

Charlemont Board of Assessors Meeting Minutes

Date: March 9, 2005

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

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

The Board reviewed and signed the minutes of the February 23, 2005 meeting. The minutes of the February 9, 2005 meeting have been e-mailed to the website.

A letter to the Board of Selectmen was reviewed and signed by the Board requesting an increase of \$500 in our FY 2006 budget request. Several increase notices have been received by the Assessors since the budget request was submitted but an amount to cover the D.O.R.-required interim year adjustment work should be included in the next budget. It should be added to the Revaluation/Computer Account.

Following discussion at the previous meeting, a letter was prepared to the Board of Selectmen informing them of the Assessors plan to have a warrant article on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant to set a minimum assessment for personal property accounts. The Assessors decided on \$2,500, which would result in \$42.70 taxes assessed using the current year's tax rate. The Selectmen's input was requested.

The Assessors voted and signed the monthly list of 2005 real estate taxes abated for the month of February in the amount of \$741.27.

Three special warrants for pre-payment of FY 2006 real estate taxes in the amounts of \$270.36, \$616.58, and \$567.06 were signed by the Board.

A letter was received from an attorney of a Chapter 61 property owner. The land has been placed under a trust and the forester is working on an amended certificate. The research on Avery Brook Road property recently surveyed has not been very successful; Mrs. Purinton found more questions than answers. An abutter came in and went over the map with her; research will have to be done at the Court House. It appears that the surveyor used the abutters northern boundary for the southern boundary of the surveyed parcel and missed a whole section of land to the south. Since no word has been received from the new owners of Chapter 61 land on upper Avery Brook Road, Mrs. Purinton called the Heath Assessors, who meet at the same time. They were unable to locate the deed for the property, which is in both towns. They have not had any contact with the new owners and are unsure of whether or not the property will remain under Chapter 61. There is agreement that the previous owners will be assessed penalty withdrawal taxes if the new owners do not want the property under Chapter 61. The assessor who handles the deeds is ill and will call our office in a week. They were thanked for their assistance.

Two motor vehicle excise abatements were discussed and signed by the Board along with the abatement certificates. Mrs. Hathaway had said to handle them in the easiest way. The City of Boston returned the four excise bills with Charlestown garaging which were listed by RVM as Charlemont. Because the RMV has Charlestown, the Boston Assessors have returned them to us. The person and leasing companies will be sent letters with a copy of the print-out; if it is incorrect, they will be asked to contact the RMV and have it corrected. Otherwise, the bills will be committed and billed from Charlestown. The letters will be prepared for Mrs. Finn's signature.

The abutters' list requested by the Sidewalk Committee has been completed and forwarded to Marguerite Willis. Research on the parcel between the Village Cemetery and Main Street has been completed for the monument committee. When Mrs. Purinton goes to the Court House, further research will be done to verify that ownership. The disk of our FY 2005 data requested by The Warren Group has been prepared and copied by Mrs. Purinton and forwarded to them. Ellen Docherty called to say that it had been received on March 2 and to thank us.

The D.O.R. sent our Fiscal Year 2008 Certification Recommendations. A cyclical re-inspection program needs to be completed by FY 2008. Mr. Bishop will begin our cyclical inspection program this spring with the village residences. It was discussed that three years may not be enough time to complete the whole town. Also noted was rediscovery, re-listing and revaluation of all business personal property. That is always part of Mr. Bishop's revaluation contract.

The Bureau of Local Services e-mailed notice of its request for submission of Property Sales Reports (LA-3 and the new specifications and format which will allow the D.O.R. to download and use it with no adjustments on their part). Mrs. Purinton has not yet begun entering 2004 deeds since the FY 2005 work has not yet been completed. There is no due date specified in the notice.

The FY 2006 Cherry Sheet amounts for the schools have been adjusted following the removal of the school construction reimbursements from the Cherry Sheets. Those amounts can now be found on the Massachusetts School Building Authority website.

Kirsten Shirer from the Springfield D.O.R. will be in the office on Tuesday, March 15, to convert our C.A.M.A. data from our Version 1 system to Version 3. Since the Board has already decided on what data will be available at the CSC Website and signed the release documentation, Ms. Shirer will copy the data and get it to the CSC Website. Jodi Walsh will come to the office to transfer the rest of the data from the old computer to the newer system.

A note and the registrations for two recreational vehicles stored on private property were received. There has been no response from the other property owner.

The research requested by the Board at the previous meeting in regard to the remaining abatement applications was reviewed. Mr. Bishop's input was reported as was that from Charlotte Dewey for the Planning Board that non-use of commercial property for two years negates that commercial use. The Assessors requested that Mrs. Purinton run cost reports for two commercial properties so that they could compare the land valuations and how the land was assessed to be sure that the criteria and process were the same. The Board discussed both applications and voted to abate one property due to access issues and to deny the second since it was valued correctly. An abatement certificate was signed by the Board as was a denial notice. A cover letter will be prepared to the property owner for Mrs. Finn's signature. The abatement applications for FY 2005 have all been processed.

A reminder memo was received from the Selectmen regarding town policies. The State governs and regulates the Assessors but it is ("what we do" that the Selectmen want so that it can be put in a reference book. Mrs. Purinton will put together a brief listing of forms and issues reviewed by the Assessors.

The Department of Revenue sent IGRs on: Social Security Deductions for FY 2006; Optional Cost of Living Adjustment for FY 2006 Exemptions; 2005 Adjustment in Land of Low Value Foreclosure Valuations Limit. These will be filed for future reference.

Notice of the New Officials Finance Forum was received by e-mail. It will be held on Friday, June 3, 2005 at the Best Western Yankee Drummer Inn in Auburn - no one wishes to attend.

The 2004 COMPreport was received. A subscription listing was also included.

ECS sent notice that we should be posting an expensive poster regarding State and Federal mandates. The Selectmen would be the ones to post such information.

The March issue of The Beacon was received.

Mr. Kane was thanked for the paper for the pinwriter; we would be completely out otherwise.

Miscellaneous ads and offers were reviewed and will be recycled.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Gloria Jean Purinton

Secretary

gjp