

TOWN OF SHELBURNE

**BOARD OF ABATEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**June 14, 2021**

**\*Meeting held by teleconference.**

**DRAFT**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Nancy Baker, Linda Barker, Susan Bowen, Joan Lenes,  
Judy Rosenstreich, Randy Rowland, Lee Suskin.

**ADMINISTRATION:** Diana Vachon, Town Clerk.

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Nancy Baker called the teleconference meeting to order at 7:03 PM. Diana Vachon referenced COVID Act 92 allowing remote meetings.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

None.

**4. APPROVE MINUTES FROM MAY 24, 2021**

**MOTION: Nancy said to change the “BCA” reference to “BOA” Randy moved to accept the minutes. Joan seconded. No discussion. Linda Barker and Susan Bowen abstained. Motion passed.**

**5. TASK GROUP PRESENTS**

Diana will take minutes for tonight. Members will use the Raise Hand feature when they want to speak.

Nancy thanked everyone for their work on the committee. She will collect all the information the subcommittee has worked on and create a presentation for the full Board of Abatement. She will send it around for everyone to review.

The Subcommittee discussed asking the applicant what do they think is the public benefit of abatement. And this led to a discussion of education. An article for the Shelburne News about abatement, services to assist residents, taxes and how we all benefit from taxes and social responsibility. Nancy will reach out to the Social Services Committee and see if this fits in with their committee scope.

The Subcommittee reviewed current procedure for filing an abatement and disseminating information to residents. The Subcommittee agreed a web page on the Shelburnevt.org website with abatement information and links to the forms, statutes, and resources would be beneficial.

The Subcommittee discussed creating a postcard or letter to go out with the next tax bill (August/September). The Town Manager has the final say on the wording. To be most helpful, they will keep it general listing Town Services such as the Social Services Committee, Shelburne Food Shelf, and State 211 information

The Subcommittee discussed Public Introduction to Abatement summary sheet Randy and Nancy put together. It is very clear and concise. The VT Secretary of State's office suggests that if the applicant's request for abatement is based on a temporary change in a financial situation or temporary damage or loss to property, then the board is more apt to grant an abatement. This temporary suggestion is not in statute and is not a requirement. The committee worked out the language with Lee and Judy's suggestions. Discussed protecting children, making sure they are food secure, their needs and health come first.

It was decided not to use the IRS tax form. Lee proposed that Linda Barker could create a better form that would help the Board make an informed decision. The process needs to be simple. Discussed not having a form and referring applicants to Linda for help.

The form(s) are to serve as guides for the applicants to make their presentations. And for the BOA to make informed decisions. It needs to be made clear this information is a public record: kept on file in the clerk's office and available to view upon request. Giving the financial information to the BOA is voluntary. If the applicant decides to volunteer the information, it may be either written or verbal.

## **6. DISCUSS NEXT STEPS & REVIEW AND ASSIGN FUTURE ACTIONS**

Nancy and Randy will fine tune the supplemental information sheet to hand out to applicants.

Nancy and Diana will work on content for the Board of Abatement web page.

Joan and Becky will draft some wording for abatement information tax insert for Lee Krohn's approval.

Next meeting will be a full Board meeting and is set for some time in early August at 7 PM. Diana will confirm a date with David and send out a save the date email.

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

*RScty: Diana Vachon*