

OPEN SESSION

The Board of Assessors met on Wednesday, March 17, 2021, at approximately 6:14 PM. Present were Chairman Steve McCarthy, Clerk Cheryl Smith, Member Paula Bunker, Principal Assessor John Donahue, and Principal Secretary Daniela Nilsson. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the meeting was closed to the public. However, the public was allowed to listen to the meeting via teleconference and to view a recording of the meeting via community access television.

The Chairman announced that the meeting was being recorded by community access television. The Principal Assessor read aloud the Board of Assessors' State of Emergency Public Access Notice from the publicly posted Agenda stating that, due to the increasing concerns surrounding the Coronavirus pandemic, the meeting would be open to the public through remote participation only. The remote access information was also read aloud.

The Principal Assessor stated a taxpayer representative would be in at 6:30 to discuss his client's application for abatement of real estate taxes. He also announced applications for Statutory Exemption are due April 1st. Also, Town Hall will re-open to the public on April 5th and is open by appointment only in the meantime.

The Principal Assessor presented a revised Fiscal Year 2022 budget. He added that the \$7,500 increase had been approved at the last meeting for Consultant Services. The current modification is the removal of the increase to line 5111, the Appointed Official salary, to keep in line with the level funded message and have no increase in salary for Fiscal Year 2022. Member Bunker stated she was confused because the line would now be set at \$86,700 and there is no contract yet. She asked what the last signed contract salary is. The Principal Assessor stated the Fiscal Year 2020 contract salary is at \$85,000 and the proposed Fiscal Year 2021 contract salary is budgeted at \$86,700. The Chairman clarified that 2% increase for Fiscal Year 2021 was the going Cost of Living increase for all department head employees and it does not have anything to do with the current, Fiscal Year 2022, budget before them. Member Bunker asked if the contract negotiations would be discussed in the near future. Everyone was in agreement that it would be beneficial to all parties to complete the contract negotiations for the Principal Assessor. The Chairman made a **motion** to approve the reduced adjusted Fiscal Year 2022 budget presented for \$247,152. Seconded by Clerk Smith. Voted 3-0-0.

The Principal Assessor stated the Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2021 and the deadline to submit Warrant Articles is March 26, 2021. He asked if the Board had any articles they would like to submit such as Authority to Enter into Multiple Year Employment Contracts. Member Bunker stated she did not feel that was necessary. The Chairman strongly disagreed because he feels no highly qualified Assessor would leave their current job for a 1-year contract and he would want to hire someone with stability. Member Bunker stated that the Town Administrator said most local towns had 1-year contracts in place. Clerk Smith suggested they put an article on the Warrant but the Chairman stated there was too much going on this year.

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The Principal Assessor stated the Open Session minutes from 1/8/20, 1/15/20, 3/4/20, 4/1/20, 5/6/20, 5/20/20, and 7/15/20 were sent to the Board for review before the meeting. The Chairman made a **motion** to accept the Open Session meeting minutes from 1/8/20, 1/15/20, 3/4/20, 4/1/20, 5/6/20, 5/20/20, and 7/15/20. Seconded by Clerk Smith. Voted 2-1-0. Member Bunker opposed and stated the meetings were too long ago and it was too hard to recall without seeing the video. Clerk Smith stated she thought the minutes were well recorded by the Principal Secretary. Member Bunker stated that if someone files a complaint she feels the Board is in the wrong for not posting minutes sooner.

Bills Payable, Motor Vehicle Abatement Applications and Certificates, Statutory Exemption Applications and Certificates, Deferrals, Monthly Lists, Request for Rollover of Vacation Days for Principal Secretary Daniela Nilsson, and Chapter Land Lien Release for Map 45 Lot 050 were presented for signatures.

A **motion** was made by Chairman McCarthy to adjourn the Open Session and to enter into Executive Session in order to Review Applications for Abatement/Exemption/Classification, relative to Purpose 7, MGL CH 59, section 60, to review and discuss strategy of pending Appellate Tax Board Cases, relative to Purpose 3 and 7, MGL CH 59, section 60, and not to reconvene in Open Session at the conclusion of the Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Clerk Smith. A **roll call vote** was taken as follows: Chairman McCarthy = affirmative, Clerk Smith = affirmative, Member Bunker = affirmative. The Board adjourned Open Session and entered Executive Session at approximately 6:25 P.M.

Next Meeting: April 7, 2021

I certify that the minutes of this meeting are true and accurate to the best of my recollection.

Respectfully submitted,



Cheryl Smith, Clerk

Prepared by Principal Secretary, Daniela Nilsson

Documents referenced during the meeting:

- *Bills payable, Chapter Land Lien Release for Map 45 Lot 050, Statutory Exemption Applications, Certificates, Deferrals, and Monthly Lists, Motor Vehicle Abatement Applications, Certificates, and Monthly Lists and other administrative documents referenced during the meeting*