

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
TOWN OF GORHAM  
MONDAY, August 6, 2012, 6:30 pm  
GORHAM TOWN HALL

Selectmen present: Chairman David Graham, Paul Robitaille, Bill Jackson.

Also present: Robin L Frost, Town Manager, Michelle Lutz, Assessing Clerk

Rob Tozier and Ken Rodgers, *KRT Appraisal*, Walt Winturri, Dr. and Lisa Kardell, Gail Scott, *Berlin Daily Sun*, Jay Holmes, Don Provencher, Roland Beausejoir, Dan McCrum, Carol Porter, Helen Beausejoir

**1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 by Chairman Graham.

**2. Appointments:**

**a) Rob Tozier & Ken Rodgers – KRT Appraisals:** Chairman Graham explained the process that brought us to the revaluation and the selection process for the company. He also explained that this was to be a general discussion tonight, not focusing on any particular properties. He reviewed RSA 75:8 and 75:8-a which speak to the five year timeframe for revaluations and annual updates to information. Mr. Tozier and Mr. Rodgers explained their process as they collected information throughout the town. They were able to identify 41 qualified sales (arms-length transactions, not family deals or foreclosure sales) which they used to perform the sales ratio study. The State sets standards for median ratios and coefficient of dispersion (COD). As the new values stand, the ratio is 0.94 and the old values ranged from 1.13 to 1.21, which is outside of the standards. With regard to COD, which measures the uniformity level between classes, the new values compute to 6.33% and the old COD is 29.6%. All in all the new preliminary valuation is \$270,747,700 as compared to the old valuation of \$310,211,100, a decline of about \$40,000,000.

Selectman Robitaille stated that since we are seeing a significant decrease in valuation, is there one area where they saw a decrease over another. The response was no, there was a decrease in all areas, except commercial which seemed to hold value better. Since they only had sales for two higher end properties, they went out to other neighboring towns to find listings of similar properties.

Selectman Jackson has spent a great deal of time analyzing the information. He feels that the high end properties took a big hit and was surprised to see that generally there were no increases. He asked about neighborhoods and Mr. Tozier reported that there were several neighborhoods identified. He can run a report for them that defines the values in that manner. This would be helpful. Selectman Jackson felt that the interior inspections were sporadic and he is not satisfied with just using what information is on the old card if they did not gain entry to a property. Mr. Tozier explained that there is a lot that can be determined by looking at the outside of a home. They took these things into consideration. With regard to sending out letters to all property owners this week, Selectman Jackson stated that he has a few more questions on specific properties before he would feel comfortable releasing the information as yet. It was agreed that once his questions were answered satisfactorily, we could let Mr. Tozier know to go ahead and send out the letters. Selectmen Jackson felt this could be accomplished in the next couple of days in order to keep to the timeline.

Chairman Graham asked if during the informal hearings, owners wanted to have their properties interior inspected, could that happen? Mr. Tozier stated that they would gladly make an appointment to inspect those properties, if there appears to be erroneous information.

Helen Beausejoir asked about how market value was used to set values. Mr. Tozier explained that they had 41 qualified sales.

Don Provencher asked what other towns in the area this company works in. There are no other towns in this area.

Carol Porter asked if the values would be sent individually in the letter with no book of all the values. This is correct, but all of the values will be available on the website and in books at Town Hall, the Library and, perhaps, the Post Office.

Walt Winturri wanted to make sure the website would have the new values available by the time the letters went out and that will be the case.

Jay Holmes asked about the sales used to determine values and it was explained that they are arms-length transactions, not foreclosures or family transactions. Mr. Holmes also spoke about inaccuracies which had been discussed during the budget process this year. It was explained that some of the listing information was incorrect. When asked if there were more inaccuracies in Gorham than they usually find, Mr. Tozier said yes, the percentage was higher.

Dr. Kardell asked if the Town was now going to hire a full time assessor and would 25% of the town be measured and listed for the next four years? Chairman Graham stated that there is no intent to hire at this time and though the Board has not yet officially made that determination, he believes that completing 25% of the Town each year is probably the best course to follow.

Jay Holmes stated that it would be a good idea to stay with the same firm.

## **2. Other Business:**

Selectman Jackson referenced the July 4<sup>th</sup> decorating contest. The Board of Selectmen judged this contest for the July 4<sup>th</sup> Committee. Selectmen Jackson was approached by the winner of the residential category and she indicated that she had not yet received her prize. He subsequently sent an email to the committee and received the response that they would look into it. He would like this taken care of as soon as possible.

Selectman Jackson attended the Planning Board meeting last week and two things arose that need attention. The first is that there were comments regarding the lack of posting of the meeting being the cause for a delay in hearing a case. He has also heard that postings are being removed from the boards on which they are placed. Selectman Jackson would like TM Frost to reiterate to Chief Cyr that these postings have to be done pursuant to a legal requirement. He further suggests placing a notice on the bottom of the posting that this is a required posting due to legal requirements and do not remove. The other item was the way that John Scarinza was spoken to by Burke York, who was representing a client before the Board. He would like a letter to go to Mr. York with the wording as follows: *It has been brought to our attention that at a recent Planning Board meeting you questioned the authority*

*of Building Inspector John Scarinza stating that he is not a resident of Gorham. Please refer to the Town of Gorham Zoning Ordinance Article VI, Section 6.01 and be aware that John Scarinza has been chosen by the Gorham Board of Selectmen as their designee for the purpose of administering said ordinance and acting in the capacity of building inspector.*

TM Frost will draft that letter accordingly.

Selectmen Robitaille asked if TM Frost would see to it that the AVRRDD minutes are emailed to the Board. TM Frost said that the minutes come to the Town Hall and she will make sure they find their way to the Selectmen's Mail folder. This was satisfactory to Selectman Robitaille.

**3. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

**REVIEWED AND APPROVED:**

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**David Graham**

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**Paul Robitaille**

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**William H. Jackson**