

1 SOMERSET COUNTY BOARD OF TAXATION
2 27 Warren Street, 4th Floor
3 Somerville, NJ
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5 MINUTES OF THE MEETING
6 September 13th, 2016 – Regular Meeting
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8 The August of 2016 regular monthly meeting of the Somerset County Board of Taxation was held at the
9 Board of Taxation offices on August 9th, 2016 starting at 12:05 PM. The meeting had been advertised in
10 accordance with State Law; upon roll call, President Lore, Vice President Rosen and Commissioner Eader
11 were present. Commissioners Marano and Pappas arrived shortly after the roll call was completed. Tax
12 Administrator Robert Vance and Assistant Tax Administrator Dawn Guttschall were also present. The
13 following matters were discussed.
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16 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
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18 The minutes of the August 9th, 2016 Regular Meeting were submitted by the administrator to the
19 Commissioners for their approval. Approval of the minutes was moved by Commissioner Eader and
20 seconded by Vice President Rosen. The roll was called and the minutes for that meeting were approved
21 by all present.
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24 CORRESPONDENCE:
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- 26 1. Administrator Vance informed the commissioners of email correspondence between the tax
27 board offices, assistant Somerset County Counsel Carl Taylor, Esq., and a property owner in
28 Manville Borough, which was an ongoing situation.
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- 30 2. Administrator Vance informed the commissioners that he had received approvals from the
31 Division of Taxation of all submitted Applications for Annual Reassessments for the
32 upcoming tax year of 2017.
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- 34 3. The administrator provided a copy of a letter he had received from the Administrator in the
35 Borough of Manville, regarding an evening meeting he had attended on August 8th with the
36 Manville Borough Council and members of the public. He discussed the recently completed
37 reassessment with all present and had answered questions from the audience at that time.
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40 OLD BUSINESS:
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- 42 1. Reassessment Districts: Monthly reports on the progress of annual reassessments had been
43 received from all active districts in the county. The administrator has reviewed these and
44 found them to be satisfactory.
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- 46 2. The current balance In the Trust Account was reported to be \$448,889.68.
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NEW BUSINESS:

- 55 1. The administrator provided a copy of a Compliance Plan prepared by Assessor Glenn Stives,
56 which was intended to address values of properties in Class 4C, (apartments), within the
57 Borough of Raritan. Administrator Vance explained that capitalization rates for such
58 properties had been showing significant decline recently, as market values of these
59 properties had been rapidly rising. The assessments on these properties warranted an
60 adjustment to reflect this reality, in order to ensure that such properties bore their fair
61 share of the local tax burden. He recommended approval of the proposed Compliance Plan
62 to the board. On a motion made by commissioner Marano and seconded by Vice President
63 Rosen, the board unanimously approved the Compliance Plan application as submitted by
64 Mr. Stives.
65
- 66 2. The administrator informed the commissioners that he has been seeking the assistance of
67 the D.A.G. in filing a petition with the Tax Court for a correction of errors regarding a
68 property located in the Borough of Watchung. This discourse has been ongoing for an
69 extended period of time, but no resolution of the matter has yet occurred.
70
- 71 3. Administrator Vance informed the commissioners that he will be attending a county
72 employee retirement dinner, at which he will speak briefly on behalf of Diane Vafides, who
73 retired from service with this tax board office in May of 2016, having served for 22 years.
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- 75 4. The Administrator told the commissioners that Tax Analyst Agnieszka Sobkowicz will be
76 starting her last two required courses for attaining her CTA designation, with the first
77 session scheduled at Rutgers on September 20th. She had completed the first two courses
78 prior to starting her position with the tax board.
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- 80 5. The commissioners were advised by Administrator Vance that rollback hearings are now
81 scheduled for the morning of September 21st, 2016, starting at 10 AM in our hearing room.
82 The number of matters which will require hearings is yet to be determined.
- 83 6. The administrator and Assistant Administrator Guttschall advised the commissioners that
84 the purchase of new printers for the tax board offices had been completed. The total
85 charge for all three printers was \$1,406, well below the board authorized limit of \$3,000.
86 The new machines were installed by county technical services and all were working well.
87

88 OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

89 During the open session, Mrs. Maria Janucik, a property owner in both Hillsborough Township
90 and Manville Borough who has recently submitted a number of OPRA requests and who has also
91 appealed her property assessments previously, was offered a seat in front of the commissioners and

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96 given the opportunity to air her grievances. Over the next 45 minutes, she discussed several issues. She
97 first complained that she wants the names of all parties who are the subject of any discussion at board
98 meetings to appear in our published monthly meeting minutes. Administrator Vance informed her that
99 he does not always do this out of respect for the privacy of the individuals involved. Ms. Janucik advised
100 Mr. Vance that she would like her name to appear in the minutes. She then asked who pays for the
101 retirement dinner for county employees, discussed earlier in that day's meeting. President Lore
102 informed her that the County of Somerset does this. When she was not satisfied with this information,
103 President Lore informed her that she could make further inquiry to the Board of Chosen Freeholders, as
104 this dinner is sponsored by the Freeholders and is not a tax board function.

105 Ms. Janucik then indicated that she was missing a letter she had asked about, which was
106 identified by her to be a letter from Manville Assessor Glenn Stives to the Administrator, which she said
107 was a cover letter for an AFR-A form. Administrator Vance indicated that he would try to find what she
108 needed and would get this to her, if was located.

109 Ms. Janucik then proceeded to discuss a number of issues which had been previously raised at a
110 hearing regarding the assessment of a dwelling she owns in Hillsborough Township. These issues
111 included misunderstandings between herself, the Hillsborough Tax Assessor and the Hillsborough
112 municipal offices concerning whether this home was located in a zone labelled as II, for Light Industrial,
113 or as I1, also Light Industrial. She stated that the zone label, as it appeared on her record card, differed
114 from the zone label as it appeared on the Hillsborough Zoning Map. She stated that she has a three
115 family dwelling in Hillsborough, which she has owned since the 1940s and that the home predated
116 Hillsborough's zoning ordinance. Administrator Vance informed her that, regardless of the zoning labels
117 appearing in various places, the property is apparently located in a light industrial zone and should be
118 valued with this fact considered. At the time of her appeal hearing, the issue of the assessed valuation
119 of her property was not heard due to her simple refusal to permit the tax assessor to conduct an
120 inspection of the property. The commissioners affirmed for her that neither the assessor nor the tax
121 board have any authority over municipal zoning.

122 After a lengthy discussion that addressed a number of issues, commissioner Marano asked Ms.
123 Janucik to try to identify to the tax board what they might be able to do to assist her. She was not able
124 to articulate what she was seeking, and the discussion was closed.

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126 As there was no further comment, the meeting was adjourned by all commissioners present at 1:15 PM.