

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING**  
**MARIANNE MUNICIPAL BUILDING**  
**November 30, 2020**  
**7:05 PM-8:55 PM**

Attendance: Roscoe Tash Sr-1st Selectman, Arnold Knights Jr - 3rd Selectman, Sandra Tash -Tax Collector/Treasurer, Carrie Kester- Town Clerk

Guests: Joshua Morin (Hamlin Associates), Chris DeBeck, Luke Tash, Owen Smith, Arlin Shaw, Abel Shaw, Robert Whittier

Meeting was called to order just as soon as Butch arrived. Kirby is in quarantine. Hamlin Associates started out the meeting with saying that if the Town was going to do a complete new assessment the sooner they get started, the better! That would give them the winter to get the paperwork done. They will go through all the deeds, all the Tree Growth and other exemptions and be able to send out notices with an estimated value once each place has been visited. Hamlin Associates have their own computer system. They charge about \$60/assessment. There are 499 tax bills for Chester, totaling \$29,940 at that rate. Hamlin prints the tax bills. Joshua Morin said that he would like to get the values up to 100% of market, especially the lakefront lots. Hamlin Associates also processes any abatements that the Selectmen have approved for people to receive. Usually 60% of the tax revenue goes to the school budget.

It would be determined by the Board of Selectmen how often Hamlin Associates comes to the office. He said that for most towns it is once a month but there are a couple that are twice a year. He said that once the assessment is finished, the following years he will ride around town once a year. He also will have the building permits from the Planning Board.

During the assessment process they take measurements and a couple pictures of each place for the file. If people are uncomfortable with them going into their homes, he can arrange for a phone interview or even talk to them out in the driveway. He wants the residents of Chester to be comfortable with the process. As far as acreage goes, Hamlin's uses the historical acreage and then the deed.

Tree Growth plans should be completed every 10 years. If the plan is out of date, the resident will receive a letter stating they have 120 days or meet up with a \$500 fine. This information is given to the State and they enforce people being up to date. The Assessor should take care to make sure each plan is up to date. This information is gathered by a forester, which could cost up to \$1500. There is a penalty to take property out of a Tree Growth Plan once it has been assigned.

Both businesses and residents should be at market value. Fair across the board.

They will work hard to get this all done. The new tax commitment needs to be submitted by November 1, 2021. In light of that, it is going to be put on the March Town Warrant to postpone changing the municipal fiscal year until 2022.

Both Selectmen voted to hire Hamlin Associates, Inc. After the assessment is done, the cost is \$7,500/year to maintain and keep up to date.

They do make tax maps but we would need a Mylar printer.

It was confirmed that we will get rid of TRIO and use Hamlin Associates program. The program is free as long as Hamlin Associates is our Assessing Agent.

Rocky told me to draft a letter to go out to each residence informing them that Hamlin Associates, Inc. has been hired and to expect them to come do an assessment. It was also decided that Josh Morin would come to the office on January 13th to meet with whoever wants to make an appointment to discuss their tax bill with him. The Selectmen agreed that it all needs to be taken care of.

Joshua again said that this will be fair for everyone. Each place will have a property card and once it is done we can access their website and look at tax bills, property cards and maps. The maps, will of course, take longer than the rest of the process.

Another note was if a resident believes that some of their property is wetlands, this needs to be documented. A letter from a forester would work great and would be included if a Tree Growth Plan had been updated. Wetlands consist of land that is wet year round.

Joshua said that he would get a contract written up and sent to us in the next couple of days. He then took his absence.

Next, I thanked the Selectmen again for allowing us to hire 2 more teams to count ballots on November 3rd. We were out of here by 10:30PM and it went great.

New Business was next. I just wanted to mention that although Rocky had me call Danny Downs about getting sand for \$1/yard, Sheridan Smith is still charging \$10.75, per his contract.

Next, Robert Whittier presented a bill for replacing a culvert just across the tracks on Plywood Road. Rocky was in favor for paying it, viewing it as a driveway, whereas Butch felt like Plywood Road is an abandoned road and therefore the town should not foot that expense. Next month Kirby will have to decide.

Old Business was opening of the sealed bids on the town truck and 2 plows. Alan Cimon of Medway was awarded the bid.

Also, several residents wrote letters complaining about their taxes.

Next, Sandy presented the warrant and bank statement, etc. for signatures.

The Town Clerk did not have anything to present.

No public comments. We were just ready to adjourn when Rocky addressed the subject of vacation pay. They did not like it that I got a vacation check for unused vacation hours, like Sandy did in September. Going forward all vacation time must be used or lost. Also, if we take a Snow Day, the Selectmen would like if we had to use one of our Sick Time or Vacation Days. And as far as being closed when the Lincoln Office is closed, that doesn't apply anymore either. Sandy mentioned that they were closed both Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving Friday. Rocky said to put this subject on the December agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55PM.

The next Selectmen's Meeting will be on December 21, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie Kester  
Town Clerk