

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2015
MMHS Auditorium
3 Memorial Drive, Winchendon, Mass.**

Present:

Michael Barbaro, Chairman
Barbara Anderson, Vice-Chair
Amy Salter
Austin Cyganiewicz
Audrey LaBrie

Bernard Lynch, Acting Town Manager
Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant

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List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Minutes for Approval: (filed)
 - o Tuesday, November 3, 2015 Special Meeting
 - o Wednesday, November 4, 2015 Special Meeting
- Christmas Tree Permit Application – John Dodge, 350 Baldwinville State Rd. (filed)
- Special Town Meeting Warrant and Motions (attached)
- Tax Classification Public Hearing Legal Notice (attached)
 - o FY16 Tax Classification Hearing Presentation Documents from Winchendon Board of Assessors, dated Nov. 23, 2015 (filed)

Chairman Barbaro called the meeting to order at 6:22 p.m. The meeting did not air live on local cable access channel 8 and was held at the MMHS prior to Special Town Meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Tuesday, November 3, 2015 Special Meeting – **Anderson moved to approve; Salter seconded. By vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.**

Wednesday, November 4, 2015 Special Meeting – **Anderson moved to approve; LaBrie seconded. By vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.**

PERMITS:

Christmas Tree Permit, John Dodge, 350 Baldwinville State Rd. - Mr. Dodge was present on his application and informed the Board the location was near Lake Dennison, the former Stuff N Things. He assured the Board there was plenty of off street parking as the Police Chief had a concern in his response to the Board. He said he would be selling his trees for \$35 and up. **LaBrie moved to approve; Salter seconded. By vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS:

Special Town Meeting Warrant / Motions – The Board received the STM Warrant and Motions for the meeting this evening.

TAX CLASSIFICATION PUBLIC HEARING – Barbaro opened the Public Hearing by reading the Legal Notice into the record. Regional Principal Assessor Harald Scheid and Regional Assessor George Bourgault were present for the hearing. The Assessor's explained the summary document on the process the

Town undertakes in determining the percentage of the Town's property tax levy to be borne by each major property class. He said this Tax Classification Hearing is the Board's annual opportunity to weigh in on whether Winchendon levies a single tax rate across all classes of property as we have historically or alternatively shifts the tax burden on the commercial property owner to the benefit of the residential property owner. He reported that Mr. Bourgault has been busy assessing all the evaluations across Town. All of the evaluations have been certified by the Dept. of Revenue. We have received new growth certification which now allows us to have this hearing. The amount they are looking to raise, qualified by this Special Town Meeting tonight, is \$10,715,725, which is just about the maximum allowable property tax levy through Proposition 2 ½. They have certified new growth amounting in \$64,823. There is very little new construction happening. Mr. Lynch asked how much of this is personal property growth. Mr. Scheid replied roughly a third. Assessor George Bourgault explained the assessments he conducted. Mr. Scheid said they are looking to shift the tax burden and a tax rate increase to help fund the increased levy going from \$16.72 per thousand to \$17.43 per thousand. That will affect the average homeowner about \$117.00 per year. Mr. Bourgault noted the residential classes have changed very little reflecting the continued soft real estate market. Mr. Scheid provided a draft motion for the Board with their recommendation. He explained that Commercial and Industrial sector represents only about 10% of the Assessment base you have to raise commercial taxes 10% to yield a 1% reduction on the residential side. For that reason, he doesn't feel it made sense to shift the burden. **LaBrie moved the Winchendon Board of Selectmen votes in accordance with M.G.L., Ch. 40 Sec. 56, as amended, the percentage of local tax levy which will be borne by each class of real and personal property, relative to setting the Fiscal Year 2016 tax rates and set the Residential Factor at 1.0, with a corresponding CIP shift of 1.0, pending approval of the Town's annual tax recap by the Massachusetts Dept. of Revenue; Salter seconded. By a vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.** Mr. Scheid said the LA-5 document will be prepared after tonight's meeting and will be ready for their signatures in a day or two. Mr. Scheid and Mr. Bourgault were thanked for their attendance this evening.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Barbaro moved to enter into Exemption No. 2 to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with non-union personnel: Subject: Police Chief Contract; Anderson seconded. By roll call vote of all aye, the meeting adjourned into Executive Session at 6:42 p.m.

RECONVENE OPEN SESSION:

Chairman Barbaro reconvened Open Session at 8:22 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

LaBrie moved to adjourn from Open Session; Salter seconded. By a vote of all aye, the meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Daigle
Executive Assistant