

**Sterling Board of Assessors**  
**Room 109, Butterick Municipal Building, 1 Park St., Sterling MA 01564**  
**Minutes of Meeting September 28, 2015**

**Present: Donlin Murray (Don), Chairman**

**Michael Rivers (Mike), Vice-Chairman**

**Robert Cutler (Bob), Clerk**

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

**Debbie Dreyer (Debbie) Assistant to the Assessor**

**Meeting Opened at 7:30am**

**Roll Call & Approval of Agenda**

Mike Rivers present, Robert Cutler present, Donlin Murray present - along with Harald Scheid & Debbie. Harald said that Becky Boucher will be joining us at 8:15. Mike made a motion to accept the amended agenda, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob, all in favor, aye.

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

**Sign Assessed Utility & Sales Report cover letters** – Utility Report to be signed when we get the numbers – the Sales Report cover letter will be signed after reviewing the LA3 today.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Review & approve previous minutes** – Minutes of the 8/13/15 will be amended to add reference documents

MOTION: Mike made a motion to approve the amended minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob, all in favor aye.

Minutes of the 9/9/15 minutes MOTION: Mike made a motion to approve, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob, all in favor aye

**Discuss Chapter 61B policy** – Will review at our next meeting

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Finalize & sign RRG Contract** – MOTION: Mike made a motion to authorize the Chairman to sign the contract, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob, all in favor aye

**Sign Chapter Liens** – Harald needs to go over them with Becky Boucher (RRG) – next meeting to sign.

8:00 – Becky Boucher with has joined the meeting. Harald introduced Becky who has been an assessor for 13 years & has now joined RRG & will be working with us here in Sterling.

**CONTRACT REGIONAL ASSESSOR (RRG) UPDATE**

**Revaluation presentation** – Harald went over some highlights of the reval reports; certification directives, cyclical re-inspections, income & expense data, land schedules – this year we had quite a project to move approximately 7500 individual land lines from 1 acre prime sites to reflect a 2 acre standard base.

Harald went over the LA3 sales report – these are the collection of sales used in the revaluation as benchmarks to establish such things as land schedules, building schedules & our underlying system of values. Harald explained the validity codes used for sales. In submitting the LA3 the BOA is also required to sign the Sales Report cover letter.

Harald presented a spreadsheet put together listing all the sales from low sale price to high sale price, looking for anomalies, potential misgradings – this is to be used during abatement season to help identify comparable sales.

*NEIGHBORHOOD MAPS:* We have 5 economic neighborhoods: #1/lowest (almost exclusively the old Campground), #2/properties that have a traffic issue, #3/average location which is most of the town. We allow for better locations – our waterfront locations are going to be a neighborhood #5. At one time we had up to 15 neighborhoods – part of the mandate under the DOR is that every economic neighborhood and its associated rate need to be supported by sales - in a small town it's virtually impossible to support 15 neighborhoods. We've tried to reduce the number of neighborhoods to a number that is long term supportable by sales.

*LAND SALES:* They help form our land tables & land rates. There are 3 categories: 1)Prime Site /1<sup>st</sup> two acres (for 87,120sf), 2)Excess Acreage /valued at \$6,000 per acre, 3)Undevelopable /wetlands or extreme topography (lowest rate - \$1,000 an acre). Any parcel may have multiple land types.

*NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT:* Size increments showing that the land table doesn't have intersecting lines.

*SINGLE FAMILY SALES:* All of the SF sales – the ratio overall is at .945 median ratio over 78 SF sales. We've met our obligation of valuing at market value.

*CONDO SALES:* There were 11 sales at .96 median ratio which meets our obligation.

*COMMERCIAL & APARTMENTS:* We derive our rates from the Income & Expense surveys & that same information from other surrounding communities to help establish typical rental rates, then used for development of a capitalization rate which plays into the income approach to value which is key in establishing the fair market value of income properties.

Harald's hoping to set a tax rate before Thanksgiving.

*References:* LA 3 sales reports

*Future agenda items:* Sign Chapter liens, review Chapter 61B policy, review Chapter returns, pymnt for work-off

*Next meeting:* Oct 28 @7:30am

Mike moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:06am, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bob, all in favor aye.

Respectfully Submitted  
Debbie Dreyer  
Assistant to the Assessor