

DRAFT

Minutes of 4/19/2010

Randolph Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: 4/19/2010

Time: 1PM

Location: Randolph Town Hall Public Meeting Room

Attending: Michael Penrod, Gary Champey, Horace Puglisi, Sheila Jacobs, Carol Flint

Guests: Pat French, Don Sweester, Polly Frankenburg, Linda Nitzel

Joe Voci , Jim Tucker

1. Introductions by Michael Penrod
2. This meeting is intended to be an educational meeting and let the Lister's Office respond to well thought out questions brought forth by the Budget Committee. It is our hope that these questions lead the way to a better understanding of the work that the Lister's office and Assessor do in the Town of Randolph.

Questions & Responses

- **What is the history of the assessor position and lister positions in Randolph?**
 - Lister's fall under guidelines from the State of Vermont
 - Pat French was a lister 1981 – 1985 – after Town reappraisal in 1985 Pat approached the Select board and began a part-time position
 - The Select board approved a position for Assessor and Pat applied and was hired for the job
 - In 1998 it was the recommendation by the Town Manager to make the Assessor position be a Town employee position-

- Lister's have a handbook from the State of Vermont clearly defining their roles and duties
 - Don advised that new statues from State of Vermont happen frequently such as Act 60 and Act 68 – new bill coming called H776 that will require the lister's to track how many renters on a particular piece of property –
 - The Assessor position was two thirds appraiser one-half paper work in the beginning – currently Pat advised due to the amount of paperwork and track it is one-quarter Appraiser and three-quarters paperwork.
 - Act 60 & 68 have created this increase in paperwork in tracking nonresidential and residential property on our Grand List
- **How and when do the assessor and listers collaborate?**
 - Listers & Assessor have standard meetings - meetings are warned and agenda is posted on the Town of Randolph website
 - Communication within the department is done via phone and email when questions occur
 - Pat advised that the Listers are his supervisor and they are elected officials of the town
- **What do the listers do in their job function that is different than the job function of the assessor?**
 - It is the Listers responsibility to sign off on the Grand List, not only sign off but understand the Grand List and how it came to be and that it is accurate –
 - The Assessor puts together the Grand List for the Listers to approve
 - More focus has been on education for the Listers – they have a lot of seminars available to them to understand their position and support the Assessor - Don has recently attended a meeting, as Chair, that gave guidelines, order of events monthly and during the year that he could follow in his role for the Town.
 - Pat receives daily lists from the State of Vt and it is up to him to input that list and make necessary updates to our Grand List and keep the Listers advised.

- **What types of seminars do the Lister's participate in and how often? Have these seminars had a positive impact on the department?**
 - In 2009 Linda took a week course learning to access, information regarding comps, how to measure structures, advised she can now apply this knowledge to her position.
 - All attend new lister orientation
 - Attend offered by VT League of Cities & Towns
 - 2010 Lister's will attend more seminars to help in position

- **Is there certain software or EXCEL programs used by the Assessor and/or listers?**
 - Software from Numeric System
 - Pat uses software system from State of VT
 - Advised these programs take much time to keep updated and keeping up on the programs is crucial to our revenue

- **What "long range" goals - 3-5 years – do the listers and assessor have either for their department or for Randolph?**
 - Advised when elected Lister's do not have any knowledge of position requirements
 - To utilize New England Municipal Resource Center
 - UVM offers seminars – review if any would help
 - Goal to take 2 courses each year – each lister
 - Long range goal to establish updated job description for Assessor
 - Create information for new Lister's as they are elected
 - Attend seminars to benefit position
 - Work closely with all departments

- **What does the assessor view as his role in our revenue stream:**
 - Revenue stream this position creates is critical
 - Determines fair market value & revenue pilot properties (payment in lieu of taxes)
 - Creates Grand List
 - Town has at least two of these types of those proprieties in pilot program

- Ratio Study
 - State does study yearly
 - CLA – Education tax purposes
 - Tracks sales
 - Appeals
- **What do the listers and assessor perceive as their relationship with the Select board and Town Manager? Do the listers and assessor perceive specific needs that can be met by the Select Board and Town Manager?**
 - The Select board determines how much money the Listers & Assessor receive
 - By State law the Lister's are the supervisor of the Assessor
 - Important to have positive relationships with the Select board, Town Manager and Town Treasurer/Clerk
 - Pat gave us a hand out prepared by Attorney Charles Merriman Attorney (attached to this notes) defining roles according to VT law
- **What is the opinion of the listers and assessor on the pros and cons of outsourcing?**
 - Don advised some Towns do outsource and he has talked with them – Don gave examples of Towns that had done this –
 - Budget Comm. – asked if Pat had to take a leave of absence –what would happen with this position?
 - This deters from the quality, continuity and public relations if Randolph were to outsource – Pat knows the history of the town, completes all studies
- **How does the assessor value his role in the larger scheme of things in Randolph and the contribution he makes to the town?**
 - Don advised he values Pat and the fairness he brings to the position
 - Pat does a great job with reports which help to bring the income to the Town by completing the ratio study and duties stated in above question
 - Assessment knowledge to the Town

- **What do the listers and assessor view as the strengths and some weaknesses in their job performance?**
 - Strengths were defined as community involvement –
 - The listers are involved in the Town and community events from 911 Co-Coordinator, Thrift Shop, Historical Society, - and care a great deal about the Town with strong community involvement and ties.
 - The challenges at this time are the relationship with other departments during the last year and a half

- **There has been discussion as the number of weekly hours needed for the Assessor to perform his functions. Can the listers provide a solid argument for maintaining the current Assessor's? Are the listers able to assume some of the functions of the Assessor? Should the Select Board review ALL management positions as to their job description and weekly hours?**
 - The number of hours are suited to the tasks that are done by the Assessor and the revenue that the position brings to the Town

- **Would the listers and Assessor Examine the RFP response and evaluate whether or not this possible change has more or less merit than the current model?**
 - Horace will provide a copy of the RFP response from Spencer B Potter – Vermont Municipal Assessor
 - RFP suggestion came from a December meeting from the Budget Committee to gain information regarding this position – it was clearly only to gain information

- **Are there any jobs or tasks currently being done that is not part of the Lister's office?**
 - Pat advised that each year he helps with the property tax bills – there is a system in place that is crucial it is adhered to in the preparation of the tax bills to get to the property owners – Linda supported this from her experience as prior Assistant Town Clerk/Treasurer – this is an area that they all work well together in completing this task

- **What they feel the needs of the department are to benefit the Town**
 - Pat has developed a good relationship with Realtors, Attorney's that do the title search, and tax payers when they need information

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM -

