

Minutes of the Board of Assessors
Meeting of October 13, 2005

A meeting of the Board of Assessors was held on Thursday, October 13, 2005 in Room 208 at City Hall. Chair, Marylou Blaisdell, called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

Members Present

Marylou Blaisdell Kevin Moriarty Dominic D'Antoni

Assessing Staff Present

Angelo Marino Cheryl Walley

Minutes of the Meeting:

MOTION BY Marylou Blaisdell to accept the minutes of the meeting held September 22, 2005.

SECONDED BY Kevin Moriarty.

MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Abatement Requests Presented:

See attached printout for approvals/denials.

Appointments:

5:00 – Pastor Larry Hileman of Heritage Baptist Church regarding denial of 2005 Religious Exemption on 105 Lock Street (Acct #13214)

The Board welcomed Pastor Hileman and said they have reviewed all the information he has submitted. Chair Marylou Blaisdell invited him to present his information. Pastor Hileman noted that he has provided the Board with Church bulletins to show the building was being used by the Church before April 1, 2005. He stated in February, 2005 they also had insurance and set up counseling and were “up-and-running”. Dominic D’Antoni pointed out that the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) was not issued until July, 2005. Pastor Hileman said that without this CO he was allowed to have up to 49 people. Dominic D’Antoni asked if prior to receiving a CO, is it even legal to be in the building. Pastor Hileman replied yes, the Fire Marshall was even in the building. Mr. D’Antoni asked him if he has any documentation that says it was legal to be in the building before it is inspected and that you followed proper procedure. Pastor Hileman said he has a building permit that was filed by the previous owner that was approved in 2/05. The building was inspected and it was determined that it was structurally sound and the heating system was in working order. He said they could have moved in but he had not gotten the approval for 299 people and he could only have 49 people. Pastor Hileman then showed the Board pictures of the inside of the building. He was asked where the church services were being held in the interim. He said the services were being held at another property they were renting on Franklin Street in Nashua. He said all of the services were not held here on Lock Street, but the phone was on, insurance was in effect, bank account opened. He stated he only rented the other place, but all of the phone calls and appointments were all made out of this building. Mr. D’Antoni asked who granted permission to meet in this building for 49 people. Pastor Hileman said the Fire Marshall had it “up-and-running” and he checked the system. He said the Church intended to have all services here by 4/05 but we ran into a problem with permits and Mayor Streeter and Chief Assessor Angelo Marino said they needed to see bulletins to verify that we met faithfully and regularly in the building, so that is what he has provided. Mr. D’Antoni asked about the total enrollment numbers in the Church. Pastor Hileman said they have 260 in the congregation and they also rented another place at 34 Franklin Street. Chair Marylou Blaisdell clarified that services were continuing at 34 Franklin Street and smaller groups met

here at 105 Lock Street, and that the Church had permission for up to 49 people to meet here. Pastor Hileman concurred. It was asked what the total bill would be for property taxes for 2005 without this exemption. Mr. Marino said the final will be more than what was billed in July, 2005 because it will be based on the 2005 assessment and 2005 tax rate which is not known yet. Mr. D'Antoni confirmed that as of 4/1/05 the Church was using two buildings. Pastor Hileman confirmed but noted he has provided the actual bulletins from the Church to show they were using this building. Kevin Moriarty stated his only issue is the Certificate of Occupancy was not approved until July, 2005. Pastor Hileman said that this CO was for 299 people but he had already had permission to have up to 49 people in the building. Mr. D'Antoni stated he would need to look into this, because occupancy is usually only authorized for 100%. He confirmed again with Pastor Hileman that the City authorized him to go into the building and hold classes. Pastor Hileman stated he does not have a document authorizing this, but he did have permission. Chair Blaisdell said we will check on this and then asked if there was anything else. Mr. Moriarty said he wasn't clear on when the Church first started having services in the new place. Pastor Hileman stated 2/12/05. The larger services were in 34 Franklin Street, but meetings were in this building as well as marriage counseling and drug abuse counseling. Pastor Hileman offered that these people who were counseled are willing to hand-write letters stating this. He said that according to Mayor Streeter the Church just needs to verify the building was used for religious purposes and training. Mr. D'Antoni asked if one of the 49 individuals fell over something would the insurance company pay damages if they were aware a CO was not issued. Pastor Hileman said he believes they would. Mr. Marino advised he will check into this with the Fire Marshall and the Building Department and get back to the Board at the next meeting, October 27. Chair Blaisdell advised Pastor Hileman the Board will let him know their final decision by the end of the month.

Old Business

Chief Assessor Angelo Marino advised the Board that the 2005 assessment information as well as the property record card is on the internet. Chair Marylou Blaisdell stated that she has a problem with the ease with which people can get taxpayers' information. Angelo said having the data online makes it easier for taxpayers to verify their assessing data. Commercial Appraiser Bob Lakeman said that there is really no information on the internet that he would consider sensitive. Dominic D'Antoni mentioned that Merrimack assessing data was on the web and it was all removed after the taxpayers complained. Chief Assessor Angelo Marino noted that what is on the web is pretty bland and it will save a lot of resources. When asked if there are a lot of people coming into Assessing, Mr. Marino replied yes but a lot of the people are coming in because they are upset over their increase in taxes. We do not discuss taxes, we only discuss assessments. Mr. Marino advised the Board that the elderly exemption amounts have been increased as a result of this update. For those receiving the exemption that are between the ages of 65 and 74 years of age will increase from \$100,000 to \$130,000; those between the ages of 75 and 79 will increase from \$125,000 to \$162,500 and those 80 years of age and older will increase from \$155,000 to \$201,500. Mr. Marino stated that this is an additional \$36,000,000 which will be added to the current dollar amount of \$125,000,000 in elderly exemptions. Dominic D'Antoni asked how this would impact the \$16.35 estimated tax rate. Mr. Marino answered we will have to wait and see.

MOTION BY Marylou Blaisdell to adjourn at 5:10 PM.
SECONDED BY Kevin Moriarty
MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Transcribed by
Cheryl Walley
Department Coordinator