

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Public Meeting

Fire Station Community Room

November 20, 2014

Present:

Chairman David Swenson

Terry Jarvis, Selectman

David Bickford, Selectman

Also Present:

Jeremy Bourgeois, Town Administrator

Todd Haywood Granite Hill Municipal Services

Scott Marsh, Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI)

Gregory Anthes, Resident

Robert (Bob) Estey, Assessor

Paul McKenney, MRI

Rudy Rosiello, Resident

The meeting was called to order by Chair David Swenson at 1:00 PM.

Chair Swenson stated he would have to leave the meeting at 2:30 as he had a prior commitment.

Chair Swenson stated the tax rate has been set at Town \$5.62, County \$2.88, State School \$2.34, and Local School \$11.08 for a total of \$21.85 per \$1,000 valuation. Chair Swenson read the Tax Collector Property Tax Warrant to be signed by the BOS members.

Chair Swenson made a motion to sign the Tax Collector Property Tax Warrant as read, Selectman Jarvis seconded the motion. The motion was passed 3-0.

Chair Swenson said the Town has already received the tax bill from the County in the amount of \$1,210,746 which is due by December 17th. After that date, the 10% interest will be assessed. He would like to add this item to the agenda of the November 24th meeting for further discussion.

One of the Town's police officers was involved in an incident and sustained a broken arm. Chair Swenson brought in a get well card for the Board members to sign.

Chair Swenson stated the MRI contract has been signed and forwarded to MRI.

TA Bourgeois informed the BOS he had been approached by the Executive Director of Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) about a park & ride across the street from Johnson's Restaurant, Selectman Bickford said it is questionable as to whether or not the Town is going to stay with SRPC. He stated several letters have been sent to the State about this matter and it is a State decision. Selectman Jarvis stated they have asked

for it before and it is always at the bottom of the list. She also stated she would like to know what would be the cost to the Town.

Interview and Review of Assessing Bids:

Bob Estey presented all the bidders with a list of what he felt the process would be. He reviewed his list and explained each item. This included:

- Relative to 2014 would be any appeals, pickups for the first half tax bill, public meetings including 2014 appeals
- Later in the year, handling the appeals from the revaluation
- No data collection in 2015
- Going forward into 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 would be the one day a month scheduled meetings, pickups, and 20% data collection
- 2020 revaluation year would be quick update of values, 20% data collection, public hearings, pickups and revaluation update

Granite Hill Municipal Services:

Bob Estey reviewed the costs with Todd Haywood for the different services as bid by Granite Hill. The bid showed an hourly rate of \$49.50 to \$52.50 for the one day a month appointments. He asked if that was a different rate depending on who was working in Town. Mr. Haywood explained it tiers up over the term of the contract. Mr. Estey said that would be approximately \$5,000 for an estimate of about 100 hrs. Mr. Estey asked if there would be any problem working on a Saturday. Mr. Haywood said he did not believe it would be a problem. Mr. Estey stated the Town assessing clerk would be available to work with him.

Mr. Estey then asked about pick-ups. Mr. Haywood said he bills by the job not by the permit. If there is more than one permit and it can be covered with one visit and that is all he charges for. Pick-ups are priced at \$2,800 tiering up to \$3,500 a year.

Mr. Estey asked about local appeals. Mr. Haywood said they are included in the hourly estimate. Mr. Estey asked if Mr. Haywood would be handling the appeals associated with the revaluation or would he want the revaluation company to handle them. Mr. Haywood said he would prefer to handle them so that he is familiar with them.

Mr. Estey said the 20 % data collection price starts at \$14,300 in 2016 and increases each year. Selectman Jarvis asked Mr. Haywood if he had done cyclical revaluation in thirds instead of quarters or fifths. He said he did when he was with Avitar. He said he has no problem doing it whichever way the Town decided to go.

Mr. Estey asked if he had others who worked for him or did he handle everything. Mr. Haywood said he has one full time person and two or three part-time people, all of

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which are at DRA approved supervisor level. There was a discussion about working with Vision and BMSI. Mr. Haywood said he encourages the merging of data instead of two separate entries. If the Town merges the two programs, the changes are done in both programs at the same time.

Selectman Jarvis asked how many remeasure/relists they had done. Mr. Haywood said the towns he is currently working in do the cyclical revaluation. He also said he does a field review on all properties every five years. Mr. Estey asked about how he handles unique properties such as golf courses. He said he has been handling golf courses and restaurants in other towns for quite some time.

Chair Swenson asked how conditions are approached. Mr. Haywood said it would be mostly based on the age of the house. Chair Swenson asked if there had been any rejections of his work by DRA. Mr. Haywood said he had never had any rejections by DRA. Chair Swenson then asked why Mr. Haywood was interested in working in New Durham. Mr. Haywood stated the location is convenient, thought it would be a good transition because of the number of years Mr. Estey has been the assessor, and the time for the job is something he can manage.

The Board thanked Todd Hayward for meeting with them and stated they should have a decision no later than December 1st. Mr. Haywood stated that once a contract is signed it has to be submitted to DRA.

MRI:

Paul McKenney and Scott Marsh introduced themselves and gave a brief description of their experience.

Bob Estey reviewed the process with Mr. McKenney and Mr. Marsh.

Mr. Estey explained it had been discussed that instead of a 20% data collection per year the Town could possibly do a 25% over four years or a 33% over three years. He asked if that would be something Mr. Marsh would consider. Mr. Marsh said it was something that could be changed to whichever way the Town chooses. Mr. Estey said the price for general assessing was \$1075 a month. He asked what that included. Mr. Marsh stated that would be the one day a month and pick-ups.

Mr. Estey asked if Mr. Marsh would want the revaluation company to handle the appeals or if he would prefer to handle them. Mr. Marsh stated he would prefer to handle them so that he would be familiar with them. Mr. Marsh stated there would be an additional fee of \$150 per hour for any appeals that went to the Board of Land and Tax Appeals (BTLA). Selectman Jarvis asked who would be coming into the Town on a monthly basis. Mr. Marsh said it would probably be either Paul McKenney or himself.

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Selectman Jarvis said the contract states payment is due within 15 days. This could be a problem for the Town. Mr. Marsh said that could be changed to meet the Town's needs. Selectman Jarvis asked what his feelings were on the different methods of doing the revaluation. Mr. Marsh said he felt cyclical was better for budgeting purposes for the Town. He personally likes the cyclical method because the work can be spread out.

Chair Swenson asked about the difference in price for the cyclical review and the cyclical 25%. Mr. Marsh stated the cyclical review at \$1850 is just the field work and the \$2850 is the statistical update as well. He stated that some towns hire another firm for the statistical revaluation. Chair Swenson asked why MRI would like to work in New Durham. Mr. Marsh stated it is a nice town, a good area, and they are looking to expand.

Mr. McKenney asked if they would be able to get remote access to the computer system. Chair Swenson said yes they would be able to remote access the town's computer system. Mr. McKenney asked if the Town had an assessing clerk. Mr. Estey said there is a clerk who handles setting appointments, preapproves the applications for credits and exemptions and put together a packet for the assessor, will make sure all documents are submitted for current use so that the assessor has everything, will update the tax deeds and address changes, etc.

Chair Swenson left the meeting at 2:30 PM.

Selectman Jarvis asked if working on a Saturday or evenings would be a problem. Mr. Marsh said there would not be a problem with working Saturdays or evenings. Mr. Estey said there is also a new building inspector and they would have to establish communication between them and the building inspector.

Mr. Marsh asked when the Town is looking for the contract to start. Selectman Jarvis said she would like to see the contract start on January 1, 2015. Mr. Estey has agreed to come in and work with the new company when they start. Selectman Jarvis asked how many of their appeals had to go to the BTLA. Mr. Marsh said less than a dozen in fifteen years. She asked if DRA had ever rejected any of their reports. Mr. McKenney said he has never had DRA reject a report but they have questioned something and he has corrected it.

Selectman Jarvis thanked them for coming in and stated they hope to have a decision by Dec 1st.

The next meeting will be November 24th, 2014 at 1:00 PM at the Fire Station Community Room.

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Selectman Bickford made a motion to adjourn. Selectman Jarvis seconded the motion. The vote passed 2-0.

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Zuzgo