



**BOARD OF ABATEMENT MEETING MINUTES  
OF JANUARY 31, 2024**

Members: Donald Blake, Don McDowell, Ed Wilson, Jane Foster\*, Judy Bickford, Leah Hollenberger, Monte Mason, Richard Craig, Shelley Nolan, Siri Rooney\*, Urban Martin, Yvette Mason, and Sara Haskins (Clerk).

Listers: Brian Yeaton\*, Duane Sprague.

Absent: Aimee Towne, Darcie Abbene, Charles Burnham, Chris Palermo, Julia Compagna, Laura Streets, Shap Smith

Applicants:

*\*participating via Zoom*

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**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Ed Wilson called the Board of Abatement meeting to order at 6:01 PM at the Morrystown Municipal Building.

**AGENDA CHANGES/ADDITIONS**

None

**APPROVE MINUTES**

**1. Approve minutes of November 2, 2023**

*Motion made by Donnie Blake to approve the minutes of November 2, 2024. Motion seconded by Shelley Nolan. Judy Bickford abstained. Motion carried. (14/0/1)*

**HEARINGS PURSUANT TO TITLE 24 V.S.A § 1535 TO CONSIDER ABATEMENT OF PROPERTY TAXES**

**1. 3031306 Canada Inc - 1994 Sterling Valley Rd (11077)**

Chair Ed Wilson opened the hearing at 6:03 PM by stating the name of the applicant, property location, parcel ID number.

Chair Wilson administered the oath to the applicant, William Herlihy.

Chair Wilson asked the Board members to disclose any conflicts of interest and/or ex parte communication. There was none.

Chair Wilson asked the appellant if they received a copy of the rules of procedure and if they had any questions about how the hearing would proceed. The Appellant stated they had received them and did not have any questions at that time.

Chair Wilson asked the application to identify the statutory category that the abatement request is being made under and present verbal and documentary evidence supporting the abatement request to the Board. A written abatement request form and narrative were presented asking for abatement of taxes of \$10,981.55 in principal, interest & penalty for the 2023-2024 tax year due to taxes or charges upon real or personal property lost or destroyed during the tax year pursuant to Title 24 V.S.A § 1535(a)(5). William Herlihy shared testimony that his home on Sterling Valley rd caught on fire in the early morning of December 9, 2023. The house is currently inhabitable, gutted with no electricity, heat or water. Along with the loss of the structure he also lost many valuable contents inside the home. He is currently working with the insurance company to receive an estimate to rebuild. He requested abatement thru November 14, 2024.

Duane Sprague gave testimony on behalf of the Listers. They visited the outside of the property and agree there is a total loss of the home. Duane explained that the tax period is from July 1- June 30. He presented an abatement amount of \$3154.03 based on 204 days of the dwelling being at a total loss. He further explained that the assessor would reevaluate the property on April 1 for the 2024-2025 tax year.

Chair Wilson invited questions from the Board. There were none.

Chair Wilson explained to the appellant that the Board will enter into deliberative session and will issue a written decision within 30 days. The Board closed the hearing at 6:22 PM.

## **2. Stephanie Miller - 5 Third St (70129)**

Chair Ed Wilson opened the hearing at 6:24 PM by stating the name of the applicant, property location, parcel ID number.

Neither the applicant nor a representative was present. As the appellant was not present, Chair Wilson could not administer the oath to them or ask if they received a copy of the rules of procedure or had any questions about how the hearing would proceed.

Chair Wilson asked the Board members to disclose any conflicts of interest and/or ex parte communication. There was none.

As the applicant was not present, Sara Haskins, Delinquent Tax Collector, presented verbal testimony on their behalf. The tax bill is for a mobile home only no land that is in the mobile home park off Cochran Rd. The mobile home caught on fire in the evening off December 9, 2023. Police Chief Luneau has verified that the mobile home is no longer inhabitable. There are various years of delinquent taxes due on the property. Sara testified that she has no way to collect the taxes or place a lien on it as it is now destroyed. Sara requested abatement of taxes of \$1,062.76 in principal, interest & penalty for the tax year due to the statutory category taxes or charges upon real or personal property lost or destroyed during the tax year pursuant to Title 24 V.S.A § 1535(a)(5).

Duane Sprague shared testimony on behalf of the Listers that they visited the property and agree it is destroyed and uninhabitable.

Chair Wilson invited questions from the Board. There were none.

Chair Wilson explained that the Board will enter a deliberative session and will issue a written decision within 30 days. The Board closed the hearing at 6:26 PM.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

none

## **DELIBERATIVE SESSION**

The Board closed the hearings and entered deliberative session at 6:26 PM.

- **3031306 Canada Inc**

*Motion made by Donnie Blake to approve the abatement request of 3031306 Canada Inc- 1994 Sterling Valley Rd for \$3,154.03 in principal for the tax year 2023-2024 due to taxes or charges upon real or personal property lost or destroyed during the tax year pursuant to Title 24 V.S.A § 1535(a)(5). Motion seconded by Urban Martin. The abatement figure was calculated at the daily rate for 204 days. Motion carried (15/0).*

- **Stephanie Miller & Brandon Godfrey**

*Motion made by Richard Craig to approve the abatement request of Stephanie Miller & Brandon Godfrey- 5 Third St for \$1,062.76 in principal, penalty & interest for the tax years 2018-2024 due to taxes or charges upon real or personal property lost or destroyed during the tax year pursuant to Title 24 V.S.A § 1535(a)(5). Motion seconded by Shelly Nolan. Motion carried (15/0).*

*Motion made by Shelley Nolan to exit the deliberative session at 6:30 PM. Motion seconded by Judy Bickford. Motion carried (15/0).*

## **ADJOURN**

*Motion made by Don McDowell to adjourn. Motion seconded by Judy Bickford. Motion carried. (15/0)*

Meeting adjourned at 6:31 PM.

Submitted and filed this February 1, 2024.

Sara Haskins, Clerk

*Please note all minutes are in Draft form and are subject to approval at the next Board of Abatement meeting.*