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MINUTES: BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY MEETING OF AUGUST 22, 2019

The Board of Civil Authority of the Town of Morristown, notified and warned, met in the conference room at the Municipal Offices Building, 43 Portland Street in said town on Thursday, August 22, 2019 at 6:00 P.M.

BCA members present: Brian Kellogg, Darcie Abbene, Donald Blake, Eric Dodge, Edward Wilson, Monte Mason, Peg Demars, Shap Smith, Siri Rooney & Urban Martin. Clerk: Sara Haskins

Listers present: Duane Sprague & Paul Griswold

Appellant present: Penny Jones & Craig Myotte

- Edward Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.
- There were no changes or additions to the posted agenda.
- **Eric Dodge made a motion to adopt the rules of procedure for property tax assessment appeal hearings. Peg Demars seconded the motion. Motion passed. (10/0).**
- Sara Haskins administered oaths to the Board of Civil Authority members.
- Pursuant to Title 32 V.S.A. §4404(b) the Board considered the tax appeal of Morrisville Water & Light, aggrieved by the action of the Board of Listers on parcel ID# 80002 for electric transmission lines and poles located in the Town of Morristown.
 - Edward Wilson administered oaths to the Board of Listers and the appellant.
 - The Board of Listers and appellant were given copies of the approved rules of procedures for tax assessment appeals and asked if they had questions on the procedures.
 - There were no disclosures of conflicts of interest and ex parte communications.
 - Duane Sprague, on behalf of the Board of Morristown Listers introduced the property on appeal and described it as electric transmissions lines, equipment and poles throughout the Town of Morristown taxed under parcel ID # 80002 with a value of \$7,553,800.
 - Penny Jones testified on behalf of Morrisville Water & Light and presented an updated Morrisville Water & Light utility inventory list as evidence #1. Penny read a summary of the letter previously submitted by Morrisville Water & Light requesting a

tax appeal hearing. Morrisville Water & Light appeal the new value they were assessed at. She informed the BCA that the value was set by the State of Vermont using a formula of cost per mile that increases every year regardless if new assets or improvements accrue. Penny further explained that the State doesn't allow for true depreciation. The State capped the depreciation at 30% but Morrisville Water & Lights books have 65% of all the poles at full depreciation and she proposed 40% depreciation as a more accurate figure. Penny additionally reported that the 2018 assets calculated by the State of Vermont show an increase of \$418,000 whereas the actual increase was only \$83,000. Morrisville Water & Light requested that the Board of Listers set the value at \$6,435,800 and not use the figure given by the State of Vermont.

- Duane Sprague testified on behalf of the Morristown Board of Listers that the Morristown Listers did not change the value on this parcel but rather the State of Vermont did. They were instructed to use the State of Vermont's value from the electric utility inventory report and not to lower it during grievance. They furthered explained that there are two other utilities that have small properties in the Town. The Listers used the same standard of valuation of the figures sent from the State of Vermont to value those two utilities. Duane reported that neither of the other two utilities grieved the values.
 - The BCA members asked questions of both the appellant and the Board of Listers.
 - Chair Edward Wilson appointed an inspection committee made up of Eric Dodge, Urban Martin and Donald Blake.
 - The hearing was recessed and the date of September 17, 2019 at 6:00 PM was set to reconvene and hear the inspection committee report.
- **Upon motion by Shap Smith and seconded by Peg Demars the minutes of the February 21, 2019 meeting were approved. (11/0)**
 - The BCA preformed the bi-annual review of the voter checklist and confirmed the names to be challenged. **Donald Blake made a motion to instruct the Town Clerk to send out letters to the voters indicated on the challenge list and report the findings to the Secretary of State's Office by September 20, 2019. Shap Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed (11/0).**
 - Under other business Clerk Haskins reported recent election law changes that will impact the the BCA.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM upon motion by Peg Demars and seconded by Eric Doge.

Respectfully submitted and filed this 26th day of August 2019
Sara Haskins, Clerk- Board of Civil Authority

Please note all minutes are in draft form and are subject to approval at the next BCA meeting.