

Minutes

Board of Assessors

Room 105

Tuesday, August 23, 2022

5:00 PM

The meeting convened at 5:06 PM in Room 105. Present were: Board members: Mary Greendale, chair, Jeffrey Marshall, and Stephen Wang. Staff: Kevin Rudden.

1. Jeffrey Marshall made a motion, seconded by Stephen Wang, to approve the meeting minutes for the August 16, 2022 meeting. The motion carried 3-0-0.
2. The board approved and signed the following Personal Property abatements submitted by Treasurer/Collector Mary Bousquet: Fiscal Year 2018 – three abatements, \$1,754.53; Fiscal Year 2019 – two abatements, \$1,468.95; and, Fiscal Year 2020 – two abatements, \$1,468.61.
3. 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: board members were e-mailed a copy of the draft agreement prior to the meeting. Town Administrator Travis Ahern said the Select Board is now scheduled to review the agreement in early September. If approved by that board, approval of the TIF agreement will go on the warrant for the fall Special Town Meeting. Mary Greendale and Kevin Rudden also discussed the process the building proposal will have to go through with the Planning Board.
4. Kevin Rudden gave board members an update on Fiscal Year 2023 valuation efforts. Calendar year 2021's sales have been through two stratifications and checked to see if they comply with the Department of Revenue's guidelines.

5. Kevin Rudden said he had met with Town Administrator Travis Ahern to discuss 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. Travis Ahern recommended first contacting the DOR staff who studied the town's financial departments in 2021 to see if they had any recommendations about staffing and – if more information was needed – to decide whether to contract with the Collins Center.
6. Mary Greendale said she will be hosting several shows on HCAT about issues facing the community and wanted Jeffrey Marshall to represent the Board of Assessors for segments discussing topics such as: the impact on property taxes if a new Department of Public Works facility is located in an industrial park; whether the town will be able to achieve a substantial raise in the ratio of commercial/industrial generated property taxes to residential generated property taxes; and, what the impact of downtown economic development could be on property taxes.
7. Jeffrey Marshall asked if the DOR had approved the abatement request for 6 Trailside Court. He and Mary Greendale suggested Kevin Rudden notify property owned Jessica "Mimi" Gallagher that the DOR approval is still pending.

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