

Freetown Board of Assessors
Minutes of Monday, March 14, 2022
Virtual Meeting – Zoom.us

Present: Mike Motta and Jeff Field were present via Zoom. Paul Sadeck was present at the Town Hall.

Absent: None.

Call to order: Meeting called to order at 3:01 p.m. In conformance with these orders, all votes taken during this meeting were by roll call. The meeting was recorded by Mr. Sadeck.

Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by Mr. Sadeck, seconded by Mr. Field, to approve both sets of minutes of the meeting held February 14, 2022, but to not release the Executive Session minutes at this time. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

No items were taken up under these headings.

New Business

A request was received from a summer home owner on Middleboro Road for an extension of time to return their Form of List. The Assistant Assessor stated he had approved the request since the board would not be meeting until after the deadline, and needed the board to confirm that decision now. A motion was made by Mr. Sadeck, seconded by Mr. Field, to allow the form to be filed delayed. The motion carried unanimously.

The budget for FY23 was reviewed. The only changes from the prior draft were to valuation and web hosting of values, both of which were contractual changes.

Potential warrant articles for the Annual Town Meeting were reviewed, as follows:

- To provide an exemption to excise taxes for former prisoners of war.
- To adopt Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 22G, which would enable veterans to continue receiving real estate tax exemptions even if their home is placed into a trust of which they are not a trustee. This exception applies to veterans only, all other classes of exemption recipients will continue to lose their exemption under similar circumstances.

Brief discussion was held on Clause 22G. A motion was then made by Mr. Field, seconded by Mr. Sadeck, to submit an article requesting the Town adopt Clause 22G. The motion carried unanimously.

Any Other Business Properly Before the Board

Mr. Motta discussed the Verizon settlement letter that was circulating to different towns via e-mail. The current settlement between Verizon and the various towns is set to expire soon, so the letter currently circulating would extend the settlement through approximately 2027.

Executive Session

A motion was made by Mr. Sadeck, seconded by Mr. Field, to enter into executive session to comply with the provisions of any general or special law; specifically, to discuss Real Estate and Personal Property abatement applications which are not open to public inspection (per M.G.L. Chapter 59, Section 60); to discuss Returns of Property Held for Charitable Purposes which are not open to public inspection (per M.G.L. Chapter 59, Section 32); and to discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's litigating position, namely Marie's Way Solar 1, LLC vs. Board of Assessors of the Town of Freetown, Braley Road Solar 4, LLC vs. Board of Assessors of the Town of Freetown, and Jorge & Tammy Silva vs. Board of Assessors of the Town of Freetown; and to return to open session afterward. When polled, the members voted as follows: Field – Aye, Motta – Aye, Sadeck – Aye.

Results of Executive Session

Results of decisions made were announced as follows:

3 & 5 Cranwood Court, East Freetown

Real estate tax exemption for FY23 was denied, as the property has been vacated. Associated motor vehicle excise abatement application was also denied.

118 High Street, Assonet

By a vote of 2-1, forms 1B3 and 3ABC were deemed received on time. No decision has yet been rendered as to whether the property would actually qualify as exempt.

Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made by Mr. Sadeck, seconded by Mr. Field, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: Michael T. McCune
Assistant Assessor