TOWN OF SALEM
BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 13, 2021 – 9:00 A.M.
SALEM TOWN OFFICE BUILDING, CONFERENCE ROOM 2

The meeting was moved to Conference Room 1 for proper physical distancing

**PRESENT**
Robert, M. Green, Chairman
Debra Gernhardt
Dianne Woronik

**ABSENT**
none

**CALL TO ORDER**
Chairman Green called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and recited the legal notice as published on the Town website on February 5, 2021. The deadline was extended by two days to coincide hours of the Town Hall.

1. **To hear and possibly take action on assessment appeals for real and personal property listed on the October 1, 2020 Grand List. Appeals will be heard by appointment only. Valid appellants were notified by mail.**

   **Real Estate Appeal of Randy & Kathleen Augustitus, 110 Rathbun Hill Road, List No. 29**
   Chairman Green swore in Randy & Kathleen Augustitus. Ms. Augustitus stated that their assessment increased by approximately 15% and presented comparable properties in the town. Their home was constructed in 1600 and, while they have obtained the necessary building permits for the bedroom and bathroom renovations, they have not yet begun the work.
   **Decision:** The Board Members will speak with the Assessor regarding the reasoning behind the increase and conduct a site visit to confirm the status of the renovations.

   **Personal Property Appeal of Gabriel Hardy, List No. 493044**
   Chairman Green swore in Gabriel Hardy. Mr. Hardy stated that he did not file a Personal Property Declaration and understood that it was not under the jurisdiction of the Board to reduce or waive the penalty. A rough appraisal and comparable backhoes and excavators were presented. Both pieces of equipment were gifted to him.
   **Decision:** The Board Members agreed to visit the site to inspect the equipment.

   **Real Estate Appeal of Susan Coffee, 365 Old Colchester Road, List No. 1076**
   Chairman Green swore in Susan Coffee. Ms. Coffee questioned the increase in the assessment of the property by approximately 60%. It was explained that, in order to qualify for farmland status, PA490 forms for both the forest and farming land must be submitted. Supporting
documents for the farmland, reflecting that the land is being utilized as an income-producing farm and a plot plan indicating the area that is being utilized for farming, must also be submitted. Two separate farms may utilize one piece of property and one application may be submitted with two lease agreements. Discussion ensued regarding the transfers of swamp and ledge, farming, and woodland properties, the zoning of the property, and obtaining an easement for the existing dry hydrants.

**Decision:** The Appeal was denied.

**Personal Property Appeal of Duran Trust, List No. 400229**
*The Appellant was not present for his appeal.*

**Personal Property Appeal of James A. Grodin, List No. 40031**
Chairman Green swore in James A. Grodin. Mr. Grodin questioned the increase in the assessment for the trailer. Board Member Gernhardt informed him that the values are based on the NADA (National Automobile Dealers Association) values, per State Statute, and the reasoning behind the rise in assessments for trailers. The Board confirmed the model of the trailer.

**Decision:** The Appeal was denied.

**Real Estate Appeal of Charlotte Madura Ferrino, 11 Forest Drive, List No. 777**
Chairman Green swore in Charlotte Madura Ferrino. Ms. Ferrino was seeking information regarding the assessment of her seasonal property. She added that Ferrino is her former surname; she owns the property with her ex-husband and they are interested in selling the land. Board Member Gernhardt recommended that she file for a name change and submit the proper paperwork with the Town Clerk to ensure that the title is correct when the property is sold. Board Member Gernhardt provided a brief history of the land/property in the area, stating that the properties were changed from year-round to seasonal status and suggested the possibility of filing for an exemption and, should the exemption not be approved, hiring the services of an attorney to file an appeal to change the zoning of the area, which should have been grandfathered in as the change was made prior to the adoption of zoning regulations. Changing its year-round/seasonal status would increase the marketability of the property.

**Decision:** The Appeal was denied.

**Personal Property Appeal of Stacey Cuppett, List No. 492743**
Chairman Green swore in Stacey Cuppett. Ms. Cuppett submitted supporting documentation regarding her appeal and expressed the confusion surrounding the 1997 tow-behind travel trailer, which has been assessed as either personal property and motor vehicle over the years. The process and determination of the assessed value of personal property and motor vehicles were explained to the Appellant. As a registered motor vehicle with a valid registration, the property would be designated as a motor vehicle, and as a travel trailer, a personal property
declaration must also be submitted. While she submitted the declaration, she neglected to sign the form and was not aware that the form was incomplete.

Decision: The Appeal was denied and the Board Members agreed to speak with the Assessor to remedy the confusion between the assessment of the trailer.

Personal Property Appeal of Robert Casseles, List No. 492644
Chairman Green swore in Robert Casseles. Mr. Casseles submitted supporting documentation, stating that the assessment for their fifth-wheel camper is higher than its purchase price. They were informed that, per State Statute, assessments are based on the clean retail value indicated in the NADA book and not the purchase price. The Appellant stated that the camper had water damage at the time of purchase, which was immediately repaired. Images of any damages on the camper would need to be submitted as proof of its condition. The determination of the tax rate was explained to the Appellants.

Decision: The Board Members agreed to wait for the submission of photographs before making a final decision on the Appeal.

Personal Property Appeal of Richard & Gail Dahlke, List No. 400054
Chairman Green swore in Mark Dahlke, representing his father, Richard Dahlke, who resides out-of-state. Mr. Dahlke stated that the assessment of the property was raised due to the screened-in porch that is attached to the existing trailer.

Decision: The Board Members agreed to confirm the Assessor’s price per square footage.

Personal Property Appeal of Kenneth J. Krause, List No. 493156
Chairman Green swore in Joseph Baccash, representing his stepfather, Kenneth J. Krause, who resides out-of-state. Mr. Baccash stated that the model of the camper is a Bighorn 32. Based on the length of the camper, as noted by the campground, it was determined that the camper is a Bighorn 32GK and was assessed as such by the Assessor. He was informed that the purchase price of the camper is not considered in determining its assessed value. Proof of any significant damage that is not covered under the warranty may be sent to the Chairman for consideration.

Decision: The Board Members agreed to wait for the submission of photographs of the condition of the camper before making a final decision on the Appeal.

2. ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by: Agnes Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Salem