



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

**Open Session Minutes**

**Date:** January 26, 2022

**Time:** 5:15 PM (open meeting)

**Location:** Osborn 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).) This meeting was also available via Zoom.

Ms. Horowitz called the meeting to order at 5:25 PM.

**1. Public comment for any non-agenda items:**

There was no one from the public present at the meeting at this time however Ms. Horowitz indicated that she would leave this public comment section open for the rest of the meeting in case any of the citizens had a public comment.

**2. Monthly Reports, Bills Payable and Updates:**

- a) Monthly reports and bills payable.** 1) The request for the Boards signature on a previously approved FY 2021 CPA fee abatement in the amount of \$550.48 for account number 61-68 and a real estate tax abatement in the amount of \$18,649.40. 2) FY 2020 Motor Vehicle Excise Tax Abatement in the amount of \$476.25, 3) FY 2021 Motor Vehicle Excise Abatement in the amount of \$1,333.22 4) Senior Work Off abatement for FY2022 in the amount of \$10,975.53 5) Veteran's exemptions in the amount of \$2,400 for FY2021 for clause 17 6) Veteran's exemption under clause 17 E in the amount of \$3,000 for FY2022 7) Various bills payable in W.B. Mason invoice for office supplies, MAAO membership, Vison invoices and mapping bill in the amount of \$2,292.91. 8) FY21 Motor Vehicle and Trailer Excise Tax commitments #6 in the amount of \$18,315.56 9) FY22 Motor Vehicle and Trailer Excise Tax commitments #1 in the amount of 1,960,612.92 The Board approved

and reviewed monthly bills, exemptions and abatements which are available to the public at the Assessor's Office upon request.

- b) **Update on Field Guide/Data Collection Manual.** Ms. Rafiki indicated there was no update on the Field Guide/Data Collection Manual as she is still organizing and putting things together. Ms. Rafiki presented Residential and Commercial Field inspections forms which she and her staff would be used as a guide to collecting data while conducting site inspections. Ms. Rafiki also presented to the Board a Marshall and Swift Data Collection Worksheet to be used when calculating % of completion projects. Ms. Rafiki indicated that the property card was previously used to accomplish this task. Mr. Dawe thought the form was a good start and it appears to cover all the major elements but would like to review it a little more and reserve comments for the next meeting.
- c) **Update on actual Tax Bills.** Ms. Rafiki indicated that they have some questions and Ms. Rafiki indicated they have 17 received to date. Ms. Horowitz asked how it was going with respect to questions from the taxpayers regarding their bills and Ms. Rafiki indicated they were responding to most questions and if the taxpayer was not satisfied with the response the taxpayer was encouraged to complete an abatement form which is available on-line. Ms. Horowitz asked Ms. Rafiki if the Field Cards had been updated on line and Ms. Rafiki indicated they had not been updated at this time. Ms. Horowitz asked Ms. Rafiki why this was not done in a timely manner since the prior year field cards were not updated until mid-January which did not give the tax payer a lot of time to address any issues if they may have had prior to meeting their abatement filing deadline of February 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Rafiki indicated that if the field cards were not updated by Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> she would follow-up with the company. Mr. Dawe indicated that the purchase order was signed in on December 23 in order to have this process completed on time.

### 3. New Action Items:

- a) **Prior submitted minutes** Ms. Horowitz suggested that the paragraph referencing Harbor Media possibly recording the meeting should be eliminated. Both Ms. Horowitz and Ms. Granville had comments related to the November 23, 2021 open meeting minutes which Mr. Dawe agreed to address and make the necessary adjustments before resubmitting to the Board for approval. Minor changes were also recommended by Ms. Horowitz regarding the December 8, 2021 and January 4, 2022 and agreed to by Mr. Dawe including referencing abatements and ATB petitions by their reference number versus their street addresses which Ms. Rafiki indicated she would supply to Mr., Dawe. Ms. Horowitz made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of December 8, 2021 and January 4, 2022 as amended, Ms. Granville seconded, a vote was taken with all in favor Ms. Horowitz, Ms. Granville and Mr. Dawe all voting yes.
- b) **Senior work off program.** Mr. Dawe spoke with Ms. Susan Curtin Director of Council on aging to see if there was flexibility in the Senior Work Off program whereby a Senior could work more or less hours depending on their schedule. Ms. Curtin indicated that the senior wanted to confirm that the provision of the law that allowed seniors that were physically unable to complete all 100 or 125 hours could allow another person to complete that work program on their behalf. Ms. Rafiki indicates that that aspect of the law should have already been voted on. Mr. Dawe said he would follow-up to make sure it is part of the laws adopted by the town. could work up to 125 hours as long the exemption did not exceed \$1,500. She also wanted to confirm that a vote did not have to be taken to include flexibility in hours allocated for seniors that were not able to complete the 100 hours and to make sure if someone else could fulfill that obligation. 100 to 125 with a maximum of \$1,500 approval of the overlay surplus transfer in the amount of \$1,087.01 for Medicare insurance was approved by the Board. Mr. Dawe would follow-up to see if this sharing was

adopted by the Town.

**c) Property Record Cards:** Mr. Dawe indicated that the only changes that were agreed to were the color and form but when the card was issued there were approximately 15 changes most notably the Adjusted Base Rate was missing which is a very critical component of interpreting the values on the PRC. Ms. Rafiki requested that Mr. Dawe send to her all the changes to the card and she would research those with Vision Government Solutions who produced the cards and to the best of her knowledge the only changes she told them to make were related to the color and font. She just told them to print the card.

**d) Abatement Statistics to Date:** There were 17 abatements filed to date.

**e) Articles for Town Meeting:** Discussion surrounding the Boards article regarding the Seniors Circuit Breaker Property Tax article was voted on. Ms. Granville made a motion to approve the Senior Circuit Breaker Property Tax Article as written, seconded by Ms. Horowitz a vote was taken with all in favor Ms. Granville, Ms. Horowitz and Mr. Dawe all voting yes.

**f) Exemptions 22H** was discussed and decided to research further to determine the cost of the program since it was determined that this exemption is not reimbursable by the state. Ms. Horowitz recommended that we would have to table this for now. Since statistics were not readily available it was suggested that we reach out to our State Rep to see if he could help gather this information for next year and Mr. Dawe agreed to intercede in this matter.

**4. Discussion Items:**

**a) Other materials related to Town Meeting** none.

**b) Other exemptions to move forward with.** Ms. Horowitz asked Ms. Rafiki to determine the financial impact of 17D for next year since it was too late in the process to put the article before the town.

**c) Next Meeting Dates.** Upcoming meeting dates were discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 6:39PM

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Theodore Dawe, Clerk'.

Theodore Dawe, Clerk