

Selectmen's Meeting
Wednesday, September 10, 2014

Chairman Morgan called the meeting to order at 2:10 PM. Present were Selectmen Richard Morgan and Frank Riley, and Ellen White, Town Administrator, who recorded the minutes. Selectman Robert Freeman was absent. Also present was Todd Haywood, Assessor.

Morgan expressed his concern for the lack of communication regarding abatements that had not been processed yet. He stated that he was served by the Sheriff's Department with documents for Fairpoint's appeal to Superior Court. Haywood responded that the appeal is a result of a 2011 ruling that has just processed. Discussion ensued on the taxation of poles and conduits.

Morgan questioned why the abatement was not processed through the Selectmen so they had some knowledge. Haywood answered that non-response by July 1 automatically constitutes denial and opens the window for the taxpayer to file an appeal. Morgan questioned if there were any others that had not been acted on. Haywood answered that he was not aware of any. White questioned if Hannaford had been settled.

Morgan reiterated that the role of the Assessor is not to negotiate on behalf of the Town and that value changes should be finalized by the Board of Selectmen. He added that assessments need to be fair, accurate and defensible.

Riley stated that he would not approve any abatement request with a recommendation that has an ultimatum included. Morgan added that decisions made on abatement requests need to be acted on once. Multiple changes show inability to assess correctly on the first attempt.

Discussion took place on the revaluation process and how it should correct previous inaccuracies. Haywood stated that the value tables will be updated to reflect current sales data and field reviews should provide consistent data.

Additional discussion took place on the assessment of various businesses throughout Town.

Riley informed Haywood that a taxpayer approached him from Deer Cove Association who questioned why the property owners are being assessed for beach rights and additional assessed for the beach property. Haywood explained the process for dealing with deeded rights and exclusivity to use certain amenities.

White questioned whether the utility values have been updated. Haywood confirmed. White informed the Board that last year's utility values were used on the form MS-1 submitted to the State and that a revised form would have to be signed and resubmitted.

A supplemental abatement request was received from Belcher Realty Trust for the properties located on Map 37, Lots 9 & 10 for review. Morgan made a motion to deny the request. Riley seconded. The motion carried 2-0.

Haywood was dismissed at 3:20 PM.

White informed Morgan that she and Riley worked on the Personnel Policy on Tuesday and they are in agreement that rather than revising the existing, a new one should be implemented. They will continue to work on a draft to discuss in work session(s).

Being no further input, Morgan made a motion to adjourn. Riley seconded. The motion carried 2-0.

Adjourned at 3:30 PM.

Richard H. Morgan, Chairman

ABSENT

Robert C. Freeman

Franklin R. Riley

To be approved 9/22/2014