

Cooper Select Board's Meeting
June 14, 2012
Held at the Grange Hall

Attending: Sandy Lyon, Ann Marie Flood, Brenda Gove, Dave Timpe, Donna Timpe, Ronnie Flood, Scott Jamieson, John Viselli, Joanne McMahon, Karen Holmes

Starting time: 6:55 p.m.

Agenda Item 1: The Tax Assessors, Assessors agent and some Select Board attended a meeting with an unhappy tax payer and the County Commissioners today at the county court house. Brenda Gove explained what went wrong with Jim Robinson's situation: the Tax Assessors have never received a form asking for tax abatement from him. Procedure was not followed, Brendan informed the County Commissioners of this, but the County Commissioner's still allowed the hearing to continue. Brenda read from the official manual of State law and Case Law. The Commissioners held the meeting anyway because of the paper the Select Board had signed.

This is the situation: Jim Robinson did not follow procedure; he requested a hearing with the commissioners, and he hired Mr. Toffolon as a lawyer to represent him. But when Brenda cited the State Law, the County Commissioners would not hear it; they said they would do what they do. Brenda said that the Assessment Board of appeals is different than the planning board of appeals. Brenda and the Tax Assessors have helped Jim, answered his questions when he asked them, even given Jim the form to fill out, which he did not do. The Tax assessors & Select Board will continue to work together on these types of issues by meeting together more frequently; open communication may help prevent these kinds of situations in the future. Brenda read the Law to us and described the violations the County Commissioners had made. Do we want to appeal to Superior Court? We will decide that later, when all three Select Board are present. Dave said he feels we should go to court.

We need to ask MMA for a lawyer, or at least for legal advice. We need to keep track of who missed time from work, how much time they missed, who did need to travel, etc. to track what this costs us. The formula used to evaluate each lot is in the computer, and Dave and Brenda explained it. This formula makes fair assessments of every lot. Tree growth penalties are figured by the State, and Jim may be upset by that also. The burden of proof is on the Tax payer, not on the Tax Assessors. Ann Marie asked some questions about how we can maybe show proof that we have been trying to deal with Jim, but Brenda said they (Assessors and Assessor's agent) thought the Tree growth issues solved last year had ended his complaint. The parcel sold to Preston was already settled. The lawyer, Mr. Toffolon, has a week to itemize what Jim would like in his appeals, and he has Norm Howe's address. Brenda will call MMA and Brenda will let us know what she finds out.

Agenda Item 2: Treasurer's Warrant was reviewed and signed.

Agenda Item 3: Manuals that Dave has will be checked for the year and he will get back to me whether we need to order more. The Workshop was short and touched high points. Discussion continued of how these types of board operate. The process of forming a planning board and how it functions was discussed. Ronnie found out that committees that are not paid are not covered by MMA insurance. This would be our planning board, so we need to look at putting a wage or stipend for this position.

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Agenda Item 4: Marion Transfer Station changes that Stuart emailed to town officers were briefly shared, and Sandy has posted them by the foot of the stairs at the Grange Hall/CCC.

Agenda Item 5: Thank you letters from various organizations who received third party donations from the Town were shared.

Agenda Item 6: The School Warrant is ready, prepared by the superintendent's office, and Scott has posted it already. It needed to be posted for 7 days prior to the meeting. We will need a moderator for the meeting on June 20th at 7:00. A couple of possibilities were discussed.

Agenda Item 7: Jim Slowe has let Ann Marie know that he will continue to be our CEO and LPI. At his request, she will pay him monthly instead of annually. Select Board members agreed to this. Then Ann Marie asked for permission to go to a class/workshop that will cost the town \$80. John and Donna said yes, she should go. Ann Marie asked for an update to the software for quick books, which was approved last year, but she has not added it yet. Quick books is what the workshop is about, so she will add the updated software after the training.

Agenda Item 8: Signs/Joanne, Show case and other items; She asked if we can add this to the next agenda for the July 5th meeting. Consensus was that signs, etc., would be discussed then.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

The next meeting will be Thursday, July 5th at 6:30 p.m.