

**Sterling Board of Assessors**  
**Room 109, Butterick Municipal Building, 1 Park St., Sterling MA 01564**

**Minutes of Meeting** January 30, 2023

**Present:** Donlin Murray (Don), Chairman  
Richard Sheppard (Dick), Clerk  
Robert Heckman Jr (Rob) Regional Assessor  
Debbie Dreyer (Debbie) Assistant to the Assessor  
**Guests:** David Favreau (BOH), Patty Page (Bldg)

**Meeting Opened at 8:30am**

**Roll Call-** Sheppard present, Murray present, along with Rob & Debbie, guests David Favreau & Patty Page, Hannah expected

**Approval of Agenda - MOTION:** Dick made a motion to approve the agenda, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Don, all in favor, aye.

**Payables, any abatements, warrants signed.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Guests David Favreau & Patty Page / 46 Main St:** David Favreau said that 46 Main St was sold back in 2018 & is now being sold again. Back in 2018, there were questions with the sellers & buyers about bedroom count. It was verified it was a one-bedroom use at that time. Sometime in 2019 there was a change in assessment from a one bedroom to a three bedroom. They are currently selling the property & the owners want to use the three-bedroom count to market their home. The BOH has no record of change of use from 2018 -2023, nor does the Bldg Dept.

Going forward David would like to ask the BOA to inform the BOH & Bldg Dept whenever there's a change in use; bedroom count specifically. There have been instances in the past where problems arose, so by keeping the lines of communication open & sharing updated information, this can be avoided.

Don wants to know what we can do to make sure issues like this don't happen in the future. Rob says his approach when an agent mentions bedroom count is to determine if it meets proper specifications & the septic system requirements.

This particular cesspool passed Title 5 requirements & currently works well. There's no design data to let us know if it would support 1 or 5 bedroom, it all depends on how ambitious the person was who dug it – impossible to determine. They never invited the assessors in to verify so we could assess it properly. Upon buying the property in 2018, they pulled & signed a bldg. permit saying that it was a one bedrm & were going to add an office. The State Law says if it says it's a one bedroom it can't change it's use without up-grading the system. Going forward there will be further investigation & discussion. **9:17am:** David Favreau & Patty Page leave the BOA meeting.

**Review & Statutory Exemption list:** The list contained one veteran continuing application & one new veteran application. both approved & list signed.

**Chapter liens & updates:** Rob said he'd have the liens ready for our next mtg.

**Town Mtg warrant / 1yr residency for veterans:** Our Veterans' agent Rick Voutour asked if the Board of Assessors could place an item on the warrant for this year's Town Meeting changing the five year Commonwealth of Mass residency requirement for veterans applying for a statutory exemption to just one year. We need to determine if this can be changed locally or is this something only the State has jurisdiction to change.

**RRG Update:**

**R.E. / P.P. Abatements:** Rob said abatements have been coming in, but not many – about 12. He will be making calls & scheduling inspections if necessary then compile all the information and present it to the Board to review along with his recommendations.

This is a Revaluation year with a 5-year audit. We are in good shape with not much catching up to do. David Manzello Did a lot with the valuations this past year to get us caught up so that when we do go through the audit we are not going to see as massive of an increase as other towns.

Future agenda items: R.E. & P.P. abatements, CAI contract, Veteran's warrant article

*Next mtg: Feb 13<sup>th</sup> @8:30am. Dick made a motion to adjourn the meeting @9:56 am, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Don, all in favor aye.*

*Respectfully submitted by Debbie Dreyer, Assistant to the Assessor*