

SOMERSET COUNTY BOARD OF TAXATION
27 Warren Street, 4th Floor
Somerville, NJ

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
May 2, 2016 - Reorganization Meeting

The May of 2016 Annual Reorganization Meeting of the Somerset County Board of Taxation was held at the Board of Taxation offices on May 2nd, 2016, beginning at 12:00 PM. The meeting had been advertised in accordance with State Law; upon roll call, President Lore, Vice President Rosen and Commissioners Eader, Marano and Pappas were present. Tax Administrator Vance and Assistant Tax Administrator Guttschall were also present. The following matters were discussed.

REORGANIZATION OF THE TAX BOARD

Administrator Vance called the meeting to order and asked for nominations for Tax Board President and Vice President for the year May of 2016 through April 30, 2017.

John Lore was nominated to serve as President; the nomination was made by Commissioner Eader and seconded by Commissioner Pappas. Upon roll call vote, John Lore was elected unanimously to serve as President of the Tax Board for the coming year, through April 30th of 2017.

Gail Rosen was nominated to serve as Vice-President; the nomination was made by Commissioner Pappas and seconded by President Lore. Upon roll call, Gail Rosen was elected unanimously to serve as Vice President for the coming year, through April 30th of 2017.

RESOLUTIONS

The following Resolutions were adopted unanimously by the members of the Board of Taxation:

Resolution No. 2016-1: Establishing meeting dates for the period of June 2016 through April of 2017, setting the second Tuesday of each month at noon as the day and time for all meetings and establishing the Board Offices at 27 Warren Street on Somerville as the meeting location.

Resolution No. 2016-2: Stipulating that the Rules of the Somerset County Board of Taxation are the same as prescribed by the Division of Taxation and by the New Jersey Tax Court.

Resolution No. 2016-3: Appointing Robert M. Vance, Tax Board Administrator, as custodian of all Public Records of the Board of Taxation.

Resolution No. 2016-4: Establishing that the Ratio of Assessed to True Value for all real property in the County of Somerset shall be 100% in accordance with Chapter 51, PL of 1960 and NJSA 54:4-2.27.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the April 12th, 2016 meeting were submitted by the administrator to the Commissioners for their approval. Commissioner Eader moved that they be approved, seconded by Commissioner Marano. The roll was called and the minutes were approved as submitted, unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE: None received

OLD BUSINESS

1. The administrator reviewed the current appeal counts with the commissioners and the assessors present. As appeal filings for towns undergoing reassessments during 2015 for the current year would remain open until 4:30 that afternoon, Administrator Vance stated that these figures should be very close to finalized, but minor changes may occur. The figures discussed showed a 30% decline from the prior year, following a 22% decline from 2014. The administrator stated that the decline could be in part attributable to some limited economic recovery, as appeal volume was trending downward in many counties, but he also stated that the work done by the annually reassessing districts was also to be recognized as it has a demonstrated history of reducing appeal volumes in those towns. The Commissioners acknowledged the hard work of Somerset's assessors and thanked them for this.
2. The administrator reported that the Trust Fund has a current balance of approximately \$473,273, including \$22,405 in appeal filing fees received to date in 2016.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Administrator Vance reported that appeal hearings for the month of May would include the Boroughs of Raritan, Somerville and South Bond Brook along with the Township of Montgomery, all on May 10th. These cases would be heard by Commissioner Pappas. Discussion followed concerning scheduling the balance of appeal hearings through June of 2016. The administrator indicated that all appeal hearings should be completed by the end of June, including the proposed adjournment hearing date of June 28th.
2. The administrator indicated that applications for annual reassessments had been submitted by Assessor Ed Kerwin for his 6 towns within Somerset County, including Bedminster, Bernardsville, Far Hills, Peapack and Gladstone, Warren and Watchung. He reported that he had reviewed the applications and found them to be in good order. The commissioners directed the administrator to mark the applications as approved and to forward them along to the Division of Taxation for final review and approval.
3. The administrator gave a brief report on the new Farmland Assessment training course being given by the State, which would be mandatory for any assessors with Qualified

Farmland parcels within their districts. The first session occurred at Monmouth County on April 27th and was well attended. New information conveyed at that meeting was limited but the discussions between the assessors and personnel from the Division of Taxation, the State Forester's office and the Department of Agriculture were useful nonetheless. The next seminar date will be in September at the Duke Farms Estate in Hillsborough.

4. The retirement of Diane Vafides, who served as a Tax Analyst for the Board of Taxation for over 20 years, was acknowledged by the administrator and all present. It was agreed that she had served the board well and that she would be missed by all. President Lore asked the Administrator to prepare a resolution acknowledging Diane's long service to the board.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No comments were offered by any of the attendees.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:34 PM.