

**TOWN OF LITTLETON
MINUTES OF
BOARD OF ASSESSORS MEETING
TOWN HALL – ROOM 205
FRIDAY JANUARY 29, 2010**

Present: Fred Freund, Will Ingham, Evelyn Masson, Kenneth Mildren, Chief Assessors and Anita Harding, recording secretary.
Absent: Pamela Campbell and Jim Winroth

The meeting came to order at 7:30 a..m.

Commitments, Warrants and Monthly reports were signed.

Lynn made a motion to deny and Exemption Application for 509 Newtown Road and 511 Newtown Rd and Will seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to deny the application.

Lynn made a motion to approve the Exemption Applications for the following: 38 New Estate Rd. (U38-42), 20 Cricket Land (U46-5), 37 Dogwood Rd (U170148), 36 Westchester Dr. (U15-64), 24 Birch Rd (U17-34), 19 Christina St (U10-96), will seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous to approve the applications.

Lynn made a motion to approve the Community Preservation Act (CPA) Applications for 17 Roxbury Dr, (U15-162), 20 Cricket Lane (U46-5), 130 King St (U38-44), 20 Worcester Rd (U32-35), 19 Christina St (U10-96), and Will seconded the motions and the vote was unanimous to approve the applications.

Ken informed the Board of an IAAO course on how to value convenient stores to be held on February 25, 2010 if anyone is interested.

Ken informed the Board of the DOR Recommendations for the 2013 revaluation. They stated that the cyclical re-inspection, which is maintenance of current and accurate property inventory data is a critical element in the development of uniform, fair market values, should be continued and completed for FY 2016. Assessors should review and analyze market influences of excess front foot pricing and adjust the land valuation system as needed in a uniform and equitable manner. The Board stated that the recommendations were well founded and that they thought it was a job well done. Lynn stated that she thought that Ken had done a good job and continue the good work.

Fred and Ken reported that the classification hearing went well. Ken also stated that the setting of the tax rate went very smoothly. Bonnie Holston, finance Director, did most of the work filling out the appropriate forms for the DOR She worked closely with Amy from the Bureau of Accounts, at the DOR and the tax rate was submitted on 12/16/2009 and was certified on 12/16/2009. Lynn stated that she was at a meeting on 1/15/2010 and there are still 70 towns that do not have tax rates certified.

Ken asked the Board how to proceed with Applications for Exemption that have not been returned. We mail out the originals and then follow up with telephone calls to remind applicants that we have not received them back yet. Lynn stated the office should do all that it can and explore all avenues to make sure all applications are returned that should be. The Board agreed.

Ken had a general discussion concerning issues that came up from reviewing applications for abatement. Fred stated if more information is needed, Ken should send a discovery form by certified mail to be filled out and returned in a timely manner.

Ken would like the Board to write a policy or guideline as to how to treat property that has a Conservation Restriction placed on it. Should land that is already discounted for excess land or under one of the Chapters be discounted further because of the Conservation Restriction? It is the Board's feeling that no additional discount should be allowed. There also needs to be more discussion with respect to properties with houses with larger than normal spaces. The Board will have further discussion at future meetings.

Ken would like a schedule set for the abatement process. Fred suggested that the applications should be rated and the easy ones should be done within 2 weeks. The rest of the applications should be handled by the end of February if possible. Ken gave the Board a list of the applications and a short explanation for each. The Board needs to decide which ones to handle first and if they need any additional information before making a decision.

Ken made the Board aware of the outstanding Appellate Tax Board cases. He presented the Board with a spread sheet listing the cases and the different years that were outstanding. For the most part, they are the wireless companies and telephone companies that file each year. They have been in the appellate since 2004 arguing the values that the DOR have assessed them. If the Appellate were to find in favor of the companies there would be a financial impact on the Town to pay back taxes to the companies. There is money in the overlay accounts for each year that would cover the impact. Ken just wanted the Board to see, in writing, what the situation is and to decide how they want to proceed with this matter. Ken does have a proposal to settle with one of the companies. There was also a discussion on the fiscal year 2009 case for 256 Great Rd. Lynn made a motion to settle on a value of \$1,622,500 and Will seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to settle.

Ken informed the Board that Anita and Lorraine had received a 20 Year Service Assessor Award from the Middlesex County Assessors Association. Anita is in her 23 year of working for the Littleton Assessor's office and Lorraine is in her 22 year. The Board acknowledged their dedicated service.

The Board scheduled meetings for every Friday in February at 7:30 a.m.
The meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

