

January 7, 2025 Board of Assessors VIRTUAL Budget Meeting with Finance Committee Assessors' APPROVED Meeting Minutes. (See also Finance Committee meeting minutes)

Board Members Present: Chairman Howard Shpetner and Members: J. April Stein and George Arvanitis.

J. April Stein and George Arvanitis are also members of the Finance Committee.

Also present: Administrative Assessor David Burgess, and Assessors' Clerk Leslie Bracebridge.

- 1) **Administrative Assessor David Burgess joined all members of the Shutesbury Board of Assessors at a Finance Committee meeting already in progress** at 7:15 PM, online using ZOOM Meeting ID: 844 4829 3355 Phone: 1.646.558.8656, Passcode: 834129.
- 2) **Review proposed FY 2026 Assessors' Department budget:**
 - a) Operating Expenses were proposed to be level-funded. Current Assessing Department members are as fully trained as needed. They are not attending high-cost trainings/conferences, charging for their mileage, or wishing to send membership fees to peripheral organizations beyond the County and State. The Finance Committee voted to lower the operating budget to \$2500, with a promise that the department can go to the Finance Committee if unanticipated costs come up.
 - b) Administrative Assessor David Burgess declined his entitled \$1,000 Administrative Assessor Certification stipend stating that he does not wish to continue the re-certification trainings. As with the operating budget, this will likely change with future Assessing Department Personnel changes.
 - c) Cartographic Associates Inc. (CAI) provides department mapping services, and hosts and updates the Assessors' online maps. Starting with FY 2024, CAI initiated a 3-year "ramping-up" of budget increases stating that the MainStreet Maps (bought-out by CAI) budget amounts were not sustainable.
 - d) Vision CAMA (Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal) sets annual increases. Vision provides "Cloud-storage" of Shutesbury's data-base. Discussion included the costs and down-time that the town once experienced when there was a computer breach in another department. (Vision charges additional fees for one-time reports and services, that are taken from operating expenses.)
 - e) Revaluation is a cumulative budget line for the 5-year state-mandated cycle.
 - f) Specialized training/knowledge is required to accurately analyze the values of the Class 504 Utilities.

No votes were taken by the Board of Assessors except to adjourn.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the Assessors' meeting at 7:30 PM: Arvanitis - aye, Stein – aye, Shpetner – aye.

Respectfully submitted, as approved on ,

**Leslie Bracebridge
Assessors' Clerk**

List of Documents used at the meeting:

1. DRAFT FY 2026 Assessors' Budget/