

**TOWN OF SHELBURNE
BOARD OF ABATEMENT
MINUTES OF MEETING
February 8, 2021**

***Meeting held by teleconference.**

DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Webster, Peter Gadue, Lee Suskin, Jennifer Leopold, Nancy Baker, Bill Deming, Rebecca Moore, Laura Gannon-Murakami, Joan Lenes, Randy Rowland, Sally Martel, Susan Bowen, Judy Rosenstreich, Denis Barton.

ADMINISTRATION: Diana Vachon, Town Clerk; Linda Barker, Treasurer.

APPELLANT: Christine Reyome.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Diana Vachon called the teleconference meeting to order at 7 PM, referenced COVID Act 92 allowing remote meetings, and did a rollcall of members.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Town Clerk, Diana Vachon, facilitated election of the Chair.

Chair

MOTION by Nancy Baker, SECOND by Pete Gadue, to nominate David Webster as Chair of the Shelburne Board of Abatement. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

David Webster is Chair of the Shelburne Board of Abatement and facilitated the remainder of the meeting.

Vice Chair

MOTION by Laura Gannon-Murakami, SECOND by Joan Lenes, to nominate Nancy Baker as Vice Chair of the Shelburne Board of Abatement. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

Nancy Baker is Vice Chair of the Shelburne Board of Abatement.

4. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

5. MINUTES

November 16, 2020

MOTION by Randy Rowland, SECOND by Jennifer Leopold, to adopt the minutes of 11/16/20 as submitted. VOTING by rollcall: all ayes except four abstentions (Judy Rosenstreich, Linda Barker, Sally Martel, Susan Bowen); motion carried.

6. ADMINISTER OATH

All members have taken and signed the Oath of Office.

7. ABATEMENT REQUEST

Individuals to give testimony before the Board were sworn in.

Christine Reyome, 208 Penny Lane, Shelburne

Christine Reyome appeared on behalf of the abatement request.

APPELLANT TESTIMONY

Christine Reyome testified she is experiencing financial difficulty and is unable to pay her taxes. The abatement request is filed under Section 1535.A.3. Ms. Reyome said she has been using her 401K to pay overdue bills (rent, water and sewer, car repairs), but her employer for the past eight years, BioTek, is merging with another company so this option is no longer available. COVID has also added more burden. Overtime hours are no longer available at work and Ms. Reyome said she has no more paid leave remaining so she does not get paid for missing work due to her child not being able to attend daycare. The state has provided assistance with rent for one month (State of Vermont Rental Stabilization Fund), but then funding for the program ran out. Ms. Reyome said she does receive a small amount of assistance for childcare and some assistance for the adoption of her son.

It was noted the amount of principal, interest, and penalty due for nonpayment of taxes over the past five years is \$4,274.60 of which about \$800 is interest and \$100 is penalty. The town has offered payment and financial arrangements, but Ms. Reyome said she did not make payments on her taxes because something else would require payment such as overdue rent or car repairs. Ms. Reyome said she was not aware of state programs to help people through COVID economically because the programs are not well advertised and the website is confusing.

There was mention of the RV owned by the appellant. Ms. Reyome confirmed she has a loan on the RV purchased in 2011 for \$32,000 and is selling the vehicle for \$25,000. The vehicle needed \$5,000 in repairs for damage done by Ms. Reyome's ex-husband.

DELIBERATION/DECISION

Following deliberative session, the following action was taken:

MOTION by Denis Barton, SECOND by Lee Suskin, that the Board of Abatement table to the next meeting the appeal by Christine Reyome for tax abatement by the Town of Shelburne pending further discussion and reporting from the appellant, Christine Reyome, and the Town Manager that could provide financial information or other relevant information including what the town has done or can do to assist individuals requesting abatement of taxes. VOTING by rollcall: all ayes except one nay (Nancy Baker); motion carried.

David Webster stated the Board needs substantiation of what the appellant is asking. Nancy Baker said a process is needed. Lee Suskin said the Board needs to hear the town's position.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Nancy Baker, SECOND by Lee Suskin, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTING by rollcall: unanimous; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

RScty: MERiordan