

SHELBURNE BOARD OF ASSESSORS
Meeting Minutes
September 23, 2019

The meeting was called to order on Monday September 23, 2019 at 6:25 p.m. by Alan Coutinho (Chairman)
Present: Alan Coutinho, James Richardson, Shawn Allen, Jennifer Morse, Bob Manners (Board of Selectmen), Michael Stein (Vispanna Mediation Center) and guest

Appointment – Vispanna Mediation Center

Michael Stein (Director) and Lysha Smith (Administrator) from Vispanna Mediation Center joined the Board of Assessors and Bob Manners (Board of Selectmen) to discuss the centers donation to the Town of Shelburne and the Shelburne Fire District. Alan Coutinho opened the discussion with an explanation of why the meeting was requested to possibly increase the amount of the donation set a minimum donation amount from the center. Bob Manners spoke about the Town Services used including highway, fire, and police. It was brought up that the meditation center has seen a huge increase in value which is now at approx... Ten million dollars. Jim Richardson stated that the mediation center came to the Town at the beginning seeking support for their tax exempt status and guaranteed funds to the Town. This statement was disputed by Mr. Stein who stated that they are a federally exempt organization which gives them the state exemption and they do not have to pay any property taxes.

Mr. Stein stated that the center is a religious organization and is tax exempt. That they have increased the donation from \$2000 to \$3000 for the town without being asked. They are also donating \$1500 to the Shelburne Fire District and will speak with the Fire Chief regarding potential donations in excess of the money already donated. The center does not charge patrons and works on a donation basis. They try to be good neighbors by hiring local contractors and locals to work at the center. The expansion was possible due to a foundation that raised money for the expansion. Mr. Stein asked if the Town had asked all religious organizations for donations to which Bob stated that the smaller churches in town have not seen the same growth as the meditation center. Both Bob Manners and Shawn Allen thanked the mediation center for their donation acknowledging that they do not have to donate since they are exempt. Mr. Stein stated that there could be a verbal commitment from the center but not a written agreement due to the inconsistency of funds due to the center working on donations. Mr. Stein will approach the members of the Meditation Center trust at the next meeting to discuss an increase in the donation.

Minutes

Minutes of August 19, 2019 were reviewed and approved by Alan Coutinho and Shawn Allen. Jim Richardson was not present at the meeting and abstained from the approval.

Signatures – Signed by members present unless otherwise noted

Monthly List – Real Estate/Personal Property – July 2019 – Levy 2020
Motor Vehicle Monthly List – June 2019 – Levy 2019
Monthly List – Real Estate/Personal Property – August 2019 – Levy 2020
Motor Vehicle Monthly List – August 2019 – Levy 2019

Chapter Land and Forest Management Plans

FVAC Chapter Land Recommended Values for Fiscal Year 2020 - The board reviewed the FVAC values for Fiscal Year 2020 compared to Fiscal Year 2019. Jim Richardson received a phone call and left the table during the discussion. Jennifer shared that for the past three years the board has voted to go with the below average value for cropland and average value for all other use.

Chapter Land and Forest Management Plan (Cont.)

MOTION: A motion was made by Alan Coutinho and seconded by Shawn Allen to use the below average value for cropland with all other uses being average. *Vote 2-0-1 with Jim Richardson abstaining from the vote.*

Board of Selectmen Policy regarding First Right of Refusal - The document was reviewed

Dole Forest Management Plan - Jennifer shared that the Dole Forest Management Plan has not been received by DCR for approval. This issue goes back to 2010 when the plan expired. Jennifer shared the last correspondence between DCR and George Dole from November 2018 which explained the process for the property to be in compliance with Chapter 61A. Jim Richardson will talk with the family and explain that they have until January 1, 2020 to bring the Forest Management Plan into compliance or the land will be removed from Chapter 61A classification for Fiscal Year 2021.

There was discussion on Chapter Land policies and the lack of enforcement by former boards. It was agreed that the policies will need to be reviewed after this year's Chapter filing deadline.

Forest Management Plan Certificates – reviewed and signed by chair Alan Coutinho

Foxbard Farm	Map 24 Lot 10	Chapter 61	Plan expires 2028
O'Brien	Map 31 Lots 8.2, 9, 9.1, 9.2	Chapter 61	Plan expires 2029

Chapter Land Applications – reviewed and signed by all members unless otherwise noted

O'Brien	Map 31 Lots 8.2, 9, 9.1, 9.2	Chapter 61	
Foxbard Farm	Multiple	Chapter 61A	
Bardwell Farm	Multiple	Chapter 61A	
Payne	Map 19, Lot 1/ Map 18 Lot 32.1	Chapter 61A	
Hitor LLC	Map 22, Lot 3/Map 27, Lot 17	Chapter 61A	
Smith	Map 16, Lot 13, 14	Chapter 61A	
Taylor	Map 14, Lot 5.1	Chapter 61A	<i>Not signed by JR</i>
Herron	Multiple	Chapter 61A	
Goldthwaite	Multiple	Chapter 61A	
Burge	Map 30, Lot 12	Chapter 61B	
Abels	Map 38, Lot 8/Map 34, Lot 14.3 Map 38, Lot 7.1	Chapter 61B	
Logan Realty	Multiple	Chapter 61A	
Wheeler	Multiple	Chapter 61A	
Freitas/Naccarato	Map 19, Lot 7	Chapter 61A	<i>Not signed by JR</i>
Graves	Multiple	Chapter 61A	
Randall	Map 38 Lot 6.1	Chapter 61A/APR	
Perry Investment	Map 20 Lot 1	Chapter 61B	
Benz	Map 36, Lot 4 & 9	Chapter 61A	
Manning	Map 10, Lot 2.1/Map 10, Lot 2.5	Chapter 61A	
Allen	Map 37, Lot 8&22	Chapter 61A	
Manners	Map 14, Lot 2.2	Chapter 61B	New

August Building Permits- Permits were reviewed

August Sales - August sales were reviewed. It was noted that the ASR (assessment to sales ratios) on two of the sales were well below the required percentage. There was discussion on properties within Shelburne selling for more than the assessed value consistently. Jim Richardson stated that the 3 Bridge Street property may not be an arm's length sale because of the extensive renovations after the flood. Jennifer shared that the best thing to do are sales inspections to verify that the property record card data is correct.

Assistant Assessor Updates

- October 3 – What’s New in Municipal Law? Seminar with assessment workshop in afternoon
- October 10 - Office closed for a training
- Senator Hinds Bill: 1676 – Jennifer shared that Senator Hinds has a petition for legislation to address challenges of rural zip codes and state revenue calculations. A letter of support was sent from the Assistant Assessor in regards to the Motor Vehicle issues with the zip code and the number of bills sent to the wrong towns. Jennifer also mentioned in the letter the small business letters sent by the state and the number of incorrect entry’s on both the Buckland list and the Shelburne list due to the zip code.
- Fire District Tax Rate setting - Chair Alan Coutinho will reach out to the Fire District to see where they stand on the document entry required to set the tax rate.
- DLS/FRCOG training brochure for October 3, 2019 - Jennifer asked members to check and get back to her if they are interested in attending so they can be signed up.

Exemption Applications - Not open to public inspection

With no audience present the board voted on the following exemption applications in open session. Exemptions for the Town were granted at this time. Fire District exemptions will be granted in January after the actual tax bills are mailed as they are based on a percentage of the bill. Jennifer shared that a letter to Fire District exemption applicants will be mailed explaining the procedure and that all Town exemptions will show on the actual tax bills for FY20.

7-2019 Granted in the amount of \$500.00 – senior exemption clause 41C

Next Meeting

October 16, October 28, November 13, November 25, December 9

Jennifer reminded the Board that there will be a Tax Classification Hearing scheduled sometime in November as well with the Board of Selectmen

Executive Session Request

Jim Richardson stated that he wanted to go into Executive Session to discuss an ethics complaint against him. Jennifer stated that the board could not go into executive session without being properly posted 48 hours in advance and a reason had to be given in the posting. She then shared the reasons for convening executive session with the board. Jennifer will contact counsel to have her advise on how to proceed with this discussion and if it is appropriate to discuss in open or executive session.

MOTION: A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m. Vote 3-0

Respectfully Submitted:

Jennifer Morse
Assistant Assessor
August 25, 2019

Document List

Minutes of August 19, 2019

Monthly List – Real Estate/Personal Property – July 2019 – Levy 2020

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FVAC Recommended Values FY19, FY20

First Right of Refusal Policy

DCR Email re: Dole Forest Management Plan

Forest Management Plan – O’Brien, Foxbard Farm

Chapter Land Applications

August Building Permits

August Sales – Warren Group

Hinds Bill 1676 with Letter of support

DLS/FRCOG training brochure – October 3

Reasons for Convening Executive Session