

Approved 12/21/16
TOWN OF WEST TISBURY
SELECTMENS MEETING
Wednesday, December 7, 2016 4:30 p.m. – 5:22 p.m.

Present: Selectmen Richard Knabel, Cynthia Mitchell, Skipper Manter, Jennifer Rand

Also Present: Dawn Barnes, Maria McFarland, Philippe Jordi, Michael Colaneri, Heather Hamacek, Edie Prescott

Tax Rate: *S. Manter motioned to open the tax rate hearing. C. Mitchell seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.*

Dawn presented the options for the Board to choose when setting the tax rate. (See attached handouts). Michael said that there was growing interest in the community to consider a residential exemption, which would shift more of the tax burden to seasonal home owners. He said exemptions are a way to level the playing field and noted the town already has exemptions for the blind, the elderly and veterans. This is a way to give back to residents.

S. Manter motioned to close the tax rate hearing. C. Mitchell seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.

Skipper said he was strongly in favor of a single tax rate noting that there are many seasonal home-owners who have been here for generations and are not wealthy. He said they use fewer services and are our neighbors. Cindy said she agreed with Skipper. She said she had not heard from residents who wanted to see the town adopt an exemption, and she noted that summer residents support a great deal of the budget for the few services they use. She suggested the Assessors hold a public forum to educate the public about the issue. Michael said there were 13 communities in the state that offer the exemption. Richard asked if the shift could only apply to properties of a certain value. Dawn said no. Cindy asked how the towns that do offer the shift determine what percentage to use. Dawn said she didn't know.

S. Manter motioned to maintain a single tax rate. C. Mitchell seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.

S. Manter motioned not to accept the open space, small commercial and residential exemptions. C. Mitchell seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.

Minutes: *S. Manter motioned to approve the minutes of 11/9/16 & 11/16/16 each with amendments. C. Mitchell seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.*

Beer & Wine Renewals: *S. Manter motioned to renew beer & wine licenses for State Road and the Plane View Restaurants. C. Mitchell seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.*

Library Foundation Donation: *S. Manter motioned to accept with thanks a donation of \$28,000 for the Library Operating Fund. C. Mitchell seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.*

Land Disposition Agreement – Scott's Grove: Richard asked the difference between this document and the ground lease. Philippe said this was basically like a purchase & sales agreement but the town won't execute the ground lease until assurances are met. Then the

ground lease takes over. He said the Disposition Agreement allows Island Housing Trust to apply for funding. The Board then identified areas in the document they wanted further explanation for. The discussion was tabled for a week to allow time to consult with Counsel. Jen will ask Counsel to attend next week.

Speed Limit on Music Street & Panhandle Road: Jen explained that she had spoken with an engineer at MADOT District 5 and he said that her method of calculating “thickly settled” was as good a method as any. He said also that the State does not have to sign off on the designation once the Board has determined the road meets the definition of thickly settled. Skipper said this was an answer from an engineer not a lawyer and that it could be challenged. Cindy said that the town should document the entire conversation to justify the designation.