



Town of Berwick

BOARD OF SELECTMEN/BOARD OF ASSESSORS MINUTES

Tuesday, August 27, 2019

6:30pm

Selectmen's Room
11 Sullivan Street
Berwick, ME 03901

1. Call to Order

Chair Wright called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

2. Roll Call

Board Members Present: Chair Thomas Wright, Vice Chair Ed Ganiere, Selectman Noah Cobb, Selectman Kenneth Manning, Jr.

Board Members Absent: Selectman Mark Pendergast.

Staff Members Present: Town Manager Stephen Eldridge, Assessor Paul McKenney, Finance Director Lisa Vargas, Transfer Station Supervisor Neil Hokinson and Town Clerk Patricia Murray.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Wright led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- August 13, 2019

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to accept the August 13, 2019 minutes as written. Selectman Manning seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

5. First Public Comment

Chair Wright opened the first public comment.

Ms. Nichole Fecteau, Wingate Lane, spoke. As Planning Board Vice Chair, Ms. Fecteau expressed her support of David Ross-Lyons' Planning Board appointment. She stated Mr. Ross-Lyons has been engaged in the meetings for the last few months by attending meetings and studying procedures.

Ms. Fecteau also stated there is a Planning Board workshop scheduled on Wednesday, August 28, 2019 at 6:30.

Mr. Neil Hokinson, Transfer Station Supervisor, reminded the public of the Hazardous Waste Day on September 7, 2019 from 9am to 1pm at 2 Industry Road. There are no limits to amount of waste brought to the Hazardous Waste Day. Mr. Hokinson stated that residents should not bring hazardous waste to the Transfer Station as they cannot accept it there.

There being no further comments, Chair Wright closed the first public comment.

6. Public Hearing

None.

7. Reports of Committees

- **BCTV Committee**

No report.

- **Envision Berwick Committee**

Chair Wright stated the second concert was a huge success with over 200 people attending. BCTV live streamed the concert.

Department Reports

None.

8. Appointments/Presentations/Other Guests

- Planning Board Appointment: (3-year term)
 - David Ross-Lyons

Mr. David Ross-Lyons was present. He stated he wants to help shape the community and the Planning Board seems like a good way to start.

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint David Ross-Lyons to the Planning Board as an alternate member for a term to expire December 2022. Selectman Manning seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Appointments: (without term)
 - Alex Boisvert

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint Alex Boisvert as member of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee without term. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Jamie Blood

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint Jamie Blood as member of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee without term. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Nichole Fecteau

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint Nichole Fecteau as member of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee without term. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Lisa Huestis

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint Lisa Huestis as member of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee without term. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Jeremy Kasten

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint Jeremy Kasten as member of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee without term. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Rick Vandenberg

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint Rick Vandenberg as member of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee without term. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Derek White

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint Derek White as member of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee without term. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Thomas Wright

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint Thomas Wright as member of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee without term. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Code Enforcement Officer: (without term)
 - Jenifer McCabe

Town Manager Eldridge explained there have been changes in the Code office. Ms. McCabe is the Deputy Code Enforcement Officer. Dan Vincent is spending more time in the field with inspections. Ms. McCabe will have increased hours to 25 per week, while Mr. Vincent will have decreased hours.

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint Jenifer McCabe as Code Enforcement Officer without term unless specified by law. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Deputy Tax Collector (without term)
 - Lisa Vargas

Ms. Vargas was present. Town Manager Eldridge reported Ms. Vargas comes from Lyman. The Board welcomed her.

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint Lisa Vargas as Deputy Tax Collector without term unless specified by law. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Deputy Treasurer (without term)

- Lisa Vargas

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint Lisa Vargas as Deputy Treasurer without term unless specified by law. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Finance Director (without term)
 - Lisa Vargas

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to appoint Lisa Vargas as Finance Director without term unless specified by law. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

9. Unfinished Business

None.

10. Town Manager Report

Town Manager Eldridge reported the following:

- Worster Road will be grinded next week with the base layer to follow.
- The Pine Hill paving project will start mid to late September.
- Culvert work is complete on Worster Road and Pine Hill.
- The Town employee parking lot is being redone sometime in September. Stump removal will create more spaces.
- Materials are being removed from the Blue Sort building at the Prime site. The end date for work at the parking lot and Blue Sort building is September 27, 2019. Commuter parking has been moved temporarily to the Prime site.
- The Teamsters Union contract negotiations will go to mediation for wages.
- The Police Union contract negotiations will begin on September 25, 2019.

11. Selectmen Communications

None.

12. Approval of Warrants

08-15-2019	A/P Warrant #2007	\$ 177,781.09
08-15-2019	Water A/P Warrant #007	\$ 44,402.32
08-22-2019	A/P Warrant #2008	\$ 97,007.10
08-22-2019	Water A/P Warrant #008	\$ 396.54
08-22-2019	Payroll Warrant #2008	\$ 65,434.76
08-29-2019	Payroll Warrant #2009	\$ 55,574.68

Motion: Chair Wright made a motion to accept the Accounts Payable Warrants as presented. Selectman Manning seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

13. New Business

- 2020 Tax Commitment

Assessor Paul McKenney presented the following:

Town of Berwick, ME
Final Revaluation Values
8/26/2019

2019 Final Value	783,274,100
2018 Value	<u>709,289,700</u>
	73,984,400

Overall Change	10%
Residential	8%
Vacant	23%
Manufactured Homes	1%
Condominiums	14%
Commercial	22%

	<u>2 Year</u>	<u>IAAO Standards</u>
Median ASR (Assessment to Sales Ratio)	97.98%	90% - 110%
COD (Coefficient of Dispersion)	8.14	Less than 20.0
PRD (Price Related Differential)	1.006	0.98 – 1.03

- Hearing notices were mailed out July 26 2019.
- Taxpayers could either schedule an appointment on line or call the MRI office until July 26, 2019.
- We had a total of 65 scheduled hearings from July 29, 2019 through August 7, 2019
- There were 10 people who could not attend a hearing and were contacted by phone. Several other people stopped in the office as well.
- Most people were questioning the increase in their property value, their property information they were being taxed on, and wanted an explanation how the revaluation would affect the tax rate.

Memorandum

TO: Town Manager
Town of Berwick

FROM: Paul McKenney
Municipal Resources, Inc.
Contracted Assessor Agent's

DATE: August 26, 2019

RE: Tax Rate Calculation form

On the following attached spreadsheets I have provided a comparison of just the prior year as well as a comparison of numerous previous years of Tax Rate Calculation Forms. On the spreadsheets you can see the town's total taxable valuation base increased from 2018-2019 tax year due to the revaluation which was just completed along with building permit changes. The net valuation base increased by 10.85%.

It also shows that compared to 2018-2019, the County tax appropriations increased by 3.84%; Municipal appropriations increased 20% while School/education appropriations increased 5%. In total, appropriations have increased by 11.73% while State and other revenues are expected to increase about 19% in total. Consequently, the net tax dollars to be raised by the local property tax rate has increased a little over 10%.

On the spreadsheet following the Municipal Tax Rate Calculation Form, we have attached a spreadsheet showing the potential range of overlay amounts depending on the tax rate selected. The minimum tax rate that could be selected is \$17.35 while the maximum rate is \$18.20.

In consideration of the revaluation that has been just completed, as well as all other aspects including prior year tax rates, it is our suggestion that a rate of \$17.53 be selected which is slight decrease from last year's rate.

If there is any further information you require, please let me know.

2019-20 MUNICIPAL TAX RATE CALCULATION FORM 08-22-19

1	LOCAL TAXABLE REAL ESTATE VALUATION	\$716,485,700		
2	LOCAL TAXABLE PERSONAL PROPERTY VALUATION	\$5,043,480		
3	TOTAL TAXABLE VALUATION	\$721,529,180		
4A	TOTAL OF ALL HOMESTEAD EXEMPT VALUATION	\$28,080,000		
4B	HOMESTEAD EXEMPT REIMBURSEMENT VALUE	\$17,550,000		
5A	TOTAL OF ALL BETE EXEMPT VALUATION	\$2,453,928		
5B	THE STATUTORY STANDARD REIMBURSEMENT IS 50%	\$1,226,964		
6	TOTAL VALUATION BASE		\$740,306,144	
	ASSESSMENTS			
7	COUNTY TAX	\$340,401		
8	MUNICIPAL APPROPRIATION	\$7,219,302		
9	TIF FINANCING PLAN AMOUNT	\$26,320		
10	SCHOOL/EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS	\$8,077,073		
11	TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS		\$15,663,096	
	ALLOWABLE DEDUCTIONS			
12	STATE MUNICIPAL REVENUE SHARING	\$550,000		
13	OTHER REVENUES	\$2,278,140		
14	TOTAL DEDUCTIONS		\$2,828,140	
15	NET TO BE RAISED BY LOCAL PROPERTY TAX RATE	\$12,834,956		
16	MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE TAX	\$12,834,956	1.05	\$13,478,704
17	MINIMUM TAX RATE	\$12,834,956	\$740,306,144	\$0.017337
18	MAXIMUM TAX RATE	\$13,478,704	\$740,306,144	\$0.018204
19	TAX FOR COMMITMENT	\$721,529,180	\$0.01753	\$12,848,407
20	MAXIMUM OVERLAY	\$12,834,956	0.05	\$641,748
21	HOMESTEAD REIMBURSEMENT	\$17,550,000	\$0.01753	\$307,651.50
22	BETE REIMBURSEMENT	\$1,226,964	\$0.01753	\$21,509
23	OVERLAY	\$12,977,567	\$12,834,956	\$142,811

PRIOR YEAR COMPARISON

	2018-2019	2019-2020	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
LOCAL TAXABLE REAL ESTATE	\$645,206,100	\$716,485,700	\$71,279,600	11.05%
LOCAL TAXABLE PERSONAL PROPERTY	\$3,673,409	\$5,043,480	\$1,370,071	37.30%
TOTAL TAXABLE VALUATION	\$648,879,509	\$721,529,180	\$72,649,671	11.20%
TOTAL OF ALL HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION VALUE*	\$27,849,200	\$28,080,000	\$230,800	0.83%
HOMESTEAD REIMBURSEMENT VALUE*	\$17,405,750	\$17,550,000	\$144,250	0.83%
BETE EXEMPTION	\$3,078,866	\$2,453,928	-\$624,938	-20.30%
BETE REIMBURSEMENT	\$1,539,433	\$1,226,964	-\$312,469	-20.30%
TOTAL VALUATION BASE*	\$667,824,692	\$740,306,144	\$72,481,452	10.85%
APPROPRIATIONS				
COUNTY TAX	\$327,821	\$340,401	\$12,580	3.84%
MUNICIPAL APPROPRIATION	\$8,010,725	\$7,219,302	-\$1,208,577	-20.11%
TIF FINANCING PLAN AMOUNT*	\$0	\$26,320	\$26,320	100.00%
SCHOOL/EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS	\$7,680,220	\$8,077,073	\$396,853	5.17%
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS*	\$14,018,766	\$15,663,096	\$1,644,330	11.73%
ALLOWABLE DEDUCTIONS				
STATE MUNICIPAL REVENUE SHARING	\$400,000	\$550,000	\$150,000	37.50%
OTHER REVENUES	\$1,970,695	\$2,278,140	\$307,445	15.60%
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	\$2,370,695	\$2,828,140	\$457,445	19.30%
NET TO BE RAISED BY LOCAL PROPERTY TAX RATE*	\$11,648,071	\$12,834,956	\$1,186,885	10.19%
TAX RATE OVERLAY*				
TAX RATE	\$17.60	\$17.53	-\$0.07	-0.40%
OVERLAY*	\$105,644	\$142,611	\$36,967	34.99%
TAXES ON A \$250,000 ASSESSMENT				
	\$4,400	\$4,383	-\$18	-0.40%
* Amended 2018-19 Commitment Value - 7-22-219				

2019-20 MUNICIPAL TAX RATE CALCULATION FORM 08-22-19

OVERLAY RELATIONSHIP

TAX RATE	OVERLAY AMOUNT	EQUATES TO ASSESSED VALUE	% OF TOTAL TAXABLE ASMNT
\$17.50	\$120,447	\$6,882,673	0.93%
\$17.52	\$135,223	\$7,718,200	1.04%
\$17.53	\$142,611	\$8,135,254	1.10%
\$17.55	\$157,387	\$8,967,921	1.21%
\$17.57	\$172,163	\$9,809,864	1.33%

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere made a motion to accept the final revaluation values as presented. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere made a motion to set the Tax Rate at \$17.53 per 1,000 for the 2020 tax year as recommended. Selectman Manning seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- November 5, 2019 Town Referendum Warrant Board Signatures and Vote on Changes

The wording for Article 2 for the November 5, 2019 Town Referendum was erroneously printed. The article changed from:

ARTICLE 2

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000 to purchase new capital equipment for the Fire Department for the remainder of the fiscal year 2019-2020 with any unspent balances to carry forward each year until fully expended?

Note: This account will be used to fund the purchase of personal protective equipment and to continue the replacement of SCBA bottles and hoses.

THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 5:0

To:

ARTICLE 2

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$50,000** for the purpose of investing in the capital purchase and replacement of Fire Department apparatus and vehicles for Fiscal Year 2019/20 and place this amount into the Fire Department Capital account established for this purpose, with any unspent balances to carry forward each year until fully expended?

The Board approved the change to Article 2 and recommends a yes vote 4:0.

- Spirit of America Legislative Sentiment

Tabled.

- Contingency Fund Request: Time Clock Plus

Town Manager Eldridge stated Finance Director Lisa Vargas recommended switching to Time Clock Plus for time tracking. The current system used is not consistent for every department. Town Manager Eldridge requested \$7,000.00 from the contingency fund to cover half of this purchase. The other half will be divided among department budgets. The contingency fund balance is currently \$49,157.50.

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere made a motion to approve using \$7,000.00 from the contingency fund toward the purchase of Time Clock Plus as recommended by the Finance Director. Selectman Cobb seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

14. Quitclaim Deeds and/or Installment Contracts

- Quitclaim Deeds

The following quitclaim deeds are the result of repurchase agreements being paid off.

- Map U004 Lot 070

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere made a motion to accept the quitclaim deed for Map U004 Lot 070. Selectman Manning seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Map R015 Lot 002-003

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere made a motion to accept the quitclaim deed for Map R015 Lot 002-003. Selectman Manning seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

- Map R071 Lot 009

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere made a motion to accept the quitclaim deed for Map R071 Lot 009. Selectman Manning seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

15. Abatements/Supplements

None.

16. Second Public Comment

Chair Wright opened the second public comment.

Mr. Rick Vandenberg, Credere Associates, spoke. Mr. Vandenberg gave an update on the Prime remediation work at the Blue Sort building and the parking lot. Digging began today at the parking lot and clean out of the building began in preparation of the asbestos removal. The soil removal is most timely with a deadline of end of September.

There being no further comments, Chair Wright closed the second public comment.

17. Executive Session

None.

18. Other Business/Non-Agenda Items

None.

19. Adjournment

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:13pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Patricia Murray
Town Clerk**

**The August 27, 2019 BOS Meeting Minutes – Signed as approved at the Board of Selectmen’s
September 10, 2019 meeting.**

On behalf of the Board