

## Tax Classification Committee - Meeting Minutes

Town of Hingham Tax Classification Study Committee October 29, 2013 Meeting Minutes Central North Meeting Room, Second floor, Town Hall

Present: Committee voting members Michael Shaughnessy, Ben Burnham, and Ed Colbert, Non voting members Ted Alexiades, Town Administrator and Bruce Rabuffo

Guests: Carol Mayer, Hingham Journal, Irma Lauter, Greg Hall, Jim Drew and two other guests

Call to order: Chairman Shaughnessy called the meeting to order at 5:25 pm

Mr. Shaughnessy opened the meeting with a review of the last meeting with Peter Forman , President and CEO of the South Shore Chamber of Commerce and a reminder the Committees purpose is to review the issue of a split rate.

Ted Alexiades pointed out the ratio of business to residential being roughly 89% residential to 11% business , is less than ideal for a split rate given that every dollar saved for the residents cost business \$9

Mike illustrated real numbers using the average Hingham home value. A savings of \$312 for the residents cost the business \$3918 .

Ed Colbert agreed based on the numbers it's hard to justify . Ed asked if the commercial properties are accurately assessed.

Ted mentioned that Assessor Nowlan is reviewing the commercial properties and values to assure they are accurate, but it will take some time to review all of them .

Mike pointed out that in the past a large jump in assessments was often due many districts assessing only every three years, but now towns must submit annually so the assessor office is not operating at as much a lag than in the past

Ted Alexiades asked that in order for this committee to meet again, what needs to change?

The committee said that the ratio of commercial to residential needs to be materially different with a substantial move in the ratio.

Mike agreed a major expansion of business closer to a 20% ratio is needed before seriously considering a split rate. By law the Board of Assessors needs to bring information to the Board of Selectman each year at the Classification Hearing, but unless there is a significant shift in the ratios, there will not be a need for a Tax classification Review Committee meeting in the near future,

Mike entertained a motion to recommend to the Board of selectman not to adopt a split tax at this time. Ed moved the motion, Ed second, all in favor , motion carries

Mike made a motion to end the meeting at 6:15pm, Ed second, all in factor, motion carries