

## **BOARD OF ASSESSORS' MEETING MINUTES**

**Meeting Date: January 11, 2022 6:00 P.M.**

**Meeting held as posted VIA REMOTE PARTICAPATION**

**Meeting Date: January 11, 2022 6:00 P.M.**

**Attendance: Diane Rhodes- Gregoire, JoAnne Higgins, Karie Morehouse, Cynthia Poirier**

**Meeting called to order via Remote Participation due to inclement weather by Cynthia Poirier at 6:09 P.M.**

### **Meeting Minutes:**

Motion made by Karie Morehouse to accept and sign the Minutes of the Assessors Meeting held July 20, 2021. Second by Cynthia Poirier. Motion carried by a roll-call vote Cynthia Poirier, Karie Morehouse. Minutes of the Assessors Meeting held December 14, 2021, and November 9, 2021 were tabled.

### **Signatures:**

Motion made by Diane Rhodes -Gregoire to accept the lists for signatures. Second by Karie Morehouse.

All in favor by roll-call vote. Cynthia Poirier, Diane Rhodes Gregoire, Cynthia Poirier.

The Board will visit the office to sign the lists.

Monthly list of 1992 MV Excise tax abated in December \$10.00

Monthly list of 1993 MV Excise tax abated in December \$10.00

Monthly list of 2002 MV Excise tax abated in December \$38.75

Monthly list of 2004 MV Excise tax abated in December \$27.71

Monthly list of 2005 MV Excise tax abated in December \$76.25

Monthly list of 2006 MV Excise tax abated in December \$36.15

Monthly list of 2008 MV Excise tax abated in December \$41.00

Monthly list of 2010 MV Excise tax abated in December \$85.63

Monthly list of 2020 MV Excise tax abated in December \$39.04

Monthly list of 2021 MV Excise tax abated in December \$65.92

Monthly list of 1994 Real Estate tax abated in December \$82.46

Monthly list of 2007 Real Estate Tax abated in December \$789.75

### **Discussion / Review**

The Board discussed the recent uptake in Covid spread and cases. The Board voted that Ms. Higgins may post the office and work remotely until she deems safe due to Corona virus.

FY2023 Budget planning: Reminder to meet with Selectmen on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The Board asked that Ms. Higgins reach out to the Selectmen to reschedule the January 18<sup>th</sup> meeting in order to prepare for the Finance Committee meeting.

The Board reviewed the prior years Budget for the upcoming meeting with Finance Committee January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022. To determine the salary needs the Board will need Ms. Higgins to verify her retirement date.

Ms. Higgins has not been able to get an appointment with the HCRB and will call again to schedule a meeting.

The first business the Board must accomplish is to obtain an updated job description from the Principal Assessor.

The Board discussed the options of filling the position, due to the lack of the funds requested last year the Board agreed that posting for a Principal Assessor at the current salary was not in the best interest of the department.

Discussion ensued surrounding the prescribed complex procedures of the position along with the modernization act of 2018 which adds to duties of the assessors. There is a great deal of experience and education needed to maintain the level of assessment Ms. Higgins has achieved. The lack of funding for the salary will likely put those values at risk if Holland becomes a pass-through community by individual's seeking higher positions and better wages.

The Board visited restructuring the department staff and salary structuring. Ms. Poirier pointed to a posting for a position in Belchertown which is for a Technical Assessing Assistant working under the Director of Assessments. Ms. Poirier explained that the benefit of this would be having an individual who has interest in pursuing an MAA and having a member of the Board work alongside of them, training and assisting and supervising. The Technical Assistant salary range is 26.49-29.00, we would be expecting a 30-hour work schedule. Because the individual would be the face of the department and work most hours independently, Ms. Poirier thought offering the top of the range was appropriate. The Board agreed. The Director of Assessments would be a member of the Board as appointed by the Board thus creating a working Board member, and the salary range would likely be 14,000-15,000.

The Clerk will be retiring also so the wages for that line item could roll into the restructuring.

Ms. Morehouse asked to make a Motion for Cynthia Poirier to take the lead on this.

Motion was discussed as follows: Ms. Rhodes-Gregoire was also in favor. Ms. Poirier thanked the members for their support and stated she would be willing to do so, however because the concept is in the preliminary stages, she will report to the Board prior to FinCom Meeting for final approval of the Board. Diane Rhodes Gregoire Seconded the Motion. Motion Carried in a roll-call vote in favor: Karie Morehouse, Diane Rhodes Gregoire, Cynthia Poirier.

Ms. Poirier pointed to what she felt were many ambiguous line items in the current Budget and asked Ms. Higgins to assist the Board in the restructuring of the budget. The goal will be to extract the assessment maintenance portion of the expenses and create a line item for them, items such as Vision CAMA License and support, RRC Personal Property, GIS Mapping, cyclical inspections and adding to the ongoing Reval account in preparation for our next recertification in 2024.

The expenses will increase due to loss of a certificated Principal Assessor and an increase in educational expenses, travel and lodging must be realized there.

Ms. Morehouse concurred that Ms. Higgins retirement will be felt for some time, she has done such a thorough job and is highly respected by the community.

Ms. Higgins has supplied many of these contracts for the Boards review and will forward the balance of them to the Board.

Ms. Poirier asked the Board if they would be interested in a Meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> in a virtual setting due to the current Covid uptake in the area, the members agreed. Ms. Higgins will post the Meeting.

The Board did not visit the List of properties assessed as buildable but do not meet current zoning, currently the Building Commissioner send applicants to ZBA.

The Board did not review any Exemption applications.

Next scheduled meeting Tuesday January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Motion made by Cynthia Poirier to adjourn Second by Diane Rhodes Gregoire Roll-call Vote Cynthia Poirier-Yes Diane Rhodes Gregoire - Yes Meeting adjourned at 7:06 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Poirier, Assessor