

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

**Open Session Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** March 8, 2023

**Time:** 9:30 AM (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:** 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 9:33 AM.

**1. Open Forum:**

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. Assessor's Office Monthly Business:**

- a) **Prior Meeting Minutes.** Ms. Horowitz made a motion to approve the open meeting minutes of February 8, 2023 (as amended) which was seconded by Ms. Granville and a vote was taken with all in favor Ms. Horowitz, Ms. Granville and Mr. Dawe all voted yes.
- b) **Monthly Reports.** Ms. Horowitz made a motion to accept the following MV Excise and Boat Abatement and Uncollectible Personal Property Tax Reports, seconded by Mary Granville and a vote was taken with all in favor Ms. Horowitz, Ms. Granville and Mr. Dawe all voted yes.

- 1) 2020 MV Excise Tax Abatement Report - \$140.31 (March)
- 2) 2021 MV Excise Tax Abatement Report - \$121.71 (March)
- 3) 2022 MV Excise Tax Abatement Report - \$159.59 (March)

- 4) 2023 MV Excise Tax Abatement Report - \$3,116.92 (March)
- 5) 2021 MV Excise Tax Abatement Report - \$126.95 (February)
- 6) 2022 MV Excise Tax Abatement Report - \$657.19 (February)
- 7) 2023 MV Excise Tax Abatement Report - \$4,846.49 (February)

c) **Commitments & Warrants to Collector** -None.

d) **Account Payable Bills and Invoices.** None.

### **3. FY 2024 Revaluation Update and RFP Status for Data Collection Project:**

Ms. Rafiki presented the BOA with a draft proposal for an RFP that will go out for bid to perform the DOR required property inspections for 2,452 properties that have not had interior inspections performed within the last 10 years. Ms. Rafiki requested the Boards comments by Friday, March 10 in order to get the proposal out for bid as soon as possible. The Board took a very quick overview of the RFP and had the following comments but may be providing other comments once they have had time to review the RFP in greater detail.

Ms. Granville suggested that the RFP include a notation that after the inspection is completed the home owner sign the data collection form presented by the data collector and the Board agreed that this should be included as a requirement place on the data collector. Ms. Granville also suggested that a notation be placed on the RPF which would indicate that the work could be sub-contracted out allowing several companies to participate to get the job done within the time frame to which the Board agreed. Ms. Granville also referenced item 6 on the second page of the RFP and recommended that the wording be changed to read as follows; "The best price shall be from the bidder who meets....." and the words lowest price be eliminated to which the Board agreed. Mr. Dawe suggested to Ms. Rafiki that the RFP be reviewed by Jennifer Williams from the DOR before issuance to ensure that all the DOR's requirements were identified in the RFP. Ms. Rafiki suggested instead of the RFP being reviewed by Jennifer Williams that the final contract be reviewed by her (Jennifer Williams) prior to signing to which all the Board members agreed.

Ms. Horowitz suggested that the Data Mailer be electronically returned to the office in addition to other options of returning the mailer such as the Town mail box or being returned in a self-addressed stamped envelope or dropping it off at the Assessor's Office. It was also suggested that the envelopes for the mailers be fluorescent in color to indicate that this an important notification. Discussion regarding the number of mailers to be sent, the timing of the project, the email from the DOR regarding their requirements, and the details of the data mailer and how it would be processed were also discussed.

Ms. Rafiki also presented a Data Verification Questionnaire which would be included in the Data Mailer. The Board recommended that all references to dimensions be eliminated from the questionnaire and Ms. Rafiki agreed. Ms. Horowitz recommended that another designation be added to the questionnaire called "Not Sure" for areas that the home owner may not be sure how to respond. Ms. Rafiki also agreed to this addition. Mr. Dawe indicated that he had made recommended comments on a copy of the questionnaire and that he would present in to Ms. Rafiki at the end of the meeting. Ms. Rafiki suggested that the other board members send their comments regarding the questionnaire to her.

Mr. Dawe presented a draft letter to the Board and Ms. Rafiki regarding the announcement of the revaluation that would be placed on the towns website to inform the tax payers of the revaluation process. Ms. Horowitz suggested that this draft be given to the Board members electronically and that the Board members send their comments to Ms. Rafiki.

Mr. Dawe suggested that Ms. Rafiki cc the Board on any and all correspondence she has with the DOR regarding the revaluation process since the Board is ultimately held responsible for these valuations.

#### **4. Town Report: Review Notes, Approval:**

Ms. Rafiki presented a copy of the Town Report for the Board's comments. Ms. Horowitz asked Ms. Rafiki to send it to her in Microsoft Word so she could send it back to Ms. Rafiki to which Ms. Rafiki agreed. Mr. Dawe discussed some numerical questions and some grammatical issues and offered to give a copy of his changes to Ms. Rafiki at the end of the meeting.

#### **5. Discussion and Demonstration of ShuBee Foot Coverings:**

Mr. Dawe recommended to the Board and Ms. Rafiki that any person entering a home owners' home for an inspection ask the home owner if they would prefer them to put on a protective foot covering to protect the home owners house from carrying debris onto the inside of the house. Mr. Dawe felt it demonstrates a matter of respect by the person entering the home. Mr. Dawe also provided samples of the protective foot coverings to the Board Members and Ms. Rafiki and demonstrated its use. Mr. Dawe also indicated he was willing to pay for the foot coverings (which are reusable) himself. Two of the Board members agreed with Mr. Dawe's recommendation and Ms. Rafiki indicated that she was inclined to offer the home owner the choice to wear the foot coverings if the inspections were being conducted by her personnel but was less inclined to provide this option to outside data collectors at this time.

**6. Update on Field Manual:** Ms. Horowitz recommended that this item be discussed at the next meeting scheduled for March 22, 2023 to allow enough time to discuss this item to which the Board and Ms. Rafiki agreed.

#### **7. Website Updates:**

- **Meeting Minutes-** Posted through November, 2022 and Kelly (Administrative Assistant) will be trained on how to post the remaining open meeting minutes next week.
- **Tax Rate-** Has been posted for FY23
- **Tax Classification Hearing-** Has been posted for FY23
- **Posting of General Information to Town's Website (Regarding Inspections, etc.)-**Mr. Margro has agreed to post this information on the Town's website when it is available.

**8. New Business: anything unforeseen:** Ms. Rafiki indicated that there was no new business of anything unforeseen to discuss at this time.

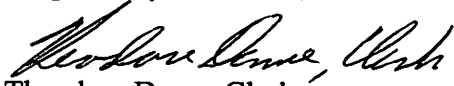
**9. Scheduling of the next couple of Meeting Dates:** Done at previous meeting.

**10. Adjourn to Executive Session.** The Executive Session will follow the open session.

All documents and exhibits referenced above are retained in the Assessor's Office in accordance with the Commonwealth's public records retention schedules

Ms. Horowitz adjourned the open session at 11:01 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Theodore Dawe, Clerk