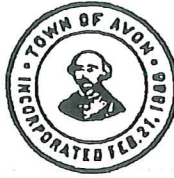


BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Steven P. Rose, Chairman
Eric S. Beckerman, Clerk
Jason L. Suzor, Associate

Gregory S. Enos
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Town of Avon Massachusetts



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BOARD OF SELECTMEN
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2021
6:30 P.M.

TOWN OF AVON
2021 NOV 19 A 11:20
TOWN CLERK

Members Present: Steven P. Rose, Chairman
Eric S. Beckerman, Clerk
Jason L. Suzor, Associate

Others Present: Gregory S. Enos, Town Administrator
Shanna M. Faro, Executive Assistant
Joseph S. Lalli, Esq., Town Counsel
Paul Sullivan, Principal Assessor
Rachel Humphries, Crave Mead LLC (via videoconference)

Board of Assessors: Warren Bruce Lane, Chair
Cynthia Bernasconi, Member
Jonathon Madore, Member

Chairman Rose called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with all members present. He announced that this meeting of the Board of Selectmen is being conducted via a hybrid method. The public may attend the Selectmen meetings in-person or may continue to participate via remote Zoom access. Until further notice, in-person attendees, who are not vaccinated, will be recommended to wear a mask. Chairman Rose reminded the viewing audience that people who would like to view this meeting while in progress may do so by watching local cable on Channel 9 or joining the Zoom link for the videoconference. Links to watch the recorded meeting will be available on the Avon Cable Access website www.avontv.org.

Town Counsel Joseph Lalli led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Participation

Mr. Ken Lundgren of 42 Granite Street addressed the Board about a problem he is having with his neighbors regarding their two large dogs. Mr. Lundgren stated that the dogs are constantly barking, creating excessive noise. Mr. Lundgren stated that when he confronted his neighbors about this problem, it was met with hostility and harassment. Chairman Rose requested a five-minute recess to speak with Town Counsel regarding this matter. Upon his return, Chairman Rose informed Mr. Lundgren this was not the correct forum for this discussion and to contact the Town Administrator and the Police Chief privately regarding this matter.

Tax Classification Hearing

Mr. Sullivan and the Board of Assessors appeared before the Board to commence the Tax Classification Hearing for Fiscal Year 2022. Mr. Beckerman read the legal notice which was posted on the town's website. Mr. Sullivan introduced himself as Principal Assessor and read a brief presentation.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the purpose of the Tax Classification Hearing was for the Board of Selectmen to determine the allocation of the local tax burden to be borne by the four classes of real property for Fiscal Year 2022. Mr. Sullivan stated that the Selectmen must adopt a residential factor which is used to determine the percentage of the tax levy to apply to each class of real and personal property. After this is completed, the Board of Assessors applies these percentages to the individual property classes. Mr. Sullivan stated that the total taxable value for Fiscal Year 2022 is \$1,019,626,085, which is historic in that this is the first year the town has reached one billion dollars in taxable value. He stated that the total valuation from Fiscal Year 2021 to Fiscal Year 2022 increased by 1.09%. Mr. Sullivan stated that it was worth noting that residential values are rising, and the increase is from new construction, minor data changes and market demand for housing. This is caused by many buyers are overbidding for properties, as well as stabilized mortgage rates. Mr. Sullivan stated that commercial values stabilized over the prior year. Mr. Sullivan stated that industrial values increased, affected by sales, new construction, and renovations. Also, noteworthy, was that personal property values increased slightly. This is due to limited growth in utility values and wireless telephone inventory values.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the increase in value, mainly from the state mandated interim revaluation of all properties, and new growth in each of the various classes, helps the FY2022 tax rate for all classes of property. With additional value, especially within the residential, commercial, and industrial classes, this provides a natural shift that helps ease the tax burden. The town has reached over a billion dollars in value. Mr. Sullivan stated that regarding the taxably levy for Fiscal Year 2022, the total amount to be raised is \$22,069,907.

Mr. Sullivan stated that for Fiscal Year 2022, the Board of Assessors is recommending a factor of 1.35%. By choosing this factor, the tax rate for each class decreases by \$0.51 for residential and \$2.37 for commercial and industrial. Mr. Sullivan stated that there is no open space discount as the Town has no land that has been classified as such. Mr. Sullivan stated that since the Town has very few multi-family income-producing properties and no second (seasonal) homes, the Board of Assessors does not recommend adopting the Residential Exemption for Fiscal Year 2022.

Mr. Enos requested to provide the Board with supplemental tax rate information. Mr. Enos stated that the levy amount for 2022 is \$22,069,907, where the levy limit is \$22,632,233, providing an excess capacity (non-debt) in the amount of \$562,326. Mr. Enos stated that last year the average single family tax bill on a house valued around \$338,411 at a residential tax rate of \$16.78 was \$5,679. Mr. Enos stated that this year, the average single-family house was valued around \$391,703. Chairman Rose asked Mr. Sullivan what the average tax bill would be this year based on the increased housing assessment. Mr. Sullivan deferred on giving an actual estimate as there are multiple factors which contribute to a house's value such as renovations made on the house, the values of neighboring houses, and other improvements.

Chairman Rose opened the hearing for discussion. Marc Roy of Roy Elevators approved of the 1.35% factor recommended by the Board of Assessors. Malik and Shannon Sabree of 10 Lawson Street recommended a factor of 1.4%. They expressed their concern as a family of young children of the raising tax rate for residents of the town, especially of the elementary school seemingly reaching maximum capacity for students. Bob Costa of B.C. Tent & Awning agreed with the Board of Assessors recommendation of 1.35%. He stated that commercial property owners cover approximately 60% of the

town's budget. He stated that a \$700 tax increase for a homeowner is most likely a \$7,000 increase for a business owner. Rick Jordan of Blanchard Street requested a higher tax factor. Frank Staffier of Stratford Avenue urged the Selectmen to stop spending money on things the town cannot afford. He stated that he is retired and on a fixed income and the constant spending impacts both the residential and commercial classes. Chairman Rose closed the public comment period of the hearing.

Mr. Beckerman made a motion to approve the recommendation of the Board of Assessors and adopt a Small Commercial Exemption of up to 10% to qualifying commercial (Class 3) properties. Mr. Suzor seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Beckerman voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Rose voted aye. The motion carried.

With the public comment period of the hearing over, the Board took a vote on the Tax Classification for Fiscal Year 2022. Mr. Beckerman made a motion to set the tax rate for Fiscal Year 2022 at a factor of 1.38%. Mr. Suzor seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Beckerman voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Rose voted aye. The motion carried.

Mr. Staffier expressed his disappointment with the vote by stating he did not feel the Board was fair to the residents of the town. The Tax Classification Hearing for Fiscal Year 2022 closed at 8:45 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Beckerman made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of October 27, 2021 (Workshop Session) as written. Mr. Suzor seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mr. Beckerman made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of October 28, 2021 (Regular Session) as written. Mr. Suzor seconded the motion. The motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

COVID-19 Updates

Mr. Enos informed the Board that the FDA has approved the Pfizer vaccine for children ages 5 to 11 years old. The vaccine will be available at the pediatrician's office and local pharmacies.

NEW BUSINESS

One Day Special Alcohol Permits

The Board reviewed a request from Crave Mead LLC for twelve One Day Special Alcohol licenses for a temporary Winter Market at 20 C Stockwell Drive from November 26, 2021 through December 19, 2021. Rachel Humphries and Louis Rocheleau from Crave Mead LLC introduced themselves to the Board. Ms. Humphries informed the Board that Crave Mead is an alcohol made from fermented honey. Ms. Humphries stated that at the Holiday Market she would be sampling five different types of mead in one-ounce glasses as well as selling bottles of her product. Chairman Rose requested clarification from Town Counsel as to whether the company would be able to sell bottled alcoholic beverages without a package store license as the One Day Special license specifically states that consumption of the alcohol must be on the premises. Mr. Lalli stated that he would contact the ABCC for further clarification. Mr. Beckerman made a motion to table this matter to the meeting of November 18, 2021. Mr. Suzor seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Temporary Sign Permit

Mr. Beckerman made a motion to approve the Temporary Sign Permit for the Tanzania School Foundation for one 30' x 3.5' vinyl banner on the front of 20 C Stockwell Drive advertising a pop-up Holiday Shop from November 21, 2021 through December 23, 2021 and one 7' feather banner on the property during the event. Mr. Suzor seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Street Opening Permit

The Board unanimously voted to agree with the recommendation of the Assistant DPW Director and deny the Street Opening Permit from Eversource for 13 Foster Street for new gas installation as the road is still under the five-year moratorium.

Announcements

Chairman Rose announced that the winter parking ban will be in effect from November 15, 2021 through April 15, 2022. No on-street parking is allowed. In additions, residents are requested to move items such as basketball hoops from the road.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Enos stated that Veteran's Day is Thursday, November 11, 2021. Unfortunately, the town's Veteran's Agent Dale Kurtz is not available on that day. However, the town will do something later to honor its veterans.

Adjournment

At 8:50 p.m., Mr. Beckerman made a motion to adjourn the regular session. Mr. Suzor seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Beckerman voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Rose voted aye. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Shanna M. Faro

Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

1. November 4, 2021 Meeting Agenda
2. Tax Classification PowerPoint Presentation
3. October 27, 2021 Meeting Minutes
4. October 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes
5. One Day Special Alcohol Licenses for Crave Mead LLC
6. Temporary Sign Permit for Holiday Market