



TOWN OF AQUINNAH
BOARD OF ASSESSORS
955 STATE ROAD
AQUINNAH, MASSACHUSETTS 02535

April 30, 2019

Gary Haley
Chairman,
Aquinnah Board of Selectmen

RECEIVED MAY - 1 2019

Dear Gary,

At a meeting April 24th of the Board of Assessors, A vote was taken unanimously to not endorse the Board of Selectmen's decision to outsource the Assistant Assessor's position. The vote comes with the following reasoning:

1. The decision to outsource has not given the Assessors any opportunity to learn what will be required of them once the employee is removed. Those currently serving the board, in both elected and appointed positions, have a set of tasks that are reasonable within the volunteer work they are required to do. It is assumed by the Board that the removal of the paid employee and the establishment of a "virtual desk" operating either two ½ days or one full day for the general public's use will significantly increase the work load of the assessors. What does the outsourcing company expect the board to do to fill the vacuum of work hours left vacant with the assistant assessor being laid off?
2. The initial draft of the budget has the Assessing Department's expense line item for salary in place. That budget was reviewed by the FinCom and initially accepted by them. The subsequent recommendation by FinCom to cut the department's budget was based on a vote your board took, not ours. We were never informed that was what the Selectmen intended to do when the final budget was reviewed and subsequently were not given an opportunity to discuss the change in the overall department's expenses;
3. The RFP for outsourcing has not yet produced any qualifiable bids with exact cost proposals. This move to outsourcing is being rushed into place before town meeting. The bid results may find the town having not allocated enough funds to hire the outsourcing service. More importantly, the low bid winner may require a lot more ancillary work for the department based on what package of services it is willing to provide for cost; the assessing board being responsible for whatever mandated tasks the company is not willing to provide;
4. The inclusion of having a clerk hired to handle the year-long transition to outsourcing has disappeared, once again assuming the elected board will handle whatever the outsourcing company is not capable of initially taking on in the takeover of the department.

We are willing to investigate outsourcing and study it's pros and cons for Aquinnah. The Assistant Assessor does the job well and performs all that is required of her. It is our belief that it would take an outsourcing company over a year to research all the information the Assistant Assessor currently has knowledge of the Town.

With respect,

Elise Lebovit
Elise Lebovit, BOA Chairman

Adam Wilson
Adam Wilson, Member

Marsha Shufrin
Marsha Shufrin, Member