Board of Assessors
August 29, 2019

Members Present: Rosemary Stewart, Chairperson; Relf Fogg; Kenneth S Paul; and Cynthia Bickford, Assessing Technician.

Mrs. Stewart called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and led those present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Also present: Kellie Collins, Town Administrator and Jim Miller, videotaping.

Appointments – None.

Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment – Ms. Bickford informed the Board an extension for the MS-1 was filed and approved through October 1, 2019 due to the utility valuations.

New Business – (a) 2020 Budget. The Board reviewed the Assessing Technician wage line. Discussion took place regarding staffing situations in other towns. Kelley Collins informed the Board there will be an extra pay period in the 2020 budget due to the schedule. Mrs. Stewart moved to increase the wage line at 2% and rounding the figure to $65,000. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion which passed 3-0.

The Assessor's Wages line will stay the same at $1,800. The New Property Assessment line was reviewed. Ms. Bickford indicated the Board had awarded R. B. Wood and Associates a 3-year contract and according to the minutes the Board had the right to renegotiate the contract. Ms. Bickford suggested the Board ask the Board of Selectmen to waive the Purchasing Policy for a year or two based on the fact the new property values were just set last year and allow the assessing firm to continue to defend the values they had recently set. Mrs. Stewart indicated her concern with correct data and wondered when the Town would receive the results of the certification. Ms. Bickford indicated Phil Bodwell, DRA Assessor had stopped by to introduce our new DRA Appraiser and he thought the Town would receive the results within a month or two due to the staffing changes.

Mr. Fogg believes the BOA has the authority to waive the policy. The Board does not feel this is needed. Mr. Fogg moved to waive the policy for putting out an RFP. Ms. Collins informed the Board there is not enough time to put out an RFP. Mrs. Stewart would like to wait to see the results of the certification. Mr. Fogg called for a Point of Order and insisted no discussion should be taking place without a second to the motion. Mr. Paul seconded the motion. Additional discussion took place. Ms. Bickford questioned if the BOA has the right to waive the policy; it's not the BOA's policy; the policy was adopted by the Board of Selectmen and the BOS has full control over the budget. Mr. Fogg then amended his motion to have the BOA recommend to the BOS a waiver of the policy requiring an RFP. Mr. Paul seconded the motion. Mrs. Stewart believes if the BOA wants to discuss extending the contract there is no need to ask for a waiver, her suggestion is to extend the contract. Motion failed 0-3.

Mrs. Stewart moved to renegotiate the contract for a year. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 3-0. The Board directed Ms. Bickford to reach out to R. B. Wood & Associates for an annual amount for the 2020 contract. The Board moved the New Property Assessment line at $59,000.

The Training line will remain the same at $500. The Software/Programming line was increased to $4,650 to include an increase (this is an estimate – Avitar does not publish the figures until late fall). Ms. Bickford spoke with Franco at CAI and there will be no increase in the Tax Map Maintenance or the GIS Internet Contracts; therefore, the line will remain the same at $7,350. Ms. Bickford indicated there has been discussion from the NHAAO organization that there may be an increase in dues, but to date there is no final figure. The Board agreed to leave the Memberships line at $50. The Printing/Supplies line was decreased to $700. There will be no change in the Postage line which will remain at $560 and the Mileage line at $600.

The Legal Expense line was new last year in the 2019 budget. In 2018 over $1,900 was expended from the office and this year to date $70. The Board agreed to decrease this line to $2,000 for the upcoming budget.

Mr. Fogg moved the 2020 Assessing Budget at $142,210. Mrs. Stewart seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Old Business – None.

Correspondence – Request for name to be removed from the on-line mapping system. Ms. Bickford reminded the Board that the on-line system is used to prepare abutters list. Mrs. Stewart discussed transparency and she believes this negates the transparency. Her suggestion is to transfer the property to a trust and name an individual as trustee, she does not support removing information from the records. Mr. Fogg is an advocate to the right to privacy; the map and lot and address is constant. Ms. Bickford reminded the Board the registry of deeds is on-line. Discussion moved forward regarding ownership under a trust or an LLC (limited liability corporation) and this is how someone may choose to protect their privacy. Mrs. Stewart moved to have Ms. Bickford send notification on how to protect the privacy by either a trust or LLC. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Administrative Matters (a) Intent to Cut. The Board approved an Intent to Cut for Wakefield Tax Map 190, Lot 2.

(b) Timber Tax Warrant. None.

(c) Current Use. Map 165, Lot 45. This lot is contiguous with other lots owned by the applicant. Mrs. Stewart moved to approve the Current Use Application for Map 165, Lot 45. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

(d) Land Use Change Tax Warrants. The Board reviewed a Land Use Change Tax Warrant for Map 132, Lot 14. The contiguous parcel (Wakefield Tax Map 135, Lot 6) was sold and therefore Map 132, Lot 14 no longer meets the current use requirements. Mr. Fogg moved to approve the Land Use Change Tax Warrant in the amount of $1,100. Mrs. Stewart seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

The Board reviewed a second Land Use Change Tax Warrant for Map 42, Lot 13. This is removing an additional

1.1 acres for the location of the driveway extension and structure area. Mrs. Stewart moved to approve the Land Use Change Tax Warrant in the amount of $700. Mrs. Stewart moved to approve the Land Use Change Tax Warrant in the amount of $700. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

(e) Abatements. None.

(f) Tax Credits and Exemptions. None.

(g) Meeting dates in November and December. The regular scheduled meeting for November falls on Thanksgiving and December meeting falls on December 26, 2019. The Board will hold the November meeting on Thursday, November 21, 2019; and the December meeting on Thursday, December 19, 2019 both meetings will begin at 8:00 a.m.

(h) Board Minutes July 18, 2019. Mrs. Stewart moved to approve the July 18, 2019 and the July 18, 2019 Non-Public minutes. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment – None.

Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A:3 II(c). Mr. Fogg moved to enter Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (c) at 8:50 a.m. Mrs. Stewart seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fogg- 'aye'; Mr. Paul – 'aye' and Mrs. Stewart – 'aye'. The motion passed 3-0. The Board returned to public session at 9:00 a.m.

Adjournment – There being no further business, Mrs. Stewart moved to adjourn at 9:01 a.m. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cynthia Bickford
Cynthia Bickford
Assessing Technician

Approval of Minutes:
Rosemary Stewart
Rosemary Stewart, Chairperson

Relf Fogg

Kenneth Paul