

BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY MEETING
March 15, 2022
Draft Minutes

Present: Lee McClenny
Dave Baczewski
Dennis Angiono

Callie Hamdy
Becky Roy
Martha Heath

Guests: Calef Letorney, Caroline Brown

The Board of Civil Authority met on Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments

MINUTES

Dave Baczewski made a motion to approve the Minutes of October 28, 2022 as written. Dennis Angiono Seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

Martha Heath made a motion to approve the Minutes of February 10, 2022 as amended. Becky Roy Seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

Martha Heath made a motion to approve the Minutes of February 22, 2022 as written. Becky Roy Seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

CALEF LETORNEY

Lee described the time him Becky and Martha spent doing the property inspection. Lee read the Inspection Report out loud.

Becky asked if the way the property was assessed was on the 7.2 acres or was it assessed on the whole property? We should just be looking at just the 7.2 property. Caroline clarified this is for the current use paperwork that was done for the assessment of the 7.2 acres for the penalty for Current Use.

Martha asked if the assessor took the new value of the whole property and subtracted the previous value of Calef's property and said "this is the fair market value" of the 7.2 acres. To her this says the value of the 7.2 acres was dependent on who bought the property. If fair market value could be dependent on who purchased the property and they said no it shouldn't be so it makes sense to her for Calef's new assessment because he's adding acreage to his property that his new assessment would be more but if we're just looking at the fair market value of the 7.2 acres it doesn't make sense.

Caroline Brown, Assessor Assistant, explained it's the Current Use program. We would take that 7.2 acres from the residual land schedule and there's a form that the assessors put the numbers into and that's where it came from. The state has a computation that they go through to get those numbers both for assessment and penalty.

That makes sense to Martha for the new assessment on his property on the Westford tax rolls, but it doesn't make sense to her to what the fair market value is of the land, and she doesn't understand why it's not at the price he paid. Caroline explained the state has a way that they want it coded that includes a parcel. This is current use; they're being penalized for taking it out of the program.

Calef Letorney was present. It is his understanding is the original reason it came back to the price it did is that they looked at it as a stand-alone building parcel and because the Assessors don't look at comparable properties, they can only apply the sliding scale Westford Land Schedule.

To Lee it seems the state's original intent was that the Schultz's land should have been assessed in value and portion should have been applied to the parcels they sectioned off and sold and that would have established the value for removal from current use but apparently the land can only be valued once in this process and that's not the way the state instructs assessors to go about the process.

DELIBERATIVE SESSION

Becky Roy made a motion to enter Deliberative Session at 5:57 p.m. and Dennis seconded. Motion passed 6-0. Those present were Lee McClenny, Dave Baczewski, Dennis Angiono, Callie Hamdy, Becky Roy and Martha Heath. The board exited Deliberative Session at 6:58 p.m.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee McClenny
Selectboard Chair

Callie Hamdy
Town Clerk