

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Eric S. Beckerman, Chairman
Jason L. Suzor, Sr., Clerk
Shannon M. Coffey, Associate

Jonathan L. Beder
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

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AVON TOWN CLERK
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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN & BOARD OF ASSESSORS
WORKSHOP MEETING
MARY MCDERMOTT MEETING ROOM
NOVEMBER 13, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Eric S. Beckerman, Chairman
Jason L. Suzor, Sr., Clerk
Shannon M. Coffey, Associate

Others Present: Jonathan L. Beder, Town Administrator
Shanna Faro, Human Resources Coordinator
Debra Morin, Finance Director
David Golden, Associate Regional Assessor, Regional Resource Group, Inc.

Board of Assessors: Warren Bruce Lane, Chairman
Jonathon Madore, Clerk
Sam Kamel, Member

Chairman Beckerman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with all members present. He announced that this joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Assessors 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. Mr. Beckerman reminded the viewing audience that people who would like to view this meeting while in progress may join the Zoom link for the videoconference.

Tax Classification Hearing

Mr. Golden and the Board of Assessors appeared before the Board to commence the Tax Classification Hearing for Fiscal Year 2024. Chairman Beckerman read the legal notice which was posted on the town's bulletin board and website. Mr. Golden introduced himself as the contracted Principal Assessor for the town. Mr. Golden began a PowerPoint presentation on the Tax Rate Classification for Fiscal Year 2024 as prepared by the Board of Assessors.

Mr. Golden 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 2024. Mr. Golden 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. Golden stated that the total taxable value for Fiscal Year 2024 is \$1,147,498,063.00. He stated that the total valuation from Fiscal Year 2023 to Fiscal Year 2024 increased by 0.73%. Mr. Golden stated that it was worth noting that residential values have stabilized, which stems from a slowdown in new

construction and renovations, as well as shifting market demand for housing. Mr. Golden stated that commercial values have been stable for three years. Mr. Golden stated that industrial values have stabilized. Also noteworthy, is that personal property values have increased slightly. Mr. Golden stated that this is largely due to booms in personal property growth for centrally valued telecom companies and public utilities.

Mr. Golden stated that regarding the taxably levy for Fiscal Year 2023, the total amount to be raised is \$22,450,243.00. Mr. Golden stated that for Fiscal Year 2024, the Board of Assessors is recommending a factor of 1.42%. By choosing this factor, the tax rate increases by \$0.42 (from \$13.62 in Fiscal Year 2023 to \$14.04 in Fiscal Year 2024) for residential and \$0.84 (from \$27.00 in Fiscal Year 2023 to \$27.84 in Fiscal Year 2024) for commercial and industrial.

Mr. Golden stated that there is no open space discount as the Town has no land that has been classified as such. Therefore, the Board need not take any action on this question.

Mr. Golden 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 2024.

Mr. Golden stated that a Small Commercial Exemption of up to 10% may be granted to qualifying commercial (Class 3) properties if the property is valued less than \$1,000,000, all the businesses occupying the property have 10 or fewer employees on average, the building is fully occupied (no vacancies), and any savings from this exemption are available only to commercial properties and the cost would be borne within the commercial (Class 3) and Industrial (Class 4). Mr. Golden informed the Board that the town does currently have qualifying commercial properties which would qualify for this exemption. Mr. Golden stated that 19 companies in town qualify for the Small Commercial Exemption and 14 of those companies have filed an application for this exemption for Fiscal Year 2024. Using the maximum of 10%, the total exemption amount for those properties would be \$336,618 in value. Mr. Golden stated that the Board of Assessors does recommend the Selectmen grant a Small Commercial Exemption for Fiscal Year 2024.

Mr. Golden gave a few examples of what the tax rate would look like for each property class using different factors to generate options for the Board of Selectmen's decision.

Chairman Beckerman opened up the meeting for questions and comments. Selectman Suzor had no questions. Ms. Coffey requested the Board consider a factor of 1.43% to help residents a little more with their tax bills. Mr. Robert Costa from B.C. Tent informed the Board that he was in attendance representing the Avon Industrial Park Association. He reminded the Board that the goal is to reduce the disparity between the residential and commercial classes for the tax burden. He stated that it seems as if the commercial class will take on a bigger tax burden this year. He stated the Board of Selectmen should be cautious when spending money and it seems as if several town employees are getting substantial pay increases. Mr. John Costa of Katherine's Way agreed with Mr. Robert Costa's comment regarding town employees' salaries. He stated that many residents are on fixed incomes and cannot afford large tax increases. Mr. Frank Staffier of Stratford Avenue agreed with Mr. John Costa. Mr. Golden informed the Board and the audience that both residential and commercial classes will most likely see their taxes raised by 3-4% for Fiscal Year 2024. Ms. Sabree of Lawson Street requested the Board of Selectmen look into regionalization of several departments to cut spending costs. Mr. Beder informed the Board and Ms. Sabree that he will look into organizing a Regionalization Committee in the spring. With no further comments or questions, the Board decided it was time to vote on the Tax Classification for Fiscal Year 2024.

Mr. Suzor made a motion to not adopt the Residential Exemption for Fiscal Year 2024. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. The motion passed. All were in favor.

Mr. Suzor made a motion to approve the Small Commercial Exemption for Fiscal Year 2024. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mr. Suzor made a motion to set the tax rate for Fiscal Year 2024 at a factor of 1.42%. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The Tax Classification Hearing for Fiscal Year 2024 concluded after the vote of the Board of Selectmen.

Adjournment

At 7:10 p.m., Mr. Suzor made a motion to adjourn the Workshop Session. Ms. Coffey seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Coffey voted aye. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Chairman Beckerman voted aye.

Respectfully submitted,



Shanna M. Faro
Executive Assistant

List of Documents

1. November 13, 2023 Meeting Agenda
2. Tax Rate Classification for Fiscal Year 2024 Presentation