

Minutes of the work session of the Town Board of the Town of Durham held February 3, 2004 at the Town Building in Oak Hill, N.Y.

Present: Gary Hulbert - Supervisor
William A. Carr, Jr. – Councilman
Robert Elpel - Councilman
Linda Sutton – Councilwoman

Others: Charles G. Soderblom – Town Clerk
Gordon Bennett – Assessor
Wes Moore – Highway Superintendent

Recording Secretary: Chris Kohrs – Deputy Town Clerk

The Supervisor called the meeting to order at 7:37 P.M. with the Pledge to the Flag. Six people were present. Supervisor Hulbert welcomed new board member Jodi Wood.

The board reviewed the proposed subdivision for Baron and set a public hearing for February 17, 2004 at 7:30 p.m.

Due to weather, Tal Rappleyea could not be present however, he had called, and explained that the Schoharie Humane Society has decided to rescind their offer to accept the stray dogs. He has since contacted the Mid Hudson Humane Society of Menands and they have stated that they would accept the dogs for \$150.00 per dog and offered to assist us in the wording of the dog ordinance to aid in recouping the cost from the dog owner.

Gordon Bennett asked the board to adopt the senior citizen sliding scale that the county has adopted of \$16,000. He has reviewed the numbers and how they would affect the town overall and it is his findings that the impact would be less than one cent per thousand. Our current base is \$13,500 and the school districts of Cairo-Durham and Greenville have adopted \$14,500. **Mr. Carr made the motion seconded by Mr. Elpel that the town of Durham adopt a resolution for the sliding scale for senior exemption of \$16,000 the same as Greene County. All were in favor and the motion carried.**

Mr. Bennett reviewed the annual reassessment results with the board. The state has proposed that the following adjustments be made: residential +11%, commercial +2% and vacant land +3%. Mr. Bennett is recommending residential +8%, commercial +2%, vacant land +3%. If the town stays within 5% of the state recommendation, we are able to maintain our 100% evaluation. Mr. Bocklett asked how Mr. Bennett determined his percentages. Mr. Bennett explained that sales are used to arrive at percentages. The assessment is compared to the actual sale. He needs to allow for grievances, which are motivated by the tax roll that is prepared prior to grievance. Mr. Bennett also asked and received permission from the board to send impact notices to the tax base explaining the new assessments and how if everything stayed the same in 2005 what the tax amount would be. Alarik Skarstrom has been helping with the wording of the notice to enable

the owner to comprehend the information provided. The board requested to review a draft of the notice prior to it being sent. The mailing is estimated to cost \$700.00

Mr. Bennett explained that he would be holding open forum assessment meetings in each of the towns that he is the assessor. Each meeting is open to all residents regardless of where the meeting is held.

Mr. Bennett was asked to explain the county's position on annual reassessment. He explained that Frank Algozzine, Director of Real Property Tax Service, has not been in support of the annual assessment because of the way the county apportionment has changed over the years. The apportionment used to happen more uniformly between annual reassessment towns and non-reassessment towns. Mr. Bennett stated that the county uses the town's assessment roll and it is his job to do what is in the best interest of the town and it is the board's job to decide on how that roll is to be produced. He has put forth a program to the board and together they have arrived at a decision that is in the best interest of the town of Durham. It does influence the apportionment of the county taxes - those who participate end up paying more however, those who don't hurt themselves in the annual equalization rate and Star exemptions. There are fourteen towns in the county eight of which participate in annual reassessment.

Mr. Carr made a motion seconded by Mr. Elpel that the assessor be permitted to proceed with the impact mailing once the board has approved the notice, all were in favor and the motion carried.

Mr. Bennett asked the board for a statement of support for his annual reevaluation procedure to show the public that he is not acting on his own but rather with the support of the board. **Mr. Carr made a motion seconded by Mrs. Sutton that the board support the assessor in the annual reevaluation of property in the Town of Durham to assure that all assessments are made in a timely and equitable manner with a view to achieving a 100% equalization rate within the town, all were in favor and motion carried.**

The board members received copies of the new Dog Housing Law.

Discussion on the Noise Ordinance was postponed due to poor attendance attributed to hazardous weather conditions.

The board approved the voucher for the new Dump trucks.

Three applications have been received for the cleaning position. After review of all applications, we hired the top applicant who will start this week.

Mr. Carr then moved to adjourn. Mrs. Sutton seconded the motion and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:38 P.M.

Minutes approved: _____ Chris Kohrs, Deputy Town Clerk