

**TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN
SELECTBOARD SPECIAL MEETING ON REVALUATION
DECEMBER 2, 2009**

Selectboard Present: Jon LeClair (Chair), Steven Neill, Doug Ring

Staff Present: David Edkins – Administrative Assistant
Jessica Dennis – Office Manager
Regina Borden – Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER: Jon LeClair called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM.

MUNICIPAL RESOURCES, INC. re: 2011 REVALUATION: Joe Lessard from Municipal Resources, Inc. advised that the State requires an update of property valuations every five years. Charlestown was done in 2006 so in 2011 a value adjustment will need to be done. The Selectboard will need to decide if they want to do a complete revaluation or a statistical up-date. There is no written requirement for properties to have a physical inspection but to put the right number on a property an inspection should be done. All the properties were looked at four years ago for the last revaluation so it is a matter of whether or not most property owners are obtaining permits for improvements, etc. If so, the current data should be pretty good.

If the Selectboard had a good feeling for this they could choose to do random inspections of about three dozen properties to see what percentage of data is good. An analysis of sales needs to be done, all the base rate tables and depreciation tables need to be brought up or down to today's market so values for 2011 are in line with market values. The real issue is how close to the average are the properties assessed. The Selectboard needs to decide if they want to pay for it all in the 2011 budget or split it up into the 2010 and 2011 budgets. If it is all put into the 2011 budget and it doesn't pass, the State will still require that the Town do it. If the Town doesn't have the money to have it done the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) will hire someone to do it and then add it to the town's tax rate.

The cost for a statistical update is about \$35/per parcel or about \$85,000 for the 2,500+/- parcels in Charlestown. He will provide an accurate figure by the end of the week. A full revaluation would be about \$80/per parcel or about \$200,000. The labor for physically gathering the data is about half the cost. Dave Edkins noted that, according to the DRA, the town's assessment ratio is about 100.04% but mobile homes are selling for less than the assessed value so that is an area that should be adjusted.

Joe Lessard said the DRA is the agency which oversees municipal activities with regards to assessments. They do not have the authority to force a town to do a revaluation however they have the authority to go to the Board of Tax and Land Appeals (BTLA) to order a town to have it done. The DRA's position is they do not care how good the statistics are; if it has been five years with good numbers they still expect an update adjustment. The town would lose control of who does it and it would cost more. There

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are five things that the BTLA is supposed to look at which include the time frame since the last revaluation plus other things including statistical data. There has been more emphasis on NH Constitutional requirements.

A new statute was created that says the towns will do an adjustment every five years. Values have been going down; unless the market turns around soon this trend will probably continue. If it goes to the BLTA, they would hold a hearing, the town could put forth its best effort to try to convince them that they do not need one and the BLTA might agree or could disagree and require a revaluation. The DRA will then hire a company who would send a bill and the DRA would add it to the town's tax rate. If the Selectboard choose to do a random search of properties, the DRA has a program that will randomly select the number of properties that will be done. It should represent a cross section of all types of properties. The cost is about \$35/each. There is money in the budget to cover it this year. There was a consensus of the Selectboard to have 50 properties inspected rather than the proposed three dozen.

Steve Neill moved to enter into an agreement with Municipal Resources, Inc. to do a physical inspection of 50 properties to see where the town stands statistically. Doug Ring seconded. With all in favor, the motion was approved.

Adjournment:

Steve Neill moved to adjourn his meeting. Doug Ring seconded. With all in favor, the motion was approved. The time was 6:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

Approved,

Jon B. LeClair, Chair

Steven A. Neill

Doug Ring

(**Note:** These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections, if necessary, may be found in the Minutes of the December 16, 2009, Selectboard meeting.)