

MINUTES  
BOARD OF ASSESSORS  
Thursday, January 25 2018

Present: Elise LeBovit, Marsha Shufrin, Adam A. Wilson and Angela A. Cywinski (Assessor/Appraiser)

Meeting called to order at 4:00 PM

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Monthly List of Abatements for July and November 2017 were signed by board:  
Real Estate 17-02, Motor Vehicle 15-07 and 17-02
- Motor Vehicle Abatement Bill #197 for 2017, granted by board.
- Abutters List signed by board: MBLU 4-71, MBLU 5-25
- Motor Vehicle Warrants signed by board: 2017-05 \$2,309.20 and 17-06 \$629.91
- Real Estate Warrant for 2017 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter \$1,062,394.65, signed by board.
- Property Warrant for 2017 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter \$29,528.70, signed by board.
- Community Preservation Act Assessment 2017 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter \$28,824.74, signed by board
- FY2019 3ABC forms emailed on December 29, 2017, with a return/ read receipt.

**FY2019 Budget and Warrants Article**

Below is an excerpt from the January 22, 2018 mandatory meeting with Jeffrey L. Madison for all department heads.

Summarization:

He stated to all at the meeting, when preparing your department budget please look towards the future needs of the department. Emily stated at the meeting, she will be providing a departmental budget ending on 12/31/2017, and apology for being delinquent in providing them.

The board received the last expense report dated 8-31-17 for the department budget.

It was brought to the attention of the board that the assessor's permanent public records are kept in an unprotected office environment, not in the safe. The permanent records, such as tax commitments, abatement record sheets, maps; has not been upkeep for over 30 years. The town's safe organization needs to be addressed, perhaps with CPA money for archival preservation proposes. The 1976 tax commitment was the last year a book was bound for permanent record.

The board proposed to seek a request from CPC in conjunction with the Town Clerk to preserve the town's records with CPA funds.

It was presented to the board to look at the future needs of the office. The board discussed to expand the office by moving the existing wall facing hallway then traversing a new wall across the floor of the hallway; to the edge of the doorway of the furnace room. The existing electrical outlets and light switch would need to be relocated, along with the furnace switch.

Funding would be a separate warrant article sponsored by Jay Smalley, DPW Director.

The board voted unanimously to contact Jay Smalley in regards to an estimate.

The board was informed that the current mass appraisal software operating system will no longer be supported. Under the procurement procedure, any amount over \$500 and under \$35,000 must have three quotes for a product or service. The estimated amount of the service will be under the \$20,000 and will not require an RFP.

A board member asked for a warrant article to be placed on this year's ATM. The article is for personal property accounts under \$5,000 to be exempted from taxation. The board was informed that approximately, 19 accounts would qualify for the exemption.

Angela informed the board the FY2019 budget calendar was sent out to all departments. Our department has been scheduled on 2-2-18 to meet with FinCom. She gave the board the preliminary warrant articles and two budget scenarios for the department.

First option, is to include pay for the appointed assessors; second option, is not to include pay for the assessors. The BOS are preparing an STM warrant, to make the assessors appointed versus elected. So, in preparing the budget for FY2019, anticipated payroll cost for the newly appointed assessors needs looking at.

It was mentioned to the board that the current work week is 32 hours. The Moderation Act of 2016 changed revaluation from every three years to every five years. A board member thought it would be a cost savings; it was stated that the cost saving is for the DOR since half of its workforce has retired. It was explained that yearly interim adjustments will require more analysis and more reports to certify values.

As the board reviews the budget, they were informed that it takes 35 hours a week to run the office. Currently, quotes are being received to see if outsourcing would be cost effective. The cost to outsource is \$130,000 with a need for an office support person. As compared to having a full-time Massachusetts Accredited Assessor which is cost effective at \$65,000. Two board members asked how many hours you (Angela) have worked over for the revaluation, she stated 120 hours or 36 days. This has been a past practice to use compensation time for revaluation with the approval from BOS and FinCom, as done in prior years. It was explained that compensation time is not a practical way to handle the work load. So, by adding three hours a week, that would avoid the need of compensation time.

Grievance hearing held on January 19, 2018:

The outcome of the hearing with personnel committee was determined that no immediate action is needed. Mr. Madison wanted to have it in public session. The hearing was very intense and his words lacked sensitivity. The Personnel Committee recommended that both boards (BOS and BOA) have a meeting to help resolve the issue. The committee stated that I cannot be left alone with Mr. Madison and one person must be around when speaking to him. Currently, I am coming in the back door and keeping my distance from him and having minimal interaction.

### **Other Administrative Business:**

Any daily duties not mentioned above that are needed to maintain the State standards.

Comcast bills are not being paid, two board members inquired as to why, the bills are not being forwarded to our office from the BOS. I have personally spoken with the accountant, and asked to please forward the bills to be paid. The account has been shut off for non-payment. Comcast bills signed need to be submitted for payment from September 2017 to present.

A Comcast representative, Sean Duffy, contacted us and gave insight on how to handle the situation. He suggested an option as he reviewed the Town Hall 100mbps service which is not enough bandwidth to support the WIFI, voice and general office use. He was given the specs and size of the programs used in the assessor's office; such as, ArcView, appraisal software and graphics. He said that 75 mbps service would be sufficient, the office has a 50mbps service. A board member stated that this issue needs to be addressed with the BOS.

CAI quarterly payment for mapping  
Special map to be paid from the revaluation article  
IAAO dues

Payroll – On November 19, 2017 an email was sent to employees from Sibel stating that Jeffrey Madison will be signing all payrolls and placing his name as the manager. (see attached)

The Attorney of day at DLS Law was called for clarification in regards to the changes from the Modernization Act of 2016 which allows one person, to assign the payroll. It was explained that an elected board can vote to have one member of that board to sign the employee's payroll. With that said, the Town Administration cannot sign an elected board's employee payroll. The budget approved at the ATM for an elected/appointed board, states the boards are accountable for that money being spent.

The BOS are responsible for signing the payroll warrant for all of the employees. A board member agreed with Angela and it's this board that is responsible to sign her timecard. The board members agreed that the chairperson would be the responsible party to sign all payrolls and bills. Board member Adam stated during his time as Town Administrator that Angela produced accurate timecards for the hours she worked. He further stated that the issue of control; who has to account for hours worked among town hall employees working for different elected board. The BOS are responsible for the payroll warrant for the entire town but the individual boards are responsible for their budgets with employees to sign those payrolls.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:48PM

Respectfully submitted by,  
Angela A. Cywinski