



**Town of Norwell
Board of Assessors
345 Main St., Norwell, MA 02061**

Open Session Minutes

Date: July 6, 2021

Time: 6:30 PM (open)

Location: Osborne Room Norwell Town Hall

Board Members Present: Ms. Mary Horowitz, Ms. Mary Granville, Mr. Theodore Dawe

Others Present: Ms. Meredith Rafiki, Principal Assessor

Of note: Harbor Media may also be providing remote participation access for interested parties who are not able to attend this in-person meeting. Remote participation continues to be conducted pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order (March 12, 2020, temporarily modifying certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L.c.30A § 20(d) and 940 CMR 29.10(4)(b).)

Ms. Horowitz called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM.

1. Public comment for any non-agenda items:

There was no one from the public present at the meeting.

General Discussion:

The Board discussed the timing of the next Board Meeting which would be Tuesday, August 3 at 6:00 PM in the Osborne Room. Ms. Rafiki is on vacation but will provided the Board with reports and documents requiring their review and approval prior to her leaving.

2. Monthly Reports and Bills Payable:

The Board approved and reviewed monthly bills and reports which are available to the public at the Assessor's Office upon request. Ms. Rafiki also indicated that she would be providing the Clerk with copies of the reports and bills that were being signed.

2.c. Update on computer upgrade and Vison software:

Ms. Rafiki indicated that the town had approved six (6) computers, three (3) of which will be dedicated to the Assessor's Office and therefore allow the Vison Solutions software package to be

upgraded to Version 8 with advanced features including back-up of the data to the Cloud. Ms. Rafiki was not sure exactly when the installation of the computers and upgraded software will occur but indicated it may be within the next couple of weeks but she was not sure

2.b Update on calculating the preliminary bills:

Ms. Rafiki indicated she spoke to SoftRight (the company responsible for generating the towns Personal and Real Property Tax commitments and CPA fees) regarding the numbers and Ms. Rafiki did recalculate the numbers but was not able to reconcile the number provided by SoftRight to the towns data base. Ms. Rafiki indicated that she would be speaking with them tomorrow (July 7, 2021).Ms. Rafiki will continue to attempt to reconcile the numbers.

2.a Sales Analysis and Timeline:

Ms. Rafiki indicated that sales are run monthly and are available to the Board at anytime and as part of her review of the data if any sale does not meet the states guideline when compared with the information in the towns data base it is reviewed by Ms. Rafiki by comparing the information on the property card to the MLS listing. If corrections have to be made to the property card they are done monthly and Vision will update their database annually.

2.d. Motor Vehicle Excise Abatements Applications:

Ms. Rafiki requested that the Board hold the motor vehicle abatement applications and Ms. Horowitz agreed.

2.e. Update on Discussion with BOS (aka SB) regarding BOA liaison & public outreach.

Ms. Horowitz reached out to Ms. Allen and the BOS (aka SB) is amiable to appointing a liaison and Ms. Horowitz indicated that she would be reaching out to Ms. Allen to continue those discussions but wanted to put this agenda item on hold until the next meeting.

3. Approve prior meeting minutes as available (5/25/2021, 6/8/2021 and 6/22/2021).

Ms. Horowitz requested that the approval of the (5/25/2021, 6/8/2021 and 6/22/2021) meeting minutes be held until the next meeting. Ms. Horowitz presented her comments on the May 25 meeting to Mr. Dawe in July 6 and would be scanning over her comments on the June meetings to him at a later date.

4.d. In August we will review timing and preparation for the tax classification hearing.

Ms. Horowitz discussed the process and information to be received from the Assessor's Office in order to calculate the tax rate and create the tax classification hearing with the public and the SB. Ms. Horowitz indicated that the public and the Board would be given ample time to discuss and understand the tax rate and the tax classifications before they are approved by the State and the SB. Ms. Horowitz indicated further discussion on this subject would continue in August.

4.b Determine first section of data collection manual to draft, assign work.

Ms. Rafiki suggested that someone could review putting together pictures and descriptions of the various house styles. Discussion among the Board members and Ms. Rafiki focused on the areas of sources of information to be used and the accuracy, consistency and transparency of the various components and classifications of the property card including effective area, outbuildings etc. that would be documented.

4.a. Data Accuracy discussion: how to ensure field card data is accurate?

Ms. Horowitz asked Ms. Rafiki how the Board could help Ms. Rafiki ensure that the data on the field card are accurate? Ms. Rafiki appreciated the offer but she was not sure at this point what the Board could do to help her. Ms. Rafiki indicated that she is still trying to figure out how these (the

property cards) were done so adjustments could be made based on her professional judgment.

4.c. Review Norwell's exemptions (as approved) vs available exemptions.

Ms. Horowitz asked Ms. Rafiki if someone in the Assessors Office could email the Board list of the current exemptions the Town of Norwell currently offers their citizens. The reason for acquiring this information is to compare Norwell against the State guidelines and other towns to see if there is an opportunity for us to propose greater relief for our seniors.

Ms. Horowitz moved to adjourn the open session at 7:34 PM and to move to Executive Session under section 7. Ms. Granville seconded. A vote was taken with all in favor Ms. Horowitz, Ms. Granville and Mr. Dawe all voted yes.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Theodore Dawe, Clerk".

Theodore Dawe, Clerk