

**TOWN OF HYDE PARK
ABATEMENT BOARD MEETING**

June 6, 2022

Hybrid Meeting Due to COVID-19

Board Members Present: Susan Bartlett, Richard Bailey, Roland Boivin, Vicki Emerson, Ed French, Riki French, Pixie Loomis, Kimberly Moulton and Brian Shackett

Board Members Virtual: Matt Reed and Tina Teale

Others

Present: Connor Manosh (virtual), Tony & DeAnne Blueter (present)

S. Bartlett called the meeting to order at 6:05pm. It was determined there was a quorum of the board to proceed.

S. Bartlett stated that the meeting was to hear the abatement requests of Connor Manosh and Tony & DeAnne Blueter. K. Moulton stated that Connor Manosh is attending the meeting virtually and is on the line.

1) Abatement request from Connor Manosh, Drift Lane:

C. Manosh testified that he is asking for an abatement of taxes due to his property being listed as and taxed at 38 acres and a recent survey shows the property to be 29.18 acres. He stated that he submitted a survey to document the actual acreage. M. Reed stated he was providing testimony as Lister of Hyde Park and acknowledges his full time job as a surveyor and the surveyor who did the survey for Connor Manosh. M. Reed provided additional explanations stating that C. Manosh contacted him last year to do a survey on this property. The survey was done and recorded in the Hyde Park Land Records March 14, 2022 in slide 126, map 784 (a copy was provided in the meeting packet with the Abatement Request). M. Reed testified that the recorded Quit Claim deed from Howard Manosh to Connor Manosh states the property being transferred is 38 acres. The property was listed and taxed as presented to the town so there was no error on the part of the Listers. M. Reed testified that it was known by the Manosh family that the property was not 38 acres but they never presented documentation to the town to make the correction in the Grand List. C. Manosh has now presented that documentation in the form a recorded survey. M. Reed recommends abating taxes equal to the difference between the 38 acre assessment and the 29.18 assessment. K. Moulton stated that she prepared a spreadsheet showing the assessment as billed and the assessment based on 29.18 acres. The difference is taxes for the 2021/2022 tax year is \$372.18.

V. Emerson made a motion that was seconded by B. Shackett to abate \$372.18 for tax the years 2021/2022. Motion to approve abatement of \$372.18 passed by voice vote unanimously.

C. Manosh had other questions about a recent notice he got in the mail from the Listers. K. Moulton stated that we were convened tonight to resolve the abatement request before the Abatement Board and that those further assessment questions should go to the Listers.

2) Abatement Request from Tony & DeAnne Blueter

D. Blueter testified that they are asking for an abatement of the penalty assessed them for their late property tax payment. She explained the circumstances that caused the late payment: moving daughter on Friday, May 13th and driving by the office forgetting to drop off the tax payment, being

diagnosed with COVID the next day, Tony staying in New Hampshire to avoid coming home and getting COVID himself, DeAnne realizing she hadn't made the tax payment, calling to talk to someone on Tuesday realizing the message she left was left at the Village and Tony calling on Wednesday to talk to someone about the situation. T. Blueter stated that their daughter was able to come get the tax payment from her car and take it to the town clerk's office and drop it off for them. T. Blueter stated it was the perfect storm of events that prevented D. Blueter from being able to make the payment on time. They are just asking for some relief of the late fees of \$113.93. K. Moulton stated that there is also interest of \$14.24 that was charged to the account. K. Moulton stated that setting aside the perfect storm of events for the Blueter's, she reminded the Board that the late fees assessed are set by the voters. The Board needs to decide if this request meets one of the eight (8) statutory reasons to abate property taxes and if not, how they will decide to deal with this request. K. Moulton stated that there were lots of calls from taxpayers who were also late paying taxes for one reason or another and they paid their late fees. Abating penalty and interest for situations like this sets precedent for future requests to abate interest and penalty. E. French stated that although he agreed with K. Moulton, he dislikes the term "precedent" but stated it would set an example for future requests.

E. French made a motion that was seconded by R. Boivin to deny the abatement request of interest and penalty for Tony and DeAnne Blueter. The motion was passed by voice vote unanimously. S. Bartlett stated it's a difficult decision for the Board to make but what we do for one, we'd have to do for all. There was a general discussion of Selectboard members and BCA members who were late paying taxes for one reason or another and having to pay the interest and penalty. It was suggested the Blueter's sign up for ACH deduction of their tax payment. K. Moulton stated paying by credit card as an option since that could be done on the town website, over the phone and in person. Although there is a 3rd party processing fee, that fee could potentially be less than paying interest and penalty on the late tax payment. K. Moulton also reminded everyone that voters have allowed postmarked payments as being accepted as on-time payments. If you can't get to the town office by 4:00pm on tax day but you can get to a post office before they close, take the tax payment to the post office and ask them to hand cancel the postage. That postage cancel stamp used by the post office is dated. If done on tax due date but not received until days later at the town office, that postmark makes that payment on-time and interest and penalty will be reversed off the account.

4) Other Business

There was no other business.

Motion by B. Shackett and seconded by R. Bailey to adjourn at 6:35pm. The motion passed by voice vote unanimously.