

Selectmen's Meeting  
Tuesday, October 3, 2006  
Ayer Town Hall, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Meeting Room, Main Street, Ayer, MA

Present

Frank F. Maxant, Chairman	X
Pauline Conley, Vice-Chairman	X
Carolyn McCreary, Clerk	X
Gary J. Luca, Member	X
Cornelius F. Sullivan, Member	X
Shaun Suhoski, Town Administrator	Absent-death in family
Janet Lewis Secretary	X

**Public Input**-Chairman Maxant opened the meeting by requesting if there was anyone present wishing to meet with the Board.

**Selectman McCreary**-Announced Community Awareness Event-Drug Rehabilitation on November 11, 2006.

**Chairman Maxant** announced to the Town of Ayer residents that Kelly's Hallmark will be selling Dump bag/bulk tags for the convenience of Ayer residents at no charge to Town. Same policy in effect re purchase of stickers by residents.. no cash checks only, Monday –Saturday effective in a couple of weeks. The Board extended their appreciation to the Kelley's.

**Chairman Maxant** advised the Board to Chamber after Hours request from Nashoba Valley Medical Center re a One Day Beer & Wine License for October 11, 2006 from 5:30-7:30p.m.

**Selectman Luca**-announced the receipt of a grievance from Fire Dept re Town not paying full amount of Health Insurance and over charging employees. Selectman Sullivan stating there was no need for this matter to be addressed under Public Input, not a liability to Town. Selectman Sullivan cautioning the Board members re micro managing Town Administrator/Department Heads. Selectman Sullivan stated Fire Chief has not made his recommendation to the Board re grievance, Treasurer has not been contacted, Board does not have a point person and process to follow not being followed. Selectman Luca stating he just wants to stay informed.

**Selectman Luca** also took this opportunity to request the Board place on an upcoming Selectmen's Agenda DOR's (Dept. of Revenue-Division of Local Services) Technical Assistance for Municipal Officials financial services detailing opportunities that are available to cities and towns. Selectman Luca stating Financial management assistance, consulting services, information technology, local assessment, property tax, municipal data management & technical assistance improving budget and capital planning, costing municipal services and analyzing user fees, improving cash management, analyzing school finance & regionalization impacts, reorganizing financial offices are available to the Town. Selectman Luca passed out brochures to fellow Board members. Selectman Sullivan advised to independent auditor being hired by Town re auditing books and requested Town Accountant's input as well as Board of Assessors and Fin-Com's. Selectman Luca advising to brochure being submitted to him from Larry Keenan who is on the Fin-Com.

**7:15p.m. Public Hearing-Fy-7 Tax Classification**

The Board met with the Ayer Board of Assessors. Present Edward Cornellier-Chairman, Sandi Jones, and Thomas Hogan-Assessors Assistant. Chairman Maxant opened the Hearing by requesting the clerk read the Legal Notice into the record. Selectman McCreary read the legal notice which ran in the Nashoba Publications the weeks of 9-15-06 and 9-22-06. Mr. Cornellier opened the Hearing by stating in accordance with MGL Chapter 40 Section 56 the Ayer Board of Selectmen is required to hold a Public Hearing for the determination of the following: Open Space, Residential Exemption of up to 20%, Small Commercial exemption of up to 10% and to adopt the residential factor for the purpose of determining the percentage tax burden to be borne by each class of property. Chairman Cornellier turned the floor over to Tom Hogan the Assessors Clerk who provided the Board with documentation re the Town's tax rate summary. Mr. Hogan reviewed with the Board the **Open Space Discount** advising the Selectman may discount up to 25% of the Open Space percentage share for land maintained in an open or natural condition for the benefit of the public-advising traditionally the Board has not adopted this discount. Selectman Sullivan moved the Board not adopt the Open Space Discount, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman Luca, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

**Residential Exemption**-Mr. Hogan stated the Selectmen may adopt an exemption of up to 20% which would be applied to every residential property which is the principal residence of a taxpayer, the exemption is subtracted from the assessed value of all eligible parcels. Exclusions-accessory residential land and seasonal homes/non-owner occupied residential property. Mr. Hogan stating again traditionally the Board has not adopted this exemption. Selectman Sullivan moved the Board not adopt the Residential Exemption of up to 20%, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman Luca, VOTE: unanimous, so moved. **Small Commercial Exemption**-Mr. Hogan stated the Selectmen may adopt an exemption of up to 10% of eligible parcels advising the tax burden would then shift within the Commercial/Industrial class with the exclusion of commercial properties excluded from a list provided annually to the Board of Assessors by the DLWD and commercial properties with assessed valuations of greater than one million dollars. Mr. Hogan again stated traditionally the Selectmen have not adopted this exemption. Selectman Sullivan moved the Board not adopt the Small Commercial Exemption of up to 10% of eligible parcels, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman Luca, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

**Residential Factor –percentage of tax burden to be born by each class of property.** Mr. Hogan ran through the Town of Ayer's FY-07 Tax Rate Summary which depicted values from 2002-2007 relative to past history of the Town's residential and CIP percentages. Mr. Hogan reviewed the FY-07 Tax Levy and 2006 Tax Data. Mr. Hogan presented the FY-07 Tax Rate Summary depicting valuations for residential at \$630,638,700 or 66% and \$89,70,200 Commercial or 9%, Industrial \$132,571,800 or 14% and Personal property valuations at \$105,772,880 or 11% for a total of 958,053,580 @ 100% or a 3% total value change over 2006 advising to a single residential property valuation in the Town of Ayer is valued at \$296,600.00 over 2006 estimated at \$291,900 or a 1% increase. FY-07 Tax Levy limit estimated at \$14,108,205 and FY-07 tax levy \$13,906,992 showing excess of \$201,213 (new growth) or 1.2% change from 2006. Mr. Hogan presented the Board the Town's estimated tax rates prepared for the Board's review and consideration this evening. Mr. Hogan advising the board to adopting the residential factor at 65.7341% (43%) and CIP percent (57%) would keep the Town at the same tax rate of 2006 or \$9.54/residential and \$24.10/CIP. Residential rate would increase \$89.00/per thousand depicting a 3% change and minus \$207.00 (CIP) or a -1% change. Present for this discussion were members of the business community: David Allen, Calvin Moore, Edward Kelley. Mr. Allen presented his view of unified rate to close gap between residential & CIP depicting a \$14.79 tax rate for properties assessed at \$400K for the Board's consideration. Mr. Moore stating Town of Ayer enjoys lowest rate due to businesses and to stop whacking business. Mr. Kelley echoing same for small businesses. Selectman Sullivan moved the Board vote to accept residential factor of 65.7341% for residential tax rate of \$9.54 and CIP rate of \$24.10, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman Luca, VOTE: Selectman Sullivan aye, Selectman Luca aye, Selectman McCreary aye, Chairman Maxant aye, Selectman Conley no, 4-1 motion passes.

Mr. Hogan took this opportunity to make disclaimer statement advising to DOR setting rate and if DOR should change rate he will advise.

Chairman Maxant called for a motion to close Public Hearing. Selectman Conley moved the Board close the FY-07 Tax Classification Public Hearing, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman Luca, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

The Board took up Nashoba Valley Community Hospital's- Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours request for a One (1) Day Beer & Wine License for 10-11-06 from 5:30-7:30p.m. Selectman McCreary moved the Board approve the One Day Beer & Wine License for Nashoba Valley Community Hospital for 10-11-06, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman Sullivan 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman for a friendly notion to add time period of from 5:30p.m. to 7:30p.m., amendment fails, motion reverts back as originally stated and approved by 4-1 vote, Selectman Conley voting no.

8:50p.m. Selectman McCreary moved the Board enter into Executive Session pursuant to MGL Chapter 39 Section 23B Exemption #3 re non-union contract negotiations and collective bargaining negotiations and to adjourn from this Executive Session to re-enter Open Session for the sole purpose of adjourning the meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman Conley, VOTE: Selectman McCreary aye, Selectman Conley aye, Selectman Luca aye, Selectman Sullivan aye, Chairman Maxant aye, unanimous, so moved.

8:50p.m. Meeting adjourned .