

Minutes

Board of Assessors

Room 105

Tuesday, August 16, 2022

5:00 PM

The meeting convened at 5:02 PM in Room 105. Present were: Board members: Mary Greendale, chair, Jeffrey Marshall, and Stephen Wang. Staff: Kevin Rudden.

1. Mary Greendale made a motion, seconded by Jeffrey Marshall, to approve the meeting minutes for the August 9, 2022 meeting. The motion carried 3-0-0.
2. Kevin Rudden updated the board on the ongoing negotiations with New England Appliance Group of Franklin for a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) agreement to re-locate NEAG's headquarters/warehouse from Franklin to Hopping Brook Road. The company and the town reached an agreement which will be presented to the Select Board on August 29, 2022. Kevin Rudden said he will get a copy for the Board of Assessors to review.
3. The board agreed to let Kevin Rudden submit two articles for the fall Special Town Meeting regarding negotiating Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreements. One is for a proposed solar array at 103 Bartzak. The other is for a proposed energy storage facility at 600 Central Street. Both projects are going through the local permitting process.
4. Mary Greendale and Kevin Rudden gave an update about follow up actions taken after the August 9, 2022 board meeting with Jessica "Mimi" Gallagher of 6 Trailside Court.
5. Following up on a discussion at the board's August 9, 2022 meeting, Kevin Rudden said he needed to talk with Town Administrator Travis Ahern about the possibility of using Joanne Graziano, former head of the DOR's Division of Local Services and now at the Collins Center for Public Management at U Mass Boston, to do a study of the Assessors' Office to recommend proper levels of staffing.

6. Mary Greendale continued her discussion from the August 9, 2022 meeting about the idea of studying what effect increases in the commercial/industrial tax base would have in terms of making any substantial difference in property taxes. She speculated whether the commercial/industrial share of valuation could ever reach 20%.
7. Kevin Rudden gave board members an update on Fiscal Year 2023 valuation efforts. Calendar year 2021's sales have been stratified and checked to see if they comply with the Department of Revenue's guidelines. In addition, a second level of stratification is being done to see if the guidelines can be maintained with values set at 94% of market sales.
8. Kevin Rudden discussed the cost to appraise a building at 60 October Hill Road in advance of an Appellate Tax Board hearing scheduled for October. Board members encouraged him to leverage existing information first.

Stephen Wang made a motion, seconded by Jeffrey Marshall, to adjourn the meeting at 5:40 PM. The motion carried 3-0-0.