



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

Open Session Meeting Minutes

Date: November 15, 2023

Time: 5:30 PM (open meeting)

Location: Osborn Room Norwell Town Hall

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

Others Present: Ms. Meredith Rafiki

Ms. Granville called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

1. Open Forum:

Ms. Darleen Sullivan, Town Administrator and Ms. Kim Roy, Assistant Town Administrator address the Board with updated information regarding the property assessment revaluation project and their anticipated next steps after their correspondence with the DOR. Ms. Sullivan noted the following with regards to the revaluation and tax setting process and timetable:

1. Completed 2,975 property inspections as of 11/13/2023 thereby completing the goal.
2. The DOR randomly selected 200 properties for review and agreed to sign off on their review of this properties on 11/15/2023.
3. After DOR has reviewed the properties, they will give the information to Vision Government Solutions ("Vision") for their analytical reviews to help set the tax rate.
4. Once Vision has completed their review and the Board has reviewed the data. Vision will forward the assessment to the DOR for their final review which would occur by 11/29.
5. The Assessor's Office is required to post a notice to the public that the property valuations are available to the public for a minimum of five (5) business days prior to the final certification by the DOR. This would occur sometime during the first week of December. Ms. Sullivan suggested that this public notice disclosure be promilitary displayed in the COA newsletter, Library, and the town website as well as any other medium to give the public maximum exposure to this process.
6. Ms. Sullivan indicated that the property taxpayer should also be given the opportunity to review their property card and suggested that their property card be inserted with their property tax bill.
7. Also, during the first week in December positive and negative adjustments would be made to the assessments based on the tax payers review of their assessments.

8. The Tax Classification Hearing with the Select Board is scheduled for December 13, 2023.
9. Currently the town is on schedule to set the tax rate and submit the final bills on schedule however if a delay occurs 3rd quarter pro-format bills will be sent out with a catchup in the 4th quarter when the actual assessments are certified.
10. Property record cards should be available for review and Ms. Sullivan suggested including the property record cards in with the tax bills to give the taxpayer an easy method of reviewing their property assessment and valuation.
11. Both Ms. Sullivan and Ms. Roy emphasized that going forward there is a critical need for continuous review of data quality by the Assessors Office. Ms. Roy also indicated that this is of primary concern for the DOR as well.
12. It was also suggested that the Board meet with the Select Board on December 6, and give them an update on the process of setting the tax rate and any other issues regarding the revaluation and assessments.
13. Finally, Ms. Sullivan offered her open and continuous support to the Board.

Mr. Dawe thanked Ms. Sullivan for their comments, update on the revaluation, timing of the tax rate setting process and especially her interface with the DOR and her hands on approach to ensure the Assessors Office completed the DOR's requirements on time.

2. Prior Meeting Minutes:

Prior meeting minutes were tabled for discussion until the next meeting when the full Board is present.

3. Office Business:

- a) Monthly Reports. None
- b) Commitments and Warrants: None
- c) Bills.

Ms. Rafiki presented monthly bills and invoices totaling \$3,218.42 as follows:

- Vision Government Solutions (Invoice #110138) - \$2,573.39
- W.B.Mason (Invoice # 242347206) - \$73.19
- W.B.Mason (Invoice # 242191984) - \$49.94
- Plymouth County Assessors Association (Reference Dues) - \$150.00
- Amazon Business (Printer Cartridges #14HQ-LTQ1-6K44) - \$371.90

4. Update on Inspectional Work:

a) Status of sales analysis. Addressed in Open Forum by Ms. Sullivan. In summary the sales analysis should be available for the Boards review by November 29, 2023.

b) Update from DOR progress. Addressed in Open Forum by Ms. Sullivan. In summary DOR sampled the inspections of 200 properties and is ready to proceed with next steps.

c) Next Critical Dates for the Board. Addressed by Ms. Sullivan in the Open Forum. In summary the next critical dates would be November 29, (sales analysis), First week in December (public disclosure of assessments and any adjustments to the valuations), December 6 (Open meeting with Select Board) and December 13 (Tax Classification Hearing)

5. Update on Town GIS & Mapping:

Ms. Rafiki indicated that the updates to the 2022-2023 map was completed and the color coding of the neighborhoods was coming.

6. Update on Data Collection Manual:

Ms. Granville indicated that Ms. Sullivan, Town Administrator, requested that the updating of the Data Collection Manual be put on hold until the tax rate process was completed.

7. New Business: anything unforeseen:

Mr. Dawe suggested that the Board contact Ms. Susan Cutain, Director of The Council on Aging to see if

the Board could place an article in the next issue of the Navigator to introduce the Seniors on how to read their property card or give a presentation on the subject. Ms. Rafiki suggested a separate flyer on the subject. Ms. Granville thought it was a good idea to discuss further at our next meeting.

Mr. Dawe then recommended that the DOR be requested to conduct a technical review of the assessing office to offer guidelines and best practices for effectively administering the duties and obligations of the Assessor's Office. These reviews are done at no cost to the town and access current procedures making suggestions for improvements and address areas where procedures that are lacking to ensure the accurate and timely execution of the DOR guidelines. Ms. Granville was interested in the program but requested more information about the process and services provided. Mr. Dawe indicated that he would reach out to the Technical Advisory Team to try and obtain an outline of their services and mission.

On a separate note, Mr. Dawe indicated to Ms. Rafiki and the Board that to remain in compliance with the DOR guidelines regarding inspections that approximately 5 residential properties must be inspected each week not including sales of homes, which Ms. Rafiki indicated could be accomplished with herself and her staff.

8. Adjourn to Executive Session:

A motion was made by Mr. Dawe to adjourn the open session, seconded by Ms. Granville with all in favor Ms. Granville and Mr. Dawe voting yes. The meeting was adjourned at 6:14 PM.

The executive session immediately followed 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

Respectfully submitted,


Theodore Dawe, Vice-Chair