

**CHARLEMONT BOARD OF ASSESSORS**  
**FEBRUARY 10, 2025 MEETING MINUTES**  
**CHARLEMONT ASSESSOR'S OFFICE**

**Members Present/ Participating:**

Jacqueline Cashin: Chair, Anthony Ostroski

**Members Absent:**

Karen Rau

**Others Present:**

Thorne Palmer, Town Clerk

**Call to Order**

Chair Cashin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**#2: 7:00 Appointment; Town Clerk Thorne Palmer**

Town Clerk Palmer attended to notarize the Board's signatures on one Chapter 61 classification land lien. This is an amended lien to reflect an ownership change.

- a. Smith Investment Trust

The Board thanked Palmer for his time notarizing their signatures.

**#3: Approval of Minutes**

The Board reviewed the minutes from their 1/6/2025 meeting. On a motion by Cashin and seconded by Ostroski, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes, as written.

**#2: Board Approval/Signatures**

On a motion by Cashin and seconded by Ostroski, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following:

1. Warrant to Collector and Notice of Commitment for 2024 Motor Vehicle Excise commitment #7 and 2025 commitment #1.
2. Fiscal Year 2026 Tax Map Maintenance contract with CAI.
3. Monthly list of abatements/exemptions of real, personal property and motor vehicle excise tax for January, 2025.
4. Public notice regarding Certification is posted on the Town Hall, the website and went into the newsletter. Hayden explained that forms of list and income and expense forms have gone out.

**#3: Board Discussion and Vote**

1. Property inspection of 2143 Route 2. Hayden had a few questions relating to the interior details of the property, so she could finish entering Cashin's inspection.
2. Property inspection of 12/14 Thunder Lane. The owner requested an inspection, but told Hayden he is still in Florida and will call us when he's back.
3. Revaluation of 191 Legate Hill Road. The owners had inquired about possible tax relief for significant damage to their property because of a fuel oil leak. The oil seeped into the soil and groundwater below, triggering involvement of the Department of Environmental Protection, and contracting with an environmental consultant to implement the remediation. After consulting with their valuation vendor Mark Harrell, he agreed there wouldn't be an abatement for Fiscal Year 2025, as the assessment date is January 1, 2024 but advised that the Board could apply a 50% influence (reduction) on the land and building going forward, due to the considerable damage and cleanup involved. He suggested keeping it on for a year and then revisiting the property to assess where it stands. The Board agreed with this, and Hayden presented them with the revised assessment, which results in a \$69,500 value reduction. Cashin made a motion to apply a temporary influence of 50% on the land and buildings, and to revisit the property in a year. Ostroski seconded, all in favor. Hayden will contact the property owners to inform them.

4. Local Options Clause 22I & 22J for veterans. The Department of Veteran's Services wrote to Select Boards asking them to consider adopting two local options that provide additional property tax relief for veteran exemptions, which were introduced as part of the HERO Act. The Select Board referred the matter to the Assessors. Clause 22I allows for an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA), which increases the exemption amount by the annual consumer price index (CPI) percent each year. Clause 22J allows for an additional exemption to veterans who qualify for the statutory exemption, of up to 100%. Hayden presented a spreadsheet with the effects of each clause. The Board reviewed the sheet and discussed the fact that we implemented the CPI COLA last year on the Senior/Surviving Spouse exemption, so this would be reasonable to consider, however we already have many exemption applicants, including seniors, and this number will only increase. Additionally, since the State is not increasing their reimbursement to us to offset the additional exemptions, 22J would substantially increase our allocation to the overlay account, causing the rest of the taxpayers to pick up the difference. Therefore, on a motion by Cashin and seconded by Ostroski, the Board voted unanimously to put local option Clause 22I before annual town meeting for vote, but not Clause 22J at this time. Hayden will report back to the Select Board and draft up the warrant article for town meeting.
5. We received information from a company called Cidare that offers data collection and designed communication for taxpayers. Hayden showed the Board the Quincy Assessor's dedicated website, including general assessing information, digital forms and an Understanding Your Taxes Booklet, all designed by Cidare, and tailored specifically to the City. The Board agreed to have Hayden contact them for more information about their services.
6. Community Compact IT Grant. Hayden explained that she saw information on the CCIT grant and saw it as an opportunity to help fund the pending AP-5 software upgrade they will need to undertake, so she applied for it. She presented the Board with the application, noting that they were informed by Catalis that they'll need to purchase a new version of Microsoft SQL Server and client access licenses. She was able to get a reasonable quote from Insight, the company they used for their 2019 SQL. Their total grant amount requested was \$9,739.
7. The Board reviewed the deeds for January, 2025.

#### Adjournment

At 7:14 p.m. on a motion by Cashin and seconded by Ostroski, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn their meeting and enter into Executive Session for purpose #7; to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements; to deliberate on pending abatement and/or exemption applications, which pursuant to G.L. Chapter 59, Section 60 are not open to public inspection, to sign the minutes from their last executive session meeting, and to not reconvene in open session afterwards. Roll Call vote: Cashin-Yes, Ostroski-Yes.

The next meeting is Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carlene Hayden,  
Assessor's Clerk

Documents Viewed in Meeting of 2/10/2025\*

1. Agenda for meeting of 2/10/2025
2. Minutes from 1/6/2025
3. Chapter 61 Amended Classified Forest, Agricultural/Horticultural, Recreational Land Tax Lien for Smith Investment Trust
4. Warrant to Collector and Notice of Commitment for 2024 Motor Vehicle Excise commitment #7 and 2025 #1
5. Fiscal Year 2026 Tax Map Maintenance contract with CAI, 1/16/2025
6. Monthly list of abatements/exemptions for January, 2025
7. Public notice from Assessor's Office regarding Fiscal Year 2026 Certification
8. Property record card for 2143 Route 2
9. Property record card for 191 Legate Hill Road
10. Letter to Charlemont Select Board from Department of Veterans Services (no date)
11. DLS Bulletin BUL-2024-5, An Act Honoring, Empowering and Recognizing Servicemembers and Veterans (HERO Act), with information on local option Clauses 22I & 22J, August, 2024f
12. Spreadsheet on Clause 22 veterans exemptions & effect of voting Clause 22I & 22J
13. Information packet from Cidaire, Inc.
14. Assessor's application for Community Compact IT Grant for AP-5 software upgrade, 2/6/2025
  - a. Quote for AP-5 upgrade (from Catalis), 10/9/2024
  - b. Pricing for Microsoft SQL Standard Server & CAL (from online), 2/2025
  - c. Quote for Microsoft SQL Standard Edition & CAL (from Insight), 2/7/2025

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