

**BOARD OF ASSESSORS' MINUTES
COMMUNITY ROOM – POLICE STATION
MONDAY – MAY 3, 2004**

Assessors Present: James J. O'Connell, Scott C. Bush and Jonathan L. Fein

Also Present: Assistant Assessor Robert P. Leclair

Assessors' Chairman O'Connell called the meeting to order at about 8:35 a.m.

Acceptance of Minutes

The minutes of the March 29, 2004 meeting were accepted as presented.

Public Comment/Correspondence

No one asked to speak at this meeting.

Correspondence/Mail

April 2004 edition of City and Town was distributed to board members. The feature article was on supplemental tax assessments on new construction. Sections 41 and 42 of the municipal relief act (Chapter 46 of the Acts of 2003) amended Chapter 59, Section 2D so that the statute now applies automatically unless it is specifically rejected. The Selectmen did vote it down the first year however; it could be voted in at any time. Bob Leclair attended an MAAO meeting in Canton, MA on this topic April 27, 2004 to hear what problems other towns were having with the implementation. There appears to be very little to gain unless the community is experiencing significant growth in the form of new construction.

Excise

The Assessors signed the March 2004 *Monthly List of Abatements, Motor Vehicle and Trailer Excise*: \$286.98 from the Levy of 2003 and \$10,043.59 from the Levy of 2004 for a monthly total of \$10,330.57.

Measure and List

Bob informed the Assessors that the inspection of property was scheduled to begin today except that the two women who will be doing the job have not finished "call-backs" in the town they are in.

Dave Martel also informed the Board in an e-mail to Bob that in his opinion the clerks could not be paid for data entry even though it would save the town about \$4,000. In Dave's opinion, this would be a conflict of interest because it is too similar to the daily work that the clerks already perform.

Bob distributed the "Press Release" that he sent to the Springfield Republican, Longmeadow News, Reminder, LCTV, and the webmaster at Longmeadow.org. It was suggested that this notice be posted at the Library and in the town hall.

Town Meeting/Warrant Articles

Warrants were distributed to the Assessors for the May 11, annual town meeting. The Board discussed the "special" town meeting article and Article 12 of the regular meeting. Jonathan will read the article which requests funding of \$90,000 for the balance of the payment for the measure and list.

Misc.

- There was a brief discussion about how to present the “classification” recommendation to the Selectmen. Scott suggested that it might be useful to know at what tax rate surrounding towns’ commercial, industrial, and personal property owners are paying (CIP).
- Bob indicated that he would gladly make some calls and included this information as part of his preparation for classification, which usually takes place in October or November. In the past Bob has shown some statistics related to the number of towns with either a high or low percentage of CIP and how this relates to a split tax rate.

Appellate Tax Board (ATB)

Jim O’Connell brought in the article about the favorable decision for the town regarding the pending appeal of Ruth’s House (780 Converse Street). Bob handed out photocopies of the same article. Bob also had each year’s tax liability that could have been lost if the decision had gone against the town (FY1999- \$77,947.45, FY2000-\$107,546.33, FY2001-\$110,536.16, FY2002- \$113,637.94, FY2003-\$136,642.16, FY2004-\$143,159.75 for a total of \$689,469.79)

Copies of the Appeals Court decision were distributed to the Assessors.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at about 9:20 p.m.

**Next Meeting: – Monday, May 24, 2004 8:30 a.m.
Community Room of the Police Station**

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert P. Leclair, CMA, RMA, MAA
Assistant Assessor