

**Sterling Board of Assessors
Room 109, Butterick Municipal Building, 1 Park St., Sterling MA 01564
Minutes of Meeting August 13, 2015**

Present: Donlin Murray (Don), Chairman

Michael Rivers (Mike), Vice-Chairman

Robert Cutler (Bob), Clerk

Harald Scheid (Harald), Contract Assessor (RRG/Regional Resource Group)

Guest: Sean Hamilton, General Manager SMLD

Meeting Opened at 7:30am

Roll Call & Approval of Agenda

Robert Cutler present, Mike Rivers present, Donlin Murray present - along with Harald Scheid & Sean Hamilton. Mike made a motion to accept the agenda amended to move item #6 to the top of the agenda, 2nd by Bob, all in favor, aye.

Payroll, Payables, any abatements, warrants signed

Review Pandolf Perkins PILOT

The Board reviewed the agreement.

MOTION: - Don made a motion to recommend to the BOS that this PILOT go on the ballot for the Special Town Meeting on October 19th, 2nd by Mike, all in favor aye.

Sign 2016 CAI Chapter tax map maintenance contract and Query Manager GIS maintenance agreement

MOTION: - Mike made a motion sign the contracts, 2nd by Bob, all in favor aye.

Review and vote on 61A Chapter Lien release for 1 Heywood Rd / Lots 1 & 2 Tuttle Rd

Just a recommendation from the BOA to the BOS as to whether or not to act on their right of first refusal

MOTION: - Bob made a motion to recommend the Town not purchase the property, 2nd by Mike, all in favor aye.

Discuss payment for part-time office fill in

One of the senior work-off people filled in for Debbie during her recuperation. The assessors' office she was using her work-off but found she had used all her hours & was filling in to help out. The Board feels that she should be compensated at minimum wage & it will be taken out of the office support wages.

MOTION: Mike made a motion to pay it out of wages at the same as the senior work-off wage, 2nd by Bob, all in favor aye

CONTRACT REGIONAL ASSESSOR (RRG) UPDATE

Review MCI Settlement

We have very few ATB cases - only one on the docket; a long standing appeal by MCI Communications on a fairly small land line assessment. MCI like Verizon NE is a DOR assessed telecom utility. We settled a case with Verizon a couple of years ago - MCI is also claiming that they're a dying technology with people migrating to cell technology. MCI & Verizon earlier claimed that their assets were overvalued by DOR. Verizon's case has been resolved. MCI's is scheduled for a hearing in October. The total taxes they've paid since 2004 were \$23,722 - they're seeking a full two-thirds abatement, but willing to settle with local boards of assessors - with Sterling for \$3,440. Harald called Joanne Graziano, head of the Bureau of Local Assessment - she said there's a 50/50 shot of winning & that towns ought to do what they find most prudent. Harald recommends the Board going with the amount proposed with no interest.

MOTION: Bob made a motion to pay \$3,440 for FY14 & FY15, 2nd by Mike, all in favor aye.

Harald will call Will Hazel who is the attorney representing MCI & inform him of the Board's decision.

Review status of Revaluation

We'll have a visual at an upcoming meeting showing all of the many reports that make up the reval effort. Generally speaking our values are going up 5% across the board. A few exceptions are the Campground. Harald's putting together a master spreadsheet for the Board to review in the next couple of weeks. Once we get preliminary certification we'll have values available to the public - during the public disclosure period.

Harald's programmer found the land conversions were much more involved than originally thought to be – close to 9,000 land lines to be converted – too many to be done manually. They were able to update those land lines with David reviewing them.

OLD BUSINESS:

Vote and sign RRG Contract – At the last meeting proposal evaluations were handed out – RRG qualified on every single one of the items. Mike would like there to be a yearly review May.

Harald left the room while the Board reviewed the proposal.

MOTION: Bob made a motion to open proposal package & go forward to negotiation with RRG, 2nd by Mike, all in favor aye.

Harald returns to meeting.

MOTION: Bob made a motion to accept the bid as printed, 2nd by Mike, all in favor aye.

Contract will be signed at the next meeting.

Sign Chapter liens

Chapter applications have been mailed out. A letter & a copy of the lien to be recorded will be sent out as a separate mailing. Chapter liens were signed.

REFERENCES: MCI memo, RRG bid

Future agenda items: Sign Chapter liens, finalize RRG contract, reval update,
Next meeting for Sept 9 @7:30am

Mike moved to adjourn the meeting, 2nd Bob, all in favor aye.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00am

Respectfully Submitted
Debbie Dreyer
Assistant to the Assessor