

## **November 12, 2019 Board of Assessors Meeting Minutes**

**Board Members Present:** Chairman Stephen Schmidt and members Susan Reyes and Diane Jacoby.  
**Also present:** Administrative Assessor Kevin Rudden and Assessors' Clerk Leslie Bracebridge.

Chairman Schmidt opened the meeting at 5:30 PM in the Shutesbury Town Hall Assessors office.

### **Meeting minutes:**

The October 22, 2019 meeting minutes were approved as written.

**Mail/Email/Phone calls/Walk-ins:** None.

**Review/Sign "Chapterland" Applications:** Assessors continued their review and approval of FY 2021 Chapter 61, Chapter 61 A and Chapter 61 B applications.

### **Discuss FY 21 Budget:**

A longevity bonus that was anticipated for retired Assessor Holmberg was dropped, and Vision and Mainstreet GIS expenses were increased.

### **Review/Sign "Signing Authority" for Administrative Assessor:**

Assessors reviewed, approved and signed a memo giving authority to Administrative Assessor Kevin Rudden to sign the various Fiscal Year 2020 property tax submittal forms on the Massachusetts DOR (Department of Revenue) Division of Local Services (DLS) Gateway online program on behalf of the Board of Assessors.

### **Discuss FY20 Tax Rate Filings:**

Kevin reported that he has been working with the DLS and has been advised that though the LA-3 on Gateway is not shown as approved, the Select Board and the Assessors should still proceed with the Tax Classification Hearing.

DLS is requiring further review of the solar farm. Kevin will continue to work through DLS recommendations including taking the 37.5 acre solar farm out of the larger 828.5 acre parcel ZG-2.

Assessors reviewed the documents for the tax classification hearing including the legal notice and the November 12, 2019 Tax Classification Hearing Summary explaining the various options available to the Select Board.

Assessors recognized that the tax rate is inching closer to the \$25/\$1,000 limit. Kevin reported that there may be some up-coming tax rate relief when a DOR mandated valuation method for electric utilities goes into effect in FY22.

**Assessors unanimously voted to recommend a single, rather than a split rate to the Select Board at their annual tax classification hearing.**

**Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting:** None.

**The next Board of Assessors meeting will be MONDAY, November 25, 2019 at 5:00 PM.**

At 6:30 PM Steve and Diane joined the Board of Selectmen Meeting, already in progress for the **6:40 PM Annual Tax Classification Hearing:**

Select Board members in attendance: Chairperson Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil, and Members April Stein and Elaine Puleo present. Also present at the hearing: Town Administrator Rebecca Torres and Administrative Secretary Linda Scott. Select Board Chairperson Makepeace-O'Neil opened the tax classification hearing at 6:41 PM:

1. Assessors presented the November 12, 2019 Tax Classification Hearing Summary.
2. The Select Board unanimously approved the 4 suggested motions on page 3 of the summary.
3. Administrative Assessor Rudden announced that he would notify all parties when it comes time to go into the DOR Gateway to electronically sign the tax classification documents.

Board of Assessors Chairman Stephen Schmidt was recognized and thanked for his close to 20 years' service on the Board of Assessors, as he is stepping down on December 31, and Member Diane Jacoby was recognized for her service on the Board, as she steps down on November 30.

Kevin reminded the Select Board that the Board of Assessors will need at least 1 new appointee by January 1, 2020, and preferably 2.

**Assessors adjourned at 7:00 PM**, though Steve stayed on for the municipal All Boards meeting, which followed.

**Respectfully submitted, as approved on November 25, 2019,**

**Leslie Bracebridge**  
Assessors' Clerk

**List of Documents used at the meeting:**

1. November 12, 2019 meeting agenda.
2. October 22, 2019 draft meeting minutes.
3. October 22, 2019 memo to DOR.
4. November 12, 2019 Tax Classification Hearing Summary