

Board of Abatement
Bennington, VT

Meeting Minutes of December 3, 2019

**Members present: Jerry Albert, Cassie Barbeau, Barbara Bluto, James Carroll, Robert Ebert, Tom Haley III, Jeannie Jenkins, Albert Krawczyk, Bruce Lee-Clark, James Marsden, Anne Mook, Mary Morrissey, Joan Pinsonneault, Marjorie Robinson, Warren Roaf, David Shaffe, Anna Kinney Swierad, and Kayla Thompson

**Also present: John Antognioni, Chief Assessor, Joyce Silvestro, Director of Collections, David Newell

**Meeting called to order at 5:00 PM by David Shaffe.

**Cassie made the motion to nominate David Shaffe as Board Chair, seconded by Mary Morrissey, motion passed unanimously.

**David read the oath to Board members and circulated it for signatures.

**David Newell, representing Southern Vermont College, spoke to the Board regarding their request for abatement as the College is insolvent. There is an offer in place for \$4.9 million but about \$7 million is owed to creditors. The tax bill for the gate house property is approximately \$10,699.72.

**Cassie made the motion to table discussion until later in the meeting when entering deliberative session, seconded by Barbara Bluto, motion passed unanimously.

**Emails and photos from Andy Anderson of Cold Wet Labs, Inc. were presented to the Board. John Antognioni explained the purchase date falling too late in the year to appeal the assessment but the emails and photos indicate this is a request for a reduction in the assessment based on the deteriorated condition of the property. The appellants paid property taxes on only what they felt the property was worth. The balance is approximately \$7,385.21.

**Barbara Bluto made the motion to deny the request for abatement as it did not meet any of the statutory requirements for abatement and the property owners should seek an appeal of the assessment in the spring with the Listers Office, motion seconded by Anne Mook, motion passed by majority with abstentions.

**Kayla Thompson submitted a letter on behalf of her parents, who had a fire in July destroying their home and making it uninhabitable. She recuses herself from this request for abatement. After the fire, the house was razed and only the garage and land remained. There is now a new home in place, which will be assessed on the annual assessment date of April 1st. The November tax bill was paid in full. The approximate amount to be abated is \$746.20.

**Mary Morrissey made the motion to grant abatement of the taxes as well as any interest due, seconded by Bruce Lee-Clark, motion passed by majority with abstention.

**Joyce Silvestro presented the list from the Treasurer's Office (list attached).

**Cassie made the motion to abate the list as presented, seconded by Mary Morrissey, motion passed unanimously.

**Cassie made the motion to enter deliberative session, seconded by Barbara Bluto, motion passed unanimously.

**Bruce made the motion to close deliberative session, seconded by Tom Haley, motion passed unanimously.

**Mary made the motion to deny the request for abatement to Southern Vermont College. It is the belief of the Board it does not qualify for abatement as the taxes will be paid at closing from the proceeds of the sale. Motion was seconded by Barbara Bluto, motion passed unanimously.

**With no further business, Mary Morrissey made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Albert Krawczyk, motion passed unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cassandra Barbeau".

Cassandra Barbeau