

Sterling Board of Assessors  
Room 109, Butterick Municipal Building, 1 Park St., Sterling MA 01564  
Minutes of Meeting November 21, 2016

**Present:** Donlin Murray (Don), Chairman  
Robert Cutler (Bob), Vice Chairman  
Richard Sheppard (Dick), Clerk  
Becky Boucher (Becky), Associate Regional Assessor  
Debbie Dreyer (Debbie) Assistant to the Assessor

**Meeting Opened at 7:31am**

**Roll Call & Approval of Agenda**

Sheppard present, Cutler present, Murray present - along with Becky Boucher & Debbie Dreyer

**MOTION:** Bob made a motion to accept the agenda, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dick, all in favor, aye.

Update: Donny said, that on speaking to the finance committee, we'll wait to increase our budget to cover commercial inspections till next year's budget since the inspections won't be done till next year. The Fin Com has been made aware that we'll be asking for more money to fund the inspections.

**MOTION:** Dick made a motion to accept the previous meeting's minutes (10/17/16), 2<sup>nd</sup> by Don, all in favor, aye.

**Payroll, Payables, Statutory Exemption list, any abatements, warrants signed.**

**Executive Session**

**Vote:** Executive Session

**7:41 EXECUTIVE SESSION** - Don made a **Motion** to go into executive session under M.G.L. C59; S60 & M.G.L. 214 S1B, Clause(7) to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law: ~ for the purpose of reviewing personal exemption applications & their supporting documentation so that identifiable confidential information shall not be made public.

**Roll Call Vote:** Sheppard aye, Cutler aye, Murray aye

The Board convened in Executive session at 7:41am and reconvened in public session at 8:50am.

**Contract Regional Assessor (RRG) Update**

Tax Rate Approved @ \$18.03

ATB case on Kroll application: We lost the case & they will be getting an abatement for only that one year (FY16) they applied for. We will need to discuss the 61B policy again.

**MOTION:** Bob made a motion to grant a one-time abatement of \$526.07, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dick, all in favor aye

Signatures for Gateway

Review Chapter Applications:

- 3 Forestry certificates to be signed by the chairman.
- Special applications to be discussed
- Prime lot size – FY15 we had a 1 acre prime site – changed in FY16 to 2 acres. FY17 we have a 2 acre prime site. Addressing Joan Hirst's issue with her land – Becky graphed it out & her extra acre that she wants classified would be saving \$17,400 in value which would result in about \$313 less in taxes. This application will be held for review. Going forward, we will approve all applications with the standard 2 acres.

**MOTION:** Sign list of all Chapter recommended by Becky to be approved: motion made by Don, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob, all in favor aye

- Becky recommended approval for an application that requested a change of use from 61A to 61B. Another Chapter owner had contacted Becky because they were thinking of putting their property on the market. Becky calculated an estimated roll-back tax, but suggested they file their Chapter application in case they didn't sell so that they would be able to remain in Chapter. Becky checked the designated acreage on the application with the online GIS & it didn't seem to coincide along with an income that didn't qualify. A letter will be sent asking them to clarify their uses & verify income.
- Letters went out last year to 5 Chapter owners asking them to correct their land uses or get a forestry plan – none of them have done anything yet. Letters have to go out again & say they need to be updated this year or they won't be approved.
- Two owners had partial withdrawals & one has not applied yet at all.

Future agenda items: Review 61B policy & update on Chapter

Next meeting: Monday December 19 @7:30am

Dick made a motion to adjourn the meeting @9:07am, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob, all in favor aye.

Respectfully submitted by Debbie Dreyer  
Assistant to the Assessor