

Minutes
Board of Civil Authority
Newfane, Vermont
February 27, 2019

Present: Carol Hesselbach, Priscilla Cotton, Evelyn Sirois, Sandra Dadik, Steve Levine, Gloria Cristelli, Abigail Dillon, and Shelley Huber

Priscilla Cotton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Priscilla introduced herself and talked about whether we should have an election for chair. Everyone wanted Priscilla to continue as chair. She had each attendee introduce themselves.

Steve asked who comprised the BCA. It was explained that the BCA consists of JP's, the Selectboard, and the Town Clerk.

Carol explained that Marion Dowling would have come if Carol insisted but she had been attending a lot of meetings and was at the tax sales this afternoon.

Priscilla explained about the tax appeal process and how it is sometimes difficult to get BCA members who can attend 2 hearings and a property visit.

Carol explained that a quorum for the BCA is 3 members.

Steve asked about where we draw the line to recuse themselves due to knowing someone. Priscilla explained that it is hard to recuse yourself as that might mean there would not be enough members to hear the appeal. Evelyn said that probably as long we disclosed a relationship that would be okay. Carol explained that the trainings she has been to said that it is a personal decision, no one on the BCA can tell you that you should step down from an appeal. That it is a personal decision and should be really considered if you have a financial interest.

Discussion of the number of appeals there might be in a year. Not usually too many but several have gone to the state.

Priscilla explained that the State does do training workshops but none have been scheduled yet this year. And that everyone who is a member of the BCA and Board of Abatement bring their own background to help with decisions. Discussed that there are booklets online from the Secretary of State to detail the actions of the BCA.

Shelley asked about Veteran or other discounts on taxes. It was explained that this is a State program that they process. The Town voted to apply the maximum \$40,000 reduction to property value for Veterans.

Discussion of education opportunities. Town Officers conference in April does not have the agenda available yet.

Discussion of possibly having a practice session before we have appeals. Discussion of VLCT.

Gloria and Carol explained that we cannot do any research on properties under appeal. Need to use information given by both sides.

Discussion of election on Tuesday. Priscilla asked to be on the schedule during the Town Meeting. March 27th is budget vote for West River MUED. We will be at Newbrook Fire Dept. from 9-7, then need to take ballots to LGUHS. People determined when they can help on Town Meeting Day.

Discussion of duties at Entrance and Exit checklist. Discussion of asking for name to be said out loud because of poll watchers. Discussion of poll watchers and what they do. Not allowed to ask for identification when someone comes to vote. Priscilla asked about name tags. Carol said she got some and got up to get them. Explained that she was going to order them and found out that she could get them free from State. Discussion of no electioneering in the building. Discussion of paper ballot procedure.

The Town Clerk explained about the Accessible Voting system and how she had chosen to just say no to using it at Town Meeting. That was good because the fee for programming would have been \$1800. She explained how it was used and that when we have to use it for an election they will have an opportunity to try it out before the election.

Discussion of counting write-ins.

Priscilla brought up purging the voter checklist. We will meet this summer to review the checklist. Challenged voters who have not voted for 2 federal elections can be purged. BCA members may know of someone who has left town so we can do challenge letters.

Gloria explained about replacement ballots and applications to be added to the checklist.

Gloria moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Evelyn.
All were in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Carol Hesselbach, Recording Clerk of the BCA