

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF ASSESSORS PUBLIC MEETING
TOWN OF CHARLEMONT**

November 26, 2012

Members Present:

Jacqueline Cashin, Chair
Sarah Reynolds
Simon Dean

Also present was Aaron Weston, of James Sewall Company.

The meeting was convened at 6:05 p.m.

1. Aaron Weston, of James Sewall Company attended the meeting to discuss their proposal for tax map updates and GIS tax mapping. Weston explained that as part of the MassGIS Statewide parcel project, the town's map data was digitized to comply with MassGIS Level III standards. However the data, while level III compliant does not contain annotation or text and could not be used to generate tax maps. Weston explained that annotation of the parcels in GIS format is highly recommended in order to take advantage of the MassGIS work done and to ensure that their maps are more accurate and would match the MassGIS data. Weston added that this would also eliminate the need for the town to maintain two sets of tax map data. The Board asked Weston if there is any available funding to help with the cost to towns. Weston stated that there is currently no funding or grant assistance but that MassGIS will be looking in to ways to help fund this, but noted that it would still be a good idea for the town to move forward with the GIS work because first priority for funding would be given to those towns already using these services. Weston then provided a PowerPoint presentation explaining an optional online hosting program called TaxMap, which allows users to search map/parcel data, perform basic GIS functions, measure distance/area, identify wetlands, create abutter's lists etc. Weston also noted that they would link this to the Town's CSC site, which provides property information, so they could be accessed together. After answering several questions of the Board, Weston went on to discuss their fees. Weston noted that the cost to perform the GIS annotation services, including current map updates would be a one-time fee of \$6,600.00, the fee for the web-based TaxMap GIS viewer would be a one-time implementation fee of \$1,800.00 and the annual hosting fee would be \$1,800.00. Weston told the Board he would send them a link to the TaxMap viewer so they could check out the features and see how it works. The Board stated that the turnaround and response time to their map updates and questions has been an issue in the past and that they would be expecting a reasonably prompt response to requests. Weston stated that this should not be a problem; they have several people who monitor this and noted that the turnaround time for map updates would be around two weeks. The Board thanked Weston for his time in coming to the meeting.
2. The Board reviewed a quote from Tighe & Bond, Inc. for similar tax mapping services, which came in higher than Sewall at \$13,250 and agreed this was too high for their budget. After some discussion, on a motion by Reynolds and seconded by Dean, the Board voted unanimously to contract the services of James Sewall Company and to move forward with their capital request of \$8,500; the \$6,600 annotation fee, \$1,800 hosting fee and a \$100 cushion in the event of unforeseen expenses.
3. The Board discussed the Tax Rate Classification hearing, noting that they would again recommend a single tax rate, as there were not enough businesses to make enough impact to justify splitting the tax rate.
4. At 7:15 p.m. the board adjourned the meeting to attend the Tax Rate Classification hearing with the Select Board.
5. At 7:28 p.m. the Board reconvened their regular meeting.
6. The Board reviewed the minutes from their 10/22/12 meeting. On a motion by Reynolds and seconded by Dean, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes, as amended. The Board reviewed the minutes from their 11/7/12 meeting. On a motion by Reynolds and seconded by Dean, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes, as written.
7. The Board reviewed and signed the A3, LA-4, LA-5, LA-15 and LA-13 Tax Rate Recap forms.

8. The Board reviewed a Fiscal Year 2014 Chapter 61A application for property on Avery Brook Road. On a motion by Dean and seconded by Reynolds, the Board voted unanimously to approve the application and signed a Notice of Action.
9. The Board reviewed and signed 3 Chapter 61 land liens.
10. The Board reviewed and signed motor vehicle commitment #6 and 6A.
11. The Board reviewed a note from a camper owner stating that he no longer owned the camper. After discussion regarding a ruling received by the DOR that all property tax is a single liability for the entire year, the Board reviewed a letter to the camper owner stating this. On a motion by Dean and seconded by Cashin, the Board approved and signed the letter.
12. The Board reviewed and signed the monthly abatements for October and November, 2012.
13. The Board reviewed their deeds for October, 2012.
14. The Board reviewed the building construction for October, 2012.
15. The Board reviewed and approved invoices for Mayflower Valuation and Franklin County Assessor's Association.
16. The Board reviewed a quote received by Patriot Properties to inspect and value personal property at Berkshire East Ski Resort. Reynolds then produced a partial list of personal property, as submitted to her by owner, Roy Schaefer. After some discussion as to the fact that since Schaefer was showing a good faith effort to complete the property list, the Board felt it best to hold off on contracting outside services. On a motion by Cashin and seconded by Dean, the Board voted unanimously to decline the services of Patriot Properties. Dean and Reynolds agreed to assist Schaefer in completing the personal property list.
17. The Board reviewed an emailed request from Community Software Consortium, asking for a letter of support and signature on being a co-applicant on a grant application. After some discussion with regard to the number of letters requested, the time involved and the expected fee that would be involved in becoming a co-applicant, the Board decided to decline at this time.
18. The Board reviewed a request from Community Software Consortium, asking if the Community wanted to be part of a beta testing of Assessing and Collection software via the cloud and to sign a grant application. The Board again declined participation, due to the fees that would be involved.
19. Millett explained that occasionally she is asked to create reports that are not in existence. Millett noted that while not required to comply, per the Public Records Law, if the report is something that is within her ability to provide, she has produced these. Millett also noted that per the Open Meeting Law, a reasonable fee may be assessed for such reports. After some discussion, on a motion by Reynolds and seconded by Cashin, the Board voted unanimously to assess a fee of \$10.00 for creation of a report not in existence.
20. The Board reviewed a Forest Cutting Plan for 1935 Route 2.
21. The Board reviewed a list of outstanding Appellate Tax Board appeals from the ATB. Millett noted that she had asked for this to be sure that they have accounted for any outstanding appeals in their overlay account.
22. The Board noted that the Special Town Meeting will be held Monday, December 10th at 6:00 p.m. and that they would attend this before their Board meeting that evening, in order to address the Verizon Appeal warrant article they had submitted.

At 8:49 p.m., on a motion by Reynolds and seconded by Dean, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the public meeting.

At 8:49 p.m., on a motion by Cashin and seconded by Reynolds, the Board voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session with the intent of not returning to open meeting afterwards, in order to deliberate on pending abatement and/or exemption applications.

Roll Call:

Voting yes: Cashin, Dean, Reynolds

Voting no: None

Motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carlene Millett,
Assessor's Secretary

List of Documents Viewed in Public Meeting of November 26, 2012*

1. Tax Mapping services proposal from James Sewall Company, dated 9/18/12.
2. Tax Mapping services proposal from Tighe & Bond, dated 11/7/12.
3. Minutes from the meetings of 10/22/12 & 11/7/12.
4. Tax Rate Recap forms A3, LA-4, LA-5, LA-15 and LA-13.
5. Fiscal Year 2014 Chapter 61 application for Avery Brook Road.
6. Chapter 61 land liens for Wayne Meeks, Jonathan Healy and Winston Healy.
7. LA-15 Interim Year Adjustment Report, as printed from the DOR/Gateway site.
8. Motor vehicle commitment #6 and 6A.
9. Letter to camper personal property owner, dated 11/26/12.
10. Monthly abatements for October, 2012.
11. Deeds for August and October, 2012
12. Building construction for October, 2012
13. invoices from Mayflower Valuation and Franklin County Assessor's Association.
14. Quote to inspect and value personal property at Berkshire East from Patriot Properties, dated 10/24/12.
15. Personal property list, received by Roy Schaefer, Berkshire East.
16. Email from Community Software Consortium regarding grant application, dated 11/21/12.
17. Email from Community Software Consortium regarding beta testing of cloud software, dated 11/8/12.
18. Forest Cutting Plan for 1935 Route 2, received 10/25/12.
19. List of outstanding Appellate Tax Board appeals from the ATB.

***Documents are stored in their respective files in the Assessor's office.**