

BOARD OF ABATEMENT MEETING

ABATEMENT AGENDA

June 5, 2019

1. Call to Order 6:30 p.m.
2. Amendments to the Agenda (if needed)
3. Roll Call and BCA oath:
"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will well and truly hear and determine all matters at issue relating to the abatement of taxes and other levies submitted for my decision."
4. Minutes of April 4, 2019 (Abatement/Checklist) and May 8, 2019 (Checklist).
5. Review applications
6. Discuss appointment/charter change for Asst. Presiding Officer.
7. Other Business: -
 - a. Odd number year - must have checklist purge meeting before September 1, 2019. During this meeting include discussion on opening of early ballots prior to election day (more information to come).
 - b. Tax Grievance Hearing dates unknown as Grand List has not been lodged. Traditionally the first meeting is held mid to late July.
 - c. Select calendar dates for customary meeting for the period July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020.
 - d. Any other business to come before the Board.
8. Adjourn

BOARD OF ABATEMENT MINUTES

The duly warned Board of Abatement Meeting was held on June 5, 2019, Barre Town Municipal Building, Selectboard meeting room, in Lower Websterville at 6:30 p.m.

The following members were present: Chair Paul Malone, Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna Kelty, Pearl Bugbee, William Bugbee, Jeff Blow, Charles "Chip" Castle, Jeanne Daniele, J. Guy Isabelle, JP Isabelle, Tom Koch, Norma Malone, Virginia Poplawski, R. Lee Walther, Sheila Walther. Members not in attendance: W. John "Jack" Mitchell, Bob Nelson, Edward Paquin, Jay Perkins, Christopher Violette, Paul White, Tom White and Assessor Russ Beaudoin.

Others present were Peter Perrault and Kathy Robinson (representing Michael Cota).

CALL TO ORDER - Chair Malone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and proceeded with the Roll call. This meeting is being audio taped. Be sure to speak distinctly and state your name for the record.

BOARD OATHS - Roll call was completed and the clerk administered the oath to those members present: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will well and truly hear and determine all matters at issue relating to abatement of taxes and other levies submitted for my decision. So help me God (or under the pains and penalties of perjury).

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

The agenda, by consensus, was approved as presented.

**BOARD OF ABATEMENT MEETING OF June 5, 2019 continued:
MINUTE APPROVAL**

On a motion by J. Guy, Isabelle, seconded by JP Isabelle, the Board of Civil Authority voted to approve the Board of Civil Authority Abatement and Checklist Update Minutes of April 4, 2019 with minor spelling and grammatical changes. Those not present for the vote were: W. John "Jack" Mitchell, Bob Nelson, Edward Paquin, Jay Perkins, Christopher Violette, Paul White, Tom White and Assessor Russ Beaudoin.

On a motion by JP Isabelle, seconded by Norma Malone, the Board of Civil Authority voted to approve the Board of Civil Authority Checklist Update Minutes of May 8, 2019 with minor spelling and grammatical changes. Those not present for the vote were: W. John "Jack" Mitchell, Bob Nelson, Edward Paquin, Jay Perkins, Christopher Violette, Paul White, Tom White and Assessor Russ Beaudoin.

**ABATEMENT APPLICATION ITEMS
and
DELIBERATIVE SESSION**

- 5-2. Michael Cota (agent Kathy Robinson)
1079 South Barre Road
Tax Map 015 Lot 005-00
Request: \$5,273.07 (interest only)

Kathy Robinson was present and administered the oath. She clarified the income statement as the property has several rental units so the revenue/expenses were monthly. It was noted the applicant applied for an abatement of all penalties in November 2018 and was granted the 5% and 8%. However, the BCA had stated the applicant could return later to ask for an additional abatement. Mr. Cota has been keeping his taxes current and entered into an agreement with the Town Manager (Delinquent Tax Collector) to pay \$500 a month toward back taxes. The Treasurer confirmed this has been done.

The BCA had requested to see the notification letter from November 2018. The Clerk provided a copy which was not included in the original packet of material.

On a motion by Lee Walther, seconded by William Bugbee, the Board of Abatement voted to enter deliberative session to discuss all applications following the taking of testimony from the applicants who were present (Kathy Robinson and Peter Perrault).

- 5-3. Peter Perreault
81 Church Hill Road
Tax Map 023 Lot 077-00
Request: Half of the outstanding delinquent water bill

Peter Perreault was present and administered the oath. Mr. Perreault stated his name is the only name on the title. He presented the list of the contributions made by his current wife but not on the income/expense statement.

The bill originated as a result of the ex-wife not paying the water bill. He has caught up on the property tax and sewer bills and continues to stay current with the Town. A payment arrangement existed with the Websterville Fire District to pay \$50 a week. Mr. Perreault has been doing this for many years. The Treasurer confirmed Mr. Perreault is current except for this delinquent water bill and has been faithfully making payments. He has made additional payments since the application was submitted. The total delinquent bill is now \$2,562.22.

Mr. Perreault's plan is to continue paying the \$50 per week to pay off the bill.

BOARD OF ABATEMENT MEETING OF June 5, 2019 continued:

5-1 Corey Grandbois was not present for the meeting.

The Board of Abatement entered deliberative session at 7:03 p.m.

On a motion by JP Isabelle, seconded by Lee Walther, the Board came out of deliberative session at 7:20 p.m. Those not present for the vote were: W. John "Jack" Mitchell, Bob Nelson, Edward Paquin, Jay Perkins, Christopher Violette, Paul White, Tom White and Assessor Russ Beaudoin.

DECISIONS - The Clerk read the following decisions which were rendered while the Board of Abatement was in deliberative session.

5-1. Corey Grandbois

Ambulance Service on January 27, 2019
Trip # 19-1881

The Board of Abatement voted that upon receipt of the proposed \$350.00 payment the balance of the ambulance bill, Trip #19-1881, date of service January 27, 2019 (\$341.00) will be abated citing financial hardship.

5-2 Michael Cota

1079 South Barre Road, Tax Map 015 Lot 005-00

The Board of Abatement voted to approve the request and abate \$5,273.07 in interest on the delinquent property tax/sewer bill for 1079 South Barre Road, Tax Map 015 Lot 005-00 citing financial hardship.

5-3. Peter Perreault

81 Church Hill Road, Tax Map 023 Lot 077-00

The Board of Abatement voted to approve the abatement request of Peter Perreault, 81 Church Hill Road, Tax Map 023 Lot 077-00 in the amount of \$1,281.11 citing financial hardship.

APPOINTING AN ASSISTANT PRESIDING OFFICER

During recent meetings the Town Clerk/Treasurer had raised concerns for continuity when conducting elections due to illness, accident, death, or retirement. The Board asked to have this item on the agenda for additional discussion.

Discussion points:

1. Some tasks (clerical) are being completed by staff. However, many of the Presiding Officer duties align with Managerial responsibility.
2. Barre Town Charter language states in the absence of the Town Clerk a Justice of the Peace will be appointed as the Presiding Officer. Amending the Charter (about a 2-year process) to match State law or to make an Assistant Town Clerk the Presiding Officer is a decision which the Selectboard should make. Changes would involve amending job description(s) and impact pay.
3. Justices of the Peace serve 2-year terms. There is a possibility even if a Justice were appointed as Assistant Presiding Officer the Town would have no guarantee they would remain in the position for any length of time.
4. With the pending retirement of the current Clerk, the Board feels this is an issue for discussion soon. Selectboard member Norma Malone was present and stated she would bring this topic up during their upcoming retreat meeting(s).

**BOARD OF ABATEMENT MEETING OF June 5, 2019 continued:
CHECKLIST PURGE**

With the odd number of year comes the required annual bi-annual checklist purge. Consensus of the Board is to have paper copies of the full checklist sent to all members soon. This will allow ample time for review. The actual meeting to discuss this could be held in conjunction with the first Tax Grievance Hearing (anywhere from mid-July to mid-August). The Town Clerk is required to notify the Secretary of State's Office no later than September 20th that this task has been completed.

SETTING THE FY 2019-2020 MEETING DATES

Consensus after discussion is to hold meetings on the first or fourth Wednesday of the month and to have meetings begin at 6:00 p.m. These days were selected to accommodate members who serve on other Boards and Committees. The Town Clerk will prepare the "meeting postcard" (contains meeting dates/elections/deadlines) within the next couple of weeks. She is awaiting the date for Assessor grievance hearings in order to set up the first BCA Tax Grievance hearing.

ELECTION LAW CHANGES

There have been last minute election law changes this year. One change pertaining to early voting and depositing ballots directly into the tabulator needs much, much more conversation. Major concerns were ballot safety and transporting these voted ballots to the polling place (at the school gym). When the Clerk has a complete list of law changes the information will be provided to the BCA.

Our next election will be March 3, 2020 (School and Presidential Primary). Currently, because of our size the BCA can open early ballot envelopes (the mailer's only) to determine if a vote is defective the day prior to voting. Since our early voting is increasing the Clerk inquired if the Board was interested in doing this. For clarification purposes only - the voted ballot envelopes would remain sealed, but they would be "ticked" off on the entrance checklist prior to the opening of polls. The day of voting the ticking would already be done/reconciled on the entrance checklist allowing the absentee counting committee to just slit the envelopes open and deposit ballots into the tabulator. Consensus is to try this method for the March 2020 election.

It was noted the November 2018 and January 24, 2019 meeting minutes have not been approved. The Clerk will see they are on the next meeting agenda.

REAPPORTIONMENT

The Town Clerk has been in touch with the Secretary of State's Office. This Fall (September/October) the Barre Town and Barre City Boards of Civil Authority will meet to have a presentation on the Reapportionment process in Vermont. Stay tuned!

ADJOURN

On a motion by Tom Koch, seconded by JP Isabelle, the Board of Civil Authority voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:06 p.m. Those not present for the vote were: W. John "Jack" Mitchell, Bob Nelson, Edward Paquin, Jay Perkins, Christopher Violette, Paul White, Tom White and Assessor Russ Beaudoin.

These are the minutes as taken by the Clerk of the Board.

Donna J. Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer

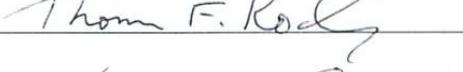
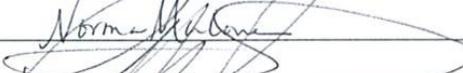
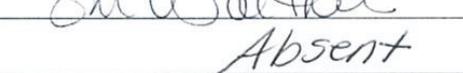
(See next page for administered oaths)

BOARD OF ABATEMENT MEETING OF June 5, 2019 continued:

APPENDIX - BOARD OF ABATEMENT OATHS

**TOWN OF BARRE - ABATEMENT MEETING
OATH OF BOARD MEMBERS
June 5, 2019**

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will well and truly hear and determine all matters at issue at issue relating to the abatement of taxes and other levies submitted for my decision. So help me God (or under the pains and penalties of Perjury).

Name	Signature
Blow, Jeff	
Bugbee, Pearl	Pearl Bugbee
Bugbee, William	William Bugbee
Castle, Charles	Charles Castle
Daniele, Jeanne	Jeanne Daniele
Isabelle, J. Guy	
Isabelle, J.P.	
Kelty, Donna	Donna Kelty
Koch, Thomas F.	Thomas F. Koch
Nelson, Bob	
Malone, Norma	
Malone, Paul	
Mitchell, W. John "Jack"	Absent
Paquin, Edward	Absent
Perkins, Jay	
Poplawski, Virginia	
Violette, Christopher	Absent
Walther, R. Lee	R. Lee Walther
Walther, Sheila	Sheila Walther
White, Paul	Absent
White Thomas	
Assessor Russ Beaudoin	Absent