

**Minutes of the Board of Assessors
Meeting of March 21, 2019**

A meeting of the Board of Assessors was held on Thursday, March 21, 2019 in Room 208, 2nd floor of City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 8:15 AM by Chair Dominic D'Antoni.

Members Present:

Dominic D'Antoni

Daniel Hansberry

Robert Earley

Assessing Staff Present:

Gary Turgiss
Louise Brown

Greg Turgiss
Cheryl Walley

Michael Mandile

Other City of Nashua Staff Present:

Chief of Staff Kimberly Kleiner, Corporation Counsel Steven Bolton

Minutes of the Meeting:

Regarding the minutes of the previous meeting, the following motion was made:

MOTION BY Daniel Hansberry to waive the reading of the minutes of March 7, 2019 and accept and place them on file.

SECONDED BY Robert Earley

MOTION PASSED

Abatement Requests Presented:

A complete list is available in the Assessor's Office.

Mr. Dominic D'Antoni noted that Mr. Mark Magovsky of 1 Farmington Road was scheduled to address the board at 8:30 this morning regarding their 2018 abatement had rescheduled this appointment for the meeting scheduled for April 4, 2019. Due to this appointment being rescheduled, the board agreed this item would not be considered at this meeting.

Staff Items:

Chief of Staff, Ms. Kimberly Kleiner, apologized that Chief Financial Officer, Mr. John Griffin could not be here this morning. She said they wanted to let you know what has happened. It has been very busy. Staff has been very busy. They have met with Mr. Rob Tozier from KRT Appraisal. After the board's last meeting, they were looking at

some type of resource that could be put out to the public and be a little more transparent. Explain what a property card looks like and what are the components. KRT had done that for Rye and they asked them to do that for Nashua. At that point the members were provided a copy of this report. Ms. Kleiner told the board this is on the City of Nashua's website and it has been given to the media and has been sent to the Board of Aldermen via email. Last Friday they met with Mr. Chuck Reese of the DRA. They had a very good discussion on the Assessing Department moving forward. Mr. Reese wanted an update on what they intended on doing to improve things. It was a great discussion and Mr. Reese gave input on what the State of NH thought was best practice. They also talked about RSA's he wanted us to review. It was interesting. They have a very positive view on this department.

A request was made by the Mayor to meet with the Commissioner of the DRA. They have been meeting as a department every Monday morning at 8 AM. They discuss metrics of the workload - what is open and what due dates are coming up and what goals and objectives staff has. They had an interesting demo of Assessspro with staff present both from the Assessing Department and the IT Department. There were questions from both departments to which Patriot will be providing the answer. So the discussion was about updating the current version to the latest version. They will be updating going forward. She said she spoke with Mr. Jayson Brennen from CDM yesterday as to when they will get his report. He told her the report will be ready in another week or week and a half. This report is his review of all of our software systems. They met with Mr. Rob Tozier from KRT Appraisal as a follow up to the week before. He gave us that report and we had some discussion on abatements and how they are going to assist us with assessing. The exposure report was sent to the media, put on the website and copies sent to this board with the memo from Corporation Counsel. These were also sent to the Board of Aldermen.

Referring to Ms. Kleiner's update she handed out earlier in the meeting, Mr. Daniel Hansberry said that he was not surprised to see #3. He stated, while enrolled in an assessing course last May at the DRA, another class participant employed by a mass appraisal firm mentioned to him that Nashua is light years ahead of other New Hampshire communities. Everyone agreed that is good news. Ms. Kleiner concluded by telling the members if there is any additional information they can provide please do not hesitate to ask.

Commercial Assessor Greg Turgiss told the board that the 2018 equalization ratio has been received by the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) and it is 94.8%. Attorney Steve Bolton told the members that in discussions with KRT they believe the State is in error and that is too low. KRT believes their work should have come in closer to 100%. He said the City has not yet made a firm decision but there is an appeal process and this may be appealed. He said he will get back to the board with a recommendation but there is at least some chance that his is going to be challenged so he said he would recommend that the board does not use the State's number at this time. Attorney Bolton advised the board to go with a ratio of 100%. KRT thinks their work was better than that. They believe the method of using sales six months prior and six months after 4/1/18 is skewing the number because sale prices were escalating at a

faster rate.

Mr. Hansberry said that at last Tuesday's meeting Ms. Ortolano addressed the Board of Aldermen and she was going over property values. When she finished she stressed there was an almost urgent need to find an alternate member because we were cancelling meetings due to a lack of quorum because we do not have an alternate member. He said he thought that was an absolute and complete misrepresentation of the facts. From January, 2018 to today there has been one meeting cancelled due to lack of quorum. On February 7th, 2019 one member was travelling and his mother-in-law was recovering from bone surgery and another member was recovering from the flu. There has only been one scheduled meeting cancelled due to lack of quorum. They tried to reschedule this meeting a week later but one member was still away and the other was still suffering from the flu. It was noted there were other meetings cancelled but due to lack of agenda and not due to lack of quorum. Mr. Hansberry wanted the record to be clear.

Ms. Kleiner said in our discussions with Mr. Reese from DRA, a question posed by him was who would be approving the exemptions and credits. So they had asked Corporation Counsel to be present here today so a policy could be developed to bring to the board. Attorney Bolton said it is his recommendation based on his understanding of the law that this board determines all the basic issues. When this board signs the warrant to the tax collector it ultimately relies on the staff but this board signs the warrant. The same is true for the other decisions that are made regarding exemptions, elderly, veterans, charity, religious or educational. He said he believes the process should be that the staff gives a whole list for the approvals/denials and the Board of Assessors signs the list, so staff should make a recommendation and it should be on the agenda. Most cases are obvious but when it is not obvious you might want to explore more information and come to a decision, with an opinion from staff of course. Their opinion means a lot so he does not foresee a great change but just that the record will be clear. Ms. Kleiner said they wanted to make sure the proper approvals are being rendered correctly and she believes that was Mr. Reese and Corporation Counsel's opinion is that it be the Board of Assessors who is approving or denying all exemptions and credits. She said she will be putting together a letter addressing that.

MOTION BY Robert Earley to adjourn at 8:48 AM.

SECONDED BY Daniel Hansberry.

MOTION PASSED

*Transcribed by:
Cheryl Walley
Department Coordinator*