

TOWN OF BARRE - TAX GRIEVANCE HEARING
October 13, 2016

AGENDA

(This meeting is being audio taped.)

1. Reconvene the FY 2016-2017 Tax Grievance Hearing 6:30 p.m.

2. Changes to the Agenda

Remind Board they are still under oath. If any Board member has not taken the oath please administer:

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will well and truly hear and determine all matters at issue between taxpayers and Assessor submitted for my decision. So help me God (or under the pains and penalties of perjury)."

3. Provide draft minutes of September 14th and 28th, 2016 for review. No action until the November 2, 2016 meeting.

4. Hear Inspection Committee report on Tofani property

5. Other Business:

A) Next meeting - BCA checklist update on November 2, 2016.

B) Discussion on Tax Grievance Policy procedure - meeting continuances.

C) Assessor Card training - should this be an annual item prior to tax grievance?

D) Email access update

E) Need ballot testers for memory cards for upcoming General Election. Local ballots at printer, memory cards coming soon. Should test no later than October 28th.

F) Any other business

6. Recess/Adjourn meeting.

TAX GRIEVANCE HEARING MINUTES
October 13, 2016

CALL TO ORDER - Chair Paul Malone reconvened the Tax Grievance Hearing meeting on this 28th day of September 2016 at 6:33 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Paul Malone, Town-Clerk Treasurer & Clerk of the Board Donna J. Kelty, Pearl Bugbee, William Bugbee, JP Isabelle, Philip Kolling, Jay Perkins, Virginia Poplawski, Christopher Violette, R. Lee Walther, Shelia Walther, and Paul White. Members who were absent included: Charles Castle, Tracy Delude, J. Guy Isabelle, Robert LaClair, W. John Mitchell, Edward Paquin, Rolland Tessier, and Tom White.

No others were present.

AGENDA - Accepted as printed.

MINUTES

Board members received draft copies of the September 14th and 28th, 2016 meeting minutes for review. No action will be taken until the November 2, 2016 meeting.

HEAR THE INSPECTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Phil Kolling, Chair of the Inspection Committee for the property of Tony Tofani, located off West Road gave his report. The Committee (Mr. Kolling, Lee Walther, and Paul

White) visited the property on September 30, 2016. Mr. Tofani granted permission for the inspection but was not present.

The committee noted the acreage, location, and described the landscaping (rural in nature with small stream, cleared and level areas, paths/trails/ and some dense woods). Photos were included as part of the report. The report also noted there was a drilled well, a gravel pad for an RV hookup, a small shed, and this area has electricity. It looked as though the well was recently drilled and did not appear to be in use at this time.

As a matter of disclosure, Chair Malone stated he was very familiar with the area and had built a home on a neighboring lot a few years ago. There were no concerns with regards to "conflict of interest."

Board discussion focused on lack of comparables and evidence to support the appellants request, our Policy item #13 cites the BCA are not considered experts in the field of property valuation and the law appears to presume the Assessor is a specialist within his field, and the value of open land versus value of developed saleable building parcel in Barre Town.

On a motion by Lee Walther, seconded by Chris Violette, the Board of Civil Authority voted to affirm the Town of Barre Assessor's value for the property of Tony Tofani, described as noted above, citing there is a lack of information to support a value change. Those not present for the vote include: Charles Castle, Tracy Delude, J. Guy Isabelle, Robert LaClair, W. John Mitchell, Edward Paquin, Rolland Tessier, and Tom White.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next meeting: The BCA will hold their next meeting on November 2, 2016 to update the Barre Town Checklist to be used at the November 8, 2016 elections.

Tax Grievance Policy procedure: The Tax Grievance Policy, Item # 6, there is a bullet which states that if new evidence is presented when hearing an appeal the BCA reserves the right to continue the hearing until a date specified.

After discussion on mandating whether or not to continue a hearing, consensus is to leave the policy as is and continue to encourage our Assessor and appellant(s) to provide their evidence in advance of the hearing date so BCA members have time to review documents and ask informed questions. With the current policy the Board has the right to continue a hearing if they choose.

Assessor Card training: The Clerk noted that several years ago the Assessor provided training on how to read/find information on the property cards. Since that time there has been a turnover of members. The question before the Board is should there be annual training from the Assessor on how to read the property cards. Consensus is the Board (perhaps in June at the end of an Abatement Meeting) would receive training. This would keep the information fresh in their minds just prior to the commencement of tax grievance hearings.

Email addresses for BCA use: The new Assistant Town Manager is now the IT person. Those who have town email addresses were given the correct site address to access their Town email.

Poll Workers needed: Sheila Walther stated she would be sending around a signup sheet for members to indicate the hours available to work on Election Day (November 8th). There will be instruction/training for all individuals (BCA and poll workers) on Thursday, October 29th at 6:00 p.m., Municipal Building, Selectboard meeting room.

There was no other business.

ADJOURN

On a motion by William Bugbee, seconded by JP Isabelle, the Tax Grievance Hearing was adjourned at 7:37 p.m. The motion passed with Tracy Delude, The motion passed with Charles Castle, Tracy Delude, J. Guy Isabelle, Robert LaClair, Ed Paquin, Rolland Tessier, and Tom White not present for the vote

Donna J. Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer

B.C.A. Chair

BARRE TOWN BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY

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