

Approved 12/2/20
TOWN OF WEST TISBURY
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
November 18, 2020 4:40 pm
Virtual meeting

Present: Selectmen Cynthia Mitchell, Skipper Manter, Kent Healy, Jen Rand

Also Present for part or all of the meeting: Dawn Barnes, Mike Bellissimo, Dave Schweizer, Philippe Jordi, James Klingensmith, Bruce Stone, Dan Doyle, Doug Ruskin, Geoffrey Freeman, Greg Orcutt, John Rau, Maria McFarland, Matt Gebo, Sarah Carr-Locke, Tara Whiting-Wells, Mike Colanari, Doug Finn, Sam hall, Jefrey Dubard, Matt Merry, Brian Dowd, Janice Haynes

Cindy called the meeting to order at 4:43pm

Public Hearing -Tax Classification Hearing:

Jen read the intro and Dawn gave the classification presentation. It showed the breakdown of the different tax classifications; Residential, Commercial, and Industrial properties and Personal Property. She explained the Residential Exemption. See attached documents from agenda. The Assessors are recommending a factor of 1 and want to encourage the Selectmen to look more into the Residential Exemption in the future. They do not recommend a split tax rate for now. Greg Orcutt (Fin Com) asked how the Selectmen may feel in the future and for an explanation of why they have voted no in the past. Cindy said a split tax rate puts extra burden on the other classifications and raised rates on the non-resident tax payers who are not here. Kent is willing to look at it in the future but needs more time and info. Dawn spoke about what it would involve to make changes to the tax rates.

Skipper suggested adopting the status quo for this year but start earlier next year getting the info they will need to decide. Dawn suggested the Finance Committee have her come to a meeting to explain more to them so they can make recommendations. Greg said they would love to have her in.

Skipper made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Kent seconded. Roll Call: all in favor

There was no further public comment or discussion.

Skipper made a motion to vote a factor of 1 for the Minimum Residential Factor. Kent seconded. Roll Call: all in favor

Skipper made a motion to not adopt a Residential Tax Exemption. Kent seconded. Roll Call: all in favor

Skipper made a motion to not accept an Open Space Tax Exemption. Kent seconded. Roll Call: all in favor

Skipper made a motion to not accept a Small Business Commercial Tax Exemption. Kent seconded. Roll Call: all in favor

Minutes: Skipper made a motion to approve the minutes of October 28th and November 4th with no changes. Kent Seconded. Roll call vote; all in favor.

New Business:

- **Old Courthouse Rd land Disposition Agreement:**

The item had to be postponed as Jen had not gotten some of the info needed back yet.

- **Shared Transportation Engineer:**

Jen explained about a grant that had been available for the last few years but was not this year. They will have to budget to hire an engineer and appropriate the money at ATM. Dan Doyle from the MV Commission said he was very pleased with the engineering firm they had worked with and that his involvement had been mostly just facilitating the time shared between towns. He felt they had gotten good mileage out of the grant. All six towns are being offered the opportunity to get in to this plan to share. Skipper asked if a minimum amount of money would be required from each town. Dan said it had not been mentioned but he felt that the firm would be ok with whatever money was appropriated. Jen said that it has to be put out as a competitive bid for appropriation. She thinks it is worth the expense and recommends that it should be put before the voters. Skip asked where the money goes. Jen said it goes to the MVC and they would pay the engineers. Skipper believes it should be part of their budget and so part of the assessment they already pay to the MVC. Jen said that nothing has to be voted tonight; this was just the beginning of the conversation. She would like to give Dan an idea of how they feel about supporting the concept, and that other ideas may come from other towns before they need to put it on the warrant. Cindy said she supports the concept and Skipper is in favor of it too. Dan was thanked and said he looks forward to revisiting the topic in the future.

- **Housing Bank Committee re: proposed Warrant Article for town meeting**

Cindy said she was a member of the committee but had not been as involved lately as Covid has kept her busy. She thanked the other committee members for their work. Mike B. introduced the members, spoke about the work the committee had been doing and presented a proposed warrant article for ATM which Doug Finn explained further. Doug said it is very similar to the proposal to all the island towns a couple of years ago, but just for West Tisbury. They believe the committee members should be elected with the initial members

being appointed by the BOS and the 3 year terms being staggered for re-election. There should be reps from the other pertinent boards and that the Bank should be for people who do not necessarily qualify for Affordable Housing too. He summarized their requests; 1st they would like to have a Housing Bank created. Next would be to figure out funding for it and they would like to see money from the short term rental tax be designated. Finally, they would like to see money from real estate transactions be designated to the Housing Bank as is done for the Land Bank. Other members from the Housing Bank committee spoke to support the proposal. Kent said he thinks zoning should be changed to allow affordable housing and is generally not in favor of a housing bank. Skipper acknowledged that housing was important but is reluctant to assign money specifically to a 'bank'. He thinks there may be a better way. There was discussion about changing local bylaws rather than having to deal with the State legislation. Mike said that they had looked into a Home-rule petition as is done on Nantucket and they would be ok with that. Jen pointed out that the deadline was in February. No action taken.

- **Appointments:**
- **Personnel Board: James Klingensmith**

Skipper made a motion to appoint James Klingensmith to the Personnel Board for a 3 year term. Kent seconded. Roll Call: all in favor

- **Shellfish Committee: Greg Orcutt**

Skipper made a motion to appoint Greg Orcutt to the Shellfish Committee for a 1 year term. Kent seconded. Roll Call: all in favor

- **Energy Committee: Geoff Freeman**

Skipper made a motion to appoint Geoff Freeman to the Energy Committee. Kent seconded. Roll Call: all in favor

- **Letter of Support for the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce:**

Jen said that they had written the same letter in the past and that their programs were of benefit to the island. The MV Commission would also like to see us do it.

Skipper made a motion to write a letter of support for the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce. Kent seconded. Roll Call: all in favor

Old Business/ Topics not anticipated: There was none, but Jen reminded everyone that there would be no meeting next week unless an emergency came up.

Cindy reminded everyone that the next meeting and all meetings to follow would be going back to starting at 4:30 pm. Jen added that there would be a new procedure coming for Zoom meetings to protect us from uninvited guests. You will need to register in advance to get the link to the meeting. They will be testing in-house first and let everyone know.

Correspondence:

- 2 letters from taxpayers *not* in favor of the Residential exemption that will be attached to the public record (minutes)
- Letter from the MV Shellfish Group regarding the appointment.

Public Comment: There was none.

With no further business Skipper made the motion to adjourn. Kent second. Roll Call: all in favor.

He also wished everyone a Happy and safe Thanksgiving.

Adjourned 6:23 pm

Respectfully Submitted by Janice Haynes, Administrative Assistant