

**Minutes of the Board of Assessors  
Meeting of July 13, 2006**

A meeting of the Board of Assessors was held on Thursday, July 13, 2006 in Financial Services Conference Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM by Chair, Marylou Blaisdell.

**Members Present**

Marylou Blaisdell	Kevin Moriarty	Dominic D'Antoni
-------------------	----------------	------------------

**Assessing Staff Present**

Robert Lakeman	Gary Turgiss	Greg Turgiss
Jeanne Dunfey	Cheryl Walley	

**Minutes of the Meeting:**

Chair Marylou Blaisdell referred to the agenda for this meeting and noted that the minutes of the last meeting as well as this meeting will be submitted for the Board's approval at the next meeting.

**Abatement Requests Presented:**

Approvals/denials are available in the Assessor's Office. Regarding those presented for the Board's review at this meeting, Dominic D'Antoni noted that some of the abatements resulted in the assessment increasing. Commercial Appraiser Robert Lakeman said that is due to the data being changed subsequent to the inspection performed. After staff inputs the data, Chief Assessor Angelo Marino looks at the abatement and determines if the assessment is fair. Mr. D'Antoni said he still says that people should be made aware of the fact that it is necessary to obtain a building permit to make sure the Assessing Department is aware if something has been removed from the property. Mr. Lakeman advised there is a lot of work being done on properties in the City without building permits. Mr. D'Antoni said that when any work is done by a contractor, they usually file a permit, but it is the work that is being done by the homeowner, for which a permit is not being filed.

**Staff Items:**

Mr. D'Antoni referenced an article in the 7/12/2006 issue of the Nashua Telegraph entitled "Appealing Filing Issue Stalls" by Patrick Meighan. He voiced some questions of concern and Chair Marylou Blaisdell asked that these questions be put into a memorandum to the Board of Aldermen from the Board of Assessors with copies to Mayor Streeter and City Counsel David Connell. The Board of Assessors would like the Board of Aldermen to receive it in time for their next meeting.

Jeanne Dunfey, Supervisor/Customer Service advised the Board that the Assessing Department is planning on reviewing everything hopefully by the middle of August. She advised 1,476 abatements have been entered but this number includes inhouse corrections. We have 732 pending after today's meeting is processed. We have acted upon 744, which is a little over half. These numbers include over 100 commercial properties that we won't be processing for awhile because these are bigger accounts that take up more time on the part of the Appraisers in the office. The two data collectors from Patriot Properties and the Residential Appraisers from the Assessing Department have been cold-calling throughout the City. If they were not home they would leave a "door-knocker" tag advising the taxpayer to call Assessing to schedule an appointment for an inspection and there was a red & white sticker on the yellow tags that advised them this inspection pertains to the abatement they filed. We are keeping track of how many appointments that were made, how many were kept, and how many just didn't bother to call. We have appointments through 8/2/2006. Prior to that all appointments were made on a Wednesday and we had 4 individuals going out on Wednesday. We now have the data collectors from Patriot who are inspecting commercial multi-unit properties, 4-units and above. It is a little more refined

because we are calling up owners and scheduling appointments for the data collectors to be able to walk through each unit on these properties.

Mr. D'Antoni asked for the most part what type of commercial properties are being held to work on later. Mr. Lakeman advised office buildings and big-box stores. He advised these are properties that file every year anyway. Ms. Dunfey told the Board that the representatives from Patriot Properties are only inspecting larger multi-unit properties, and as we get this data back and enter it they get filtered through Chief Assessor Angelo Marino. She said it is a lot of paperwork and a lot of tracking but we are chugging along. With the 4 individuals out there collecting data they are covering 15 or 18 properties a day each. She advised that Noreen Duxbury, Administrative Specialist, has done a great job keeping the inspections for each in a certain grid or area of the City. Last night they worked past 5 to cover all the appointments that had been scheduled. Ms. Dunfey advised that due to the volume of abatements it has been necessary to utilize all the administrative staff to get the work done. Mr. Lakeman noted that the \$50,000 the aldermen are proposing be spent on appeal fees would have covered the two data collector positions which Assessing requested but were turned down. Ms. Dunfey noted that we lost an administrative staff position 2 ½ years ago and we never got it back.

Mr. Moriarty asked if the Aldermen are aware that we are still working on these abatements even though the deadline of July 1 has passed. Ms. Dunfey answered that the staff has told everyone that has called and it is also clear in the deemed denied letters, sent out July 3, 2006 to all the pending abatements. The July 1<sup>st</sup> date is the date at which the taxpayer can file to the State if their abatement has not been acted on by the Board of Assessors and they have until September 1, 2006 to file with the State. Great effort has been made to communicate to the public that the Assessing Department continues working on the abatements.

Mr. Lakeman stated that Commercial Appraisers in the Assessing Office are State certified Appraisers and are required to meet USPAP guidelines, consequently we can be sued and lose our license if those standards are not met. Some aldermen think that this legislation (R-06-67) is making us process these abatements more quickly but it really isn't something that can be done arbitrarily, therefore we need extra help. Mr. D'Antoni noted that making appointments can delay the process tremendously because you are having to set your schedule to the property owner. They have until 9/1/2006 to appeal and if they receive notification from the City without having to wait two year's for their case to be heard, that of course, would be preferable to the taxpayer. Mr. Lakeman advised that he was told the Board of Tax and Land Appeals (BTLA) is just now beginning to hear the 2004 cases.

Ms. Dunfey told the Board that most of the abatements they have seen the last two months have been those properties that we have inspected. Towards the end of the process, the Board will see the abatements that we were not able to inspect the interior and could only inspect exterior. Mr. D'Antoni asked if we are documenting when and where we leave door-knockers. Mr. Lakeman advised the Appraisers submit daily logs of each property they have been to. Chair Blaisdell noted that also on the property record card it is listed who was there and when.

**MOTION BY** Dominic D'Antoni to adjourn at 8:50 AM.

**SECONDED BY** Kevin Moriarty.

**MOTION CARRIED** unanimously

Transcribed by  
Cheryl Walley  
Department Coordinator