

Freetown Board of Assessors
Minutes of Wednesday, February 24, 2021
Virtual Meeting – Zoom.us

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Present: Mike Motta and Jeff Field.

Absent: Sue Parker.

Call to order: Mike Motta called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. The clerk then read a statement describing orders by the Governor suspending the Open Meeting Law and permitting the holding of meetings via remote participation during the coronavirus pandemic. Also, in conformance with these orders, all votes taken during this meeting were by roll call.

New Business

Pete Jankowski, new Town Administrator, was present to introduce himself to the members. General introductory statements and discussion was held between Mr. Jankowski and the members present, after which Mr. Jankowski departed.

Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by Mr. Field, seconded by Mr. Motta, to approve the minutes of the open session of the January 11, 2021 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.
- A motion was made by Mr. Field, seconded by Mr. Motta, to approve (but not release) the minutes of the executive session of the January 11, 2021 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Staff Report

- a. As of the start of the meeting, 16 of the 48 forms mailed out for Second Home Personal Property had been returned, and scattered others had responded in some other manner (phone calls or letters to say the houses are rental houses or otherwise occupied).
- b. Discussion was next held on an article submitted by the Veterans Agent for a tax work-off program for veterans similar to the program now in place for senior citizens (see: M.G.L. Chapter 59, Section 5N). The statute provides two options, one that would allow veterans to work up to 125 hours per year rather than to a maximum of \$1500 credit earned, and another that would allow an approved representative to earn credit on behalf of a veteran who was unable to do so. The noted difference in the former option was that credit is earned at the rate of minimum wage, so tying the credit to hours would change the cap every time minimum wage increases. Mr. Motta said he was inclined to stick with the \$1500 cap rather than the 125-hour option, and Mr. Field agreed, feeling it was easier to track and plan for a set amount rather than an amount that might change periodically. In terms of the option to allow approved representatives to earn credit on behalf of a veteran unable to do so, Mr. Field felt this was a fair option, and Mr. Motta agreed. A companion article will be submitted to adopt the program with the option for a representative, with the intent being that the selectmen's office will somehow combine the different versions of the article.

Old Business

No new information was available for the item under this heading, which was Exemption and Deferral Limits.

Any Other Business Properly Before the Board

- The Annual Report was reviewed prior to submission.
- Reminders were given for completing Course 101.

Executive Session

A motion was made by Mr. Field, seconded by Mr. Motta, 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) and to return to open session afterward. When polled, the members voted as follows: Field – Aye, Motta – Aye.

Results of Executive Session

Results of decisions made were announced as follows:

#008	6 Tommy's Lane, East Freetown	Granted, with a reduction in value of \$7,100.00 and a reduction in tax of \$90.17.
#009	152 Middleboro Road, East Freetown	Granted, with a reduction in value of \$18,600.00 and a reduction in tax of \$236.22.
#010	23 Braley Road, East Freetown	Denied.
#011	62 South Main Street, Assonet	Denied.
#012	259 Middleboro Road, East Freetown	Denied.
#014	78 & 80 Middleboro Road, E. Freetown	Denied.
#015	13 Estelle Avenue, East Freetown	Granted, with a reduction in value of \$28,255.00 and a reduction in tax of \$358.46.
#016	84 Chace Road, East Freetown	Denied.
#017	30 Washburn Road, East Freetown	Denied.
#018	17 Middleboro Road, East Freetown	Granted, with a reduction in value of \$1,300.00 and a reduction in tax of \$16.51.
#019	PP-HIGI-SH	Denied.
#021	4 Kenneth Pettey Drive, Assonet	Denied.

#999 141 South Main Street, Assonet Denied.

Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made by Mr. Field, seconded by Mr. Motta, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: _____
Assistant Assessor