

**Town of Concord
Board of Assessors Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2021**

Present: Tom Matthews, Chair, Susan Livingston, Brendan Kemeza and Mera Tilley
Staff: Rich Scanlon, Interim Town Assessor, Carolyn Dee, Sr. Administrative Assistant, Rick Ladd, Assistant Assessor, Mike Gibbons, Sr. Department Clerk and Kerry LaFleur, Chief Financial Officer
Others: Henry Dane, Select Board Liaison, Yannis Tsitsas and Brooks Read

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 P.M.

Mr. Matthews read the Zoom Conference statement provided to all Concord Boards and Committees for a zoom meeting.

“In accordance with Governor Baker’s executive order permitting virtual meetings during the COVID pandemic, the Board of Assessors is conducting this meeting today, October 14, 2021 at 4:01 P.M. Eastern Time on the Zoom platform and in accordance with the Town’s Policy Directive and Guidelines issued on April 1, 2020 and amended on May 7, 2020. I ask that all board members, town staff, and presenters activate their video and mute their microphone unless they have something to say or are participating in committee dialogue. This meeting is being recorded and will be available for later viewing on the Town’s website. All committee votes will be taken via roll call. We will start with an attendance roll call. I will announce your name, please reply. For members of the public, please unmute yourself when I’ve opened the meeting to public comment.”

Mr. Matthews took the attendance:

Mr. Matthews -	Aye
Mr. Kemeza -	Aye
Ms. Tilley -	Aye
Mr. Ladd-	Aye
Mr. Scanlon -	Aye
Ms. Dee-	Aye
Mr. Tsitsas -	Aye
Mr. Dane -	Aye
Mr. Gibbons -	Aye
Ms. LaFleur -	Aye

MINUTES
September 9, 2021 – Regular Session

On a **MOTION** made by Mr. Kemeza and seconded by Ms. Tilley it was **VOTED** to **APPROVE** the minutes of the regular session meeting of September 9, 2021.

Mr. Matthews – Aye
Mr. Kemeza - Aye
Ms. Tilley - Aye

September 29, 2021 – Regular Session

On a **MOTION** made by Mr. Kemeza and seconded by Ms. Tilley it was **VOTED** to **APPROVE** the minutes of the regular session meeting of September 29, 2021.

Mr. Matthews – Aye
Mr. Kemeza - Aye
Ms. Tilley - Aye

FY 2022 PROPERTY VALUES

The Board discussed Commercial Property Values for Fiscal Year 2022. Mr. Ladd and Ms. Dee spoke with Mike Tarello, Vision Government Solutions, regarding the Commercial Property Values for Fiscal Year 2022. This is what they summarized from their conversation:

- Retail values will remain the same. With the effect COVID has had on the retail industry now is not the right time to raise values.
- Downtown retail properties will likely see an increase next year.
- Hotels and Restaurants will be reduced from \$130/sq. ft. to \$125/sq. ft. and will see a decrease in value.
- Motels and Bowling Alleys will be reduced but we don't have any of those in Concord.
- Inn's will remain the same because he did not see them taking as large a decrease in revenue as Hotels and Restaurants.
- Office Building values will also remain the same.
- Apartment Buildings will be increased from \$96/sq. ft. to \$103/sq. ft.
- Next Year, Commercial Values will most likely remain flat while Residential will increase.
- For FY 2022, Residential Values will see an increase of 2% to 3%.
- For FY 2023, based on sales in 2021, it is speculated that Residential Values may increase from 9% to 10%.

The Board asked Mr. Scanlon whether we should apply the projected increase for next year over a period of time to reduce the impact to the homeowners. This could be done by raising the percentage of increase to 5% this year from 2% to 3%. Mr. Scanlon stated that we must go with what the sales are indicating because if we don't the ratios for the DOR will be skewed. We would like to spread the increase over a few years, but we still must be at 95% of full market value for the DOR to certify the values. Fiscal Year 2023 is a full Revaluation year and if there is going to be a large increase in Property Values early outreach to the community is an important element in the process. We will discuss this further next year.

On a **MOTION** made by Mr. Kemeza and seconded by Ms. Tilley it was **VOTED** to **APPROVE** the Commercial Property Values for Fiscal Year 2022, as recommended by staff.

Mr. Matthews - Aye
Mr. Kemeza - Aye
Ms. Tilley - Aye
Ms. Livingston - Aye

MOTOR VEHICLE END OF MONTH REPORT

Ms. Dee presented the End of Month Report for Motor Vehicle Excise Tax Abatements for **September 2021** with the following amounts:

2019 - \$ -60.42
2020 - \$ 271.35
2021 - \$6,067.62

Ms. Dee explained that the negative number seen under 2019 is because there were two abatements done for one bill, in error, and one of them had to be removed.

On a **MOTION** made by Ms. Tilley seconded by Ms. Livingston it was **VOTED** to **APPROVE** the Motor Vehicle Excise tax abatements for **2019, 2020 & 2021** as designated in the End of the Month Report for **September 2021** and as listed above.

Mr. Matthews - Aye
Mr. Kemeza - Aye
Ms. Livingston - Aye
Ms. Tilley - Aye

CHAPTER LAND APPLICATIONS

Ms. Dee informed the Board that the Chapter 61 (Forestry Land) applications for Fiscal Year 2023, have been reviewed for content and the staff is recommending granting the applications as listed on the attached sheet:

On a **MOTION** made by Ms. Tilley, seconded by Ms. Livingston, it was **VOTED** to **APPROVE 19** Chapter 61 – Forestry Land Applications, as recommended by staff.

Mr. Matthews - Aye
Ms. Livingston - Aye
Ms. Tilley - Aye
Mr. Kemeza - Aye

Ms. Dee informed the Board that the Chapter 61A (Agricultural/Horticultural) applications, for Fiscal Year 2023, have been reviewed for content and the staff is recommending granting the applications as listed on the attached sheet:

On a **MOTION** made by Mr. Kemeza, seconded by Ms. Tilley, it was **VOTED** to **APPROVE 48** Chapter 61A – Agricultural Land Applications, as recommended by staff.

Mr. Matthews - Aye
Mr. Kemeza - Aye
Ms. Livingston - Aye
Ms. Tilley - Aye

Ms. Dee informed the Board that the Chapter 61B (Recreational Land) applications, for Fiscal Year 2023, have been reviewed for content and the staff is recommending granting the applications as listed on the attached sheet:

On a **MOTION** made by Ms. Tilley, seconded by Mr. Kemeza, it was **VOTED** to **APPROVE 34** Chapter 61B – Recreational Land Applications as recommended by staff.

Mr. Matthews - Aye
Mr. Kemeza - Aye
Ms. Livingston - Aye
Ms. Tilley - Aye

Ms. Dee informed the Board that the following applicants had not filed their Chapter Land Applications by October 1, 2021 and will be removed from the program for Fiscal Year 2023:

Joan Little – 9B Buttricks Hill Rd.
11B Buttricks Hill Rd.
11R Buttricks Hill Rd.
108Y Buttricks Hill Rd.

Richard Churchill - 903 Monument St.
David Meyers - 116 Estabrook Rd.
Judith Swanson - 266 Shadyside Ave.

The staff has continuously tried to contact these property owners and has received no response.

FOREST MANGEMENT PLAN – 366 ESTABROOK RD

Ms. Dee informed the Board that Mr. Brooks Read, 366 Estabrook Rd., has filed a Forest Management Plan in July 2021 where the following totals will apply for Fiscal Year 2023:

21.53A – Total Acres at 366 Estabrook Rd.
19.69A – Currently under Chapter 61B

For Fiscal Year 2023:

10.00A – Will be put under Chapter 61 (Forestry) for Fiscal Year 2023
9.69A – Will remain in Chapter 61B for Fiscal Year 2023

On a **MOTION** made by Mr. Kemeza, seconded by Ms. Tilley, it was **VOTED** to **APPROVE** the Forest Management Plan for 366 Estabrook Rd. as presented by staff.

Mr. Matthews - Aye
Mr. Kemeza - Aye
Ms. Livingston - Aye
Ms. Tilley - Aye

As the Chair, Mr. Matthews will come to the office and sign the necessary paperwork to submit to the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

TOWN ASSESSOR

Rich Scanlon, Interim Assessor, introduced himself to the Board and reviewed his credentials. He is a retired Town Assessor from Billerica and is currently doing consulting work. He is on the Board of Assessors in Beverly, Somerville and Billerica. The Board thanked him for agreeing to come to Concord and looks forward to working with him.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Matthews thanks Mr. Tsitsas for agreeing to join the Board of Assessors and Ms. Livingston for agreeing to be re-appointed to another three-year term. Both members will be presented for appointment at the Select Board Meeting on Monday, October 18, 2021. He also thanked Ms. Tilley for completing the Classification Workshop modules from the DOR Course 101, which need to be completed to be eligible to sign the documents needed to be submitted to the DOR for approval.

NEXT MEETING

The next Board of Assessors meeting was scheduled for Thursday, November 18, 2021 at 4:00 P.M. by Zoom Conferencing.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 4:24 P.M. a **MOTION** was made by Mr. Kemeza to enter into Executive Session to consider Statutory Exemption Applications, Community Preservation Surcharge Exemption Applications and Appellate Tax Board Cases, in compliance with the Open Meeting Laws purpose #7 (“To comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special or federal grant-in-aid requirements”) and to adjourn the meeting from the

Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tilley and it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED** by Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Matthews -	Aye
Mr. Kemeza -	Aye
Ms. Livingston -	Aye
Ms. Tilley -	Aye

The Board entered the Executive Session at 4:24 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn H. Dee
Sr. Administrative Assistant