

**MINUTES**  
**SELECT BOARD**  
**TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH**  
Tuesday, September 12, 2011 – 7:00pm  
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

**Present:** Joe Byk, Barbara Miller, Elizabeth Thomas

**Also Present:** Pamela Brenner, Rodney Bartlett, Nicole MacStay

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**Chair Miller** called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

**Appointment – Wil Corcoran, Corcoran Associates – Reassessment Update**

**Mr. Corcoran** stated that the market has been getting soft; all sectors are being affected. Currently Corcoran Associates is working to bring the assessments into alignment with the market, and to make the database current. He explained that the assessors look at the market, deeds and surveys to make sure that the sales that are used to set assessments are not distressed or bank sales. However, because there are so many bank sales occurring, they do have an impact on the regular “arms-length” sales. Overall, **Mr. Corcoran** said they are seeing a 14-18% reduction in assessments. Other municipalities have experienced a general, slow decline over a number of years, however in Peterborough sales held longer, and then suddenly fell. **Mr. Corcoran** then described the assessing process and the state’s oversight role.

**Mr. Byk** asked how this will affect the school rate. **Ms. Brenner** said that the decline in assessments will not be reflected in the school funding formula this year, but it will have a big impact next year. **Mr. Byk** asked if this has an effect on what the Department of Revenue Administration does in setting the equalized valuation ratio; **Ms. Brenner** said that it does, and they will take those numbers and put them into the formula when they do their equalized ratio work next spring, however if all the towns go down 10% then the adjustment washes out. This highlights the unfortunate thing about the ConVal formula – it is not averaged at all. **Chair Miller** asked **Mr. Corcoran** if he knows if the values of properties in other ConVal Districts towns are moving; **Mr. Corcoran** said that he does not. He explained that there is a specific factor that is used to equalize, and Peterborough will not be hurt by that process. He then explained the how DRA uses a complicated formula to arrive at the equalized value ratio.

**Mr. Corcoran** then said that with the lapse on the exemption for poles and conduits owned by telephone companies, those properties will be assessed and taxed by municipalities for the first time. **Ms. Thomas** asked what he thought Fairpoint will do; **Mr. Corcoran** said that he expects they will not pay, and will take the issue to court. **Mr. Corcoran** then explained how they have assessed Fairpoint’s assets, and stated that he believes that they are as safe as they can be with their methodology. The Board then reviewed a document prepared by **Mr. Smith** which provides an overview of the preliminary changes to the taxable values. **Chair Miller** announced that **Mr. Corcoran** and **Mr. Smith** just completed a video answering the most frequently asked assessing questions. That video will be uploaded to YouTube and linked to the Town’s website.

**New Business – Future of the Monadnock Country Club**

**Chair Miller** said that several weeks ago Ted Covert and Ted McInnis, members of the Monadnock Country Club Board of Trustees approached the town about their tax status. Both the Town and the Monadnock Country Club agree that the golf club is a valuable asset for the town, and together

have come up with a plan by which the town would take the lead in safeguarding the property. This plan would have to be approved of by the membership and the town. Though she could not reveal any specifics, the Board and the Trustees are engaged in on-going discussions. A public hearing will be scheduled for September 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss how the Town and the Club might work together. **Ms. Brenner** said that she and other staff members have gotten to know both of these gentlemen very well these last few weeks, beginning when they came to talk about the tax and utility situation. She said that they all love MCC, and believe that it is a great asset for the community. When it was understood that the Town couldn't do much to assist with the taxes or utilities, it moved into a discussion about what can be done to safeguard the property. She added that **Ms. Vaihinger** is working with the mortgage holder to see what can be done to come up with a solution. **Ms. Brenner** said that she feels they are making progress, but they are not ready to discuss that yet.

### **Nancie Vaihinger – Employee Handbook**

**Ms. Vaihinger** said that earlier this year she presented the new regular employee handbook. Some changes have been recommended by the Town's attorney for inclusion. **Ms. Vaihinger** then reviewed the changes with the Board.

#### **Motion:**

**Mr. Byk** made a motion to amend the Regular Employee Handbook as recommended by **Ms. Vaihinger**; **Ms. Thomas** seconded.

#### **Vote:**

**Mr. Byk**, **Ms. Thomas** and **Chair Miller** voted in favor of the motion; the motion carried.

### **Old Business – Citizen Satisfaction Survey**

**Ms. MacStay** began by explaining that in the beginning of March the Town contracted with the Research Bureau to conduct a citizen satisfaction survey, and invited a randomly chosen group of Peterborough residents to complete a survey about the services they receive from all town departments. The participants were chosen randomly by selecting every 10<sup>th</sup> person on the voter's checklist. Of those 622 randomly chosen citizens, 103 participated in the survey, which provided a large enough sample to provide a reasonably representative report. Overall, the survey results were very positive, and demonstrate that the respondents are pleased with the services they receive and the overall professionalism of the employees they interact with.

**Ms. MacStay** said that the Research Bureau then took the results of that survey and compared them with the results of similar surveys conducted by eight other cities and towns in New England. Here too Peterborough performed overall very well in comparison with the participating communities. Following this memo are the summaries of both the Citizens Satisfaction and the Cross Comparison results. She then reviewed some of the questions. **David Weir**, Library Trustee, asked if any questions about the Library building were asked; **Ms. MacStay** said that aside from a general question regarding the upkeep of the building, no specific questions were asked, but she said that conducting a survey specifically to ask about the Library building would be a simple thing to conduct.

### **Review and Approval of Minutes of August 2<sup>nd</sup> & August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011; Non-Public Minutes of August 12<sup>th</sup> & August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

#### **Motion:**

**Mr. Byk** made a motion to accept the minutes as presented; **Ms. Thomas** seconded.

**Vote:**

**Mr. Byk, Ms. Thomas and Chair Miller** voted in favor of the motion; the motion carried.

**Appointment of Diane Burnett as Alternate Library Trustee**

**Motion:**

**Chair Miller** made a motion to appoint Diane Burnett as an alternate Library Trustee; **Ms. Thomas** seconded.

**Vote:**

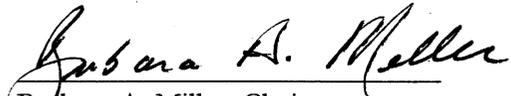
**Chair Miller, Ms. Thomas and Mr. Byk** voted in favor of the motion; the motion carried.

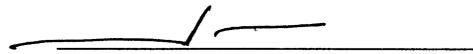
**Chair Miller** announced that the Department Directors will be available to answer resident questions at the next Select Board meeting.

As there was no further business, **Ms. Thomas** made a motion to adjourn; **Mr. Byk** seconded. All in favor, the meeting adjourned at 7:59pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Nicole MacStay, Assistant to the Town Administrator

PETERBOROUGH  
SELECT BOARD:

  
Barbara A. Miller, Chair

  
Joe Byk

  
Elizabeth M. Thomas

**ACTION ITEM PENDING LIST**

1.

