the registration for both vehicles showing where they were registered. Mrs. Finn will come in to sign the letter.

The Board signed a special warrant to the Tax Collector for pre-payment of FY 2005 real estate taxes in the amount of \$1,477.72.

The previous owners of property on Tea Street, which was divided by a lot split during 2004, submitted a written request for an apportionment. The Board reviewed the figures and signed the document. A copy will be sent to each owner of record and the original will be sent to the Tax Collector.

The Department of Veteran Services sent notice of Charlemont's portion of the expenses to be raised for FY 2006. The amount is \$2,709.00. A copy has been given to the Town Accountant and our copy will be placed in the FY 2006 recap folder.

Mrs. Finn has been working on the specialized form of list for recreational vehicles. She will meet with Mrs. Purinton on Friday to go over what needs to be included. A cover letter to Dan Murphy, Legal Services at the D.O.R. in Boston, will be prepared for Mrs. Finn's signature. The Board discussed the upcoming inspection of the recreational vehicles in the two campgrounds. The form to be used will be prepared by Mrs. Purinton and put into a three-ring notebook. The Board approved the information necessary to assess recreational vehicles, which will be included on the worksheet. The time, money, and effort going into this procedure were also discussed. It was felt that we should keep track and then report the results to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee so they will know what it took to do the project legally.

The October building permit summary was reviewed, as was the October listing of certificates of occupancy. They will be filed for future reference.

We received a copy of a letter sent to the Board of Selectmen from FRCOG regarding high-definition photography provided by Pictometry. There was just general information in the letter; the Board of Selectmen received the details of the proposal.

Copies of the Planning Board minutes of the October 28 and November 4, 2004 meetings were received. Of particular assistance will be the October 28 minutes which contain information regarding the parcels on Cherrie Pierson Road. Mrs. Purinton will use them as a reference document when telephone calls come in for that area. The minutes will be kept on file.

The Community Software Consortium sent the ballot for election for the Board of Directors. The Board reviewed the candidates and chose one. Mrs. Purinton will fax the ballot to Linda Bradley at CSC. Prior to this meeting, CSC sent a nomination form but Mrs. Finn, who was contacted when it came in, said that she was not interested in being nominated and she didn't think either Mrs. Rice or Mr. Kane wanted to be. Notice was received of the Annual Meeting of CSC to be held on Thursday, January 27, in Grafton. No one plans to attend.

The Division of Local Services sent the following Information Guideline Release and Bulletins: Motor Vehicle and Boat Excise Abatements (the new guidelines – a copy will be made for each Assessor); Motor Vehicle and Boat Excise Bills and Abatement Forms; Boat Excise Bills; and Motor Vehicle Excise Bills. All will be put in the office manual and a copy of the motor vehicle excise information will also be copied and put in the excise manual for future reference. Also received was the Bulletin Exchange of State Tax Data Regarding Residency.

A.M. Sulkin Company sent their current price list for forms. It will be kept for future reference.

The COMPreport for October was received. Also received was the December issue of The Beacon.

Notice of the Mass. Municipal Assoc. Annual Meeting and Trade Show was received. No one will attend. Miscellaneous ads and offers were reviewed.

The Board voted to cancel its December 22 meeting. Mrs. Purinton will have the cancellation placed in the newspapers and on the website and will place notices on the doors.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Gloria Jean Purinton

Secretary

gjp