

**BOARD OF ASSESSORS' MINUTES
COMMUNITY ROOM – FIRE STATION
MONDAY – JUNE 23, 2003**

The meeting was called to order at about 8:35 a.m.

Assessors Present: James J. O'Connell, Scott C. Bush and Jonathan L. Fein
Also Present: Assistant Assessor Robert P. Leclair

NOTE: Originally scheduled meeting of June 16, 2003 was rescheduled to June 23, 2003.

Acceptance of Minutes

The minutes of the June 2, 2003 meeting were accepted with revisions.

Public Comment/Correspondence

No one was present for this portion of the meeting.

Excise

The Assessors signed the May 2003 *Monthly List of Abatements, Motor Vehicle and Trailer Excise*: \$1,067.50 from the Levy of 2002 and \$8,026.17 from the Levy of 2003 for a monthly total of \$9,093.67.

FY2004 Budget

Board members were updated on the department head meeting that took place after the assessors met June 2, 2003. Susan Wright wanted to discuss 1) restoring money taken out of the department heads' salaries by the Board of Selectmen, and 2) how much money will be needed to restore the Friday afternoon hours at the town hall. The discussion by the assessors focused on several changes that have taken place since the town meeting was scheduled. It is anticipated that all three warrant articles will be tabled or withdrawn.

Abatements/ATB

Dave Martel telephoned Bob to inform him that the SJC had denied the town's motion to hear our appeal regarding Bay Path College's property at 33 Farmlea Road. As a result about \$6,000 in tax revenue is lost per year.

Income and expense statements were prepared for the Assessors by Bob and mailed out June 16, 2003. These were reviewed and discussed. The three spreadsheets prepared used the appraiser's figures, actual figures from Chestnut Knoll and state and national averages supplied by Chestnut Knoll. The Assessors feel that there is room to compromise and asked Bob to contact representatives at Chestnut Knoll.

An updated list of FY20003 appeals to the ATB was distributed to the Board. Currently there are eight cases. Three are "centrally valued" personal property accounts that should be handled by the D.O.R.

Measure & List

A copy of a sample RFP was distributed and review by the Assessors. Discussion focused on the need for inspecting and measuring all property in Longmeadow on a 10-year cycle and the consequences of not getting it done. Then the discussion focused on how much of the work will be done “in-house”. Who sets up appointments, how much will be done by the contractor, etc. and does the contractor have the capacity to host the data on the Internet.

Misc.

- Bay Path College has bought several properties in town. Consequently, these parcels have gone from taxable to exempt. As a result of these actions and due to the financial state of the town, the issue of having Pay Path make a payment in lieu of taxes (P.I.L.O.T. program) as is done in some communities. This issue has come up occasionally and has been discussed at department head meetings. The Assessors are willing to discuss the topic with other boards, especially Selectmen and Appropriations. Bob said he would look into what arrangements other communities have if and when the Assessors get together with other boards.
- Bob informed the Board that the www.longmeadow.org website has been updated with the names of the new Assessors. Also on the site (under Tax Assessors) are approved meeting minutes and a link to the questions and answers section that was originally printed in the most recent town report.
- Copies of the Warrant for tonight’s town meeting were handed out.
- Copies of the June edition of “City and Town” were distributed.
- Bob briefly reviewed the procedure for preparing the preliminary bills and the reconciliation that takes place between Gemini and Vision. Preliminary bills are mailed at the end of June with the first payment due August 1. The preliminary bills are not based on a value and a tax rate; they are one quarter of the prior fiscal year’s taxes paid. The actual bills (first actual due February 1) are usually higher if the new tax rate is higher, or if the town’s values increased as was the case for fiscal 2003.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at about 9:50 a.m.

**Next Meeting: – Monday, July 21, 2003
Community Room of the Police Station**

Respectfully Submitted,

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