

Town of Hillsborough
Economic Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 9, 2013

In Attendance: Dennis Roberts, Jr., Chairman; Dave Fullerton; Robyn Payson; Laura Buono; Alan Urquhart; Steve Heavener; Doug Hatfield; Jack Wells; Deborah DeScenza.

Guest: Dave Marazoff, Assessor

Dennis Roberts opened the meeting by explaining to the various business owners who were in attendance that today's meeting is an informational session with regard to assessment questions which have recently been brought up in conjunction with downtown businesses. He went on to say that any objections to assessments must go through the abatement process through the Selectmen's Office.

Doug Hatfield stated that the reason to have the Assessor speak is so that we have a better understanding of the method of appraising commercial property in Hillsborough.

Dave Marazoff was introduced and said that although he wasn't quite sure what to prepare for with regard to this meeting, he will do his best to explain the process and answer as many questions as possible. Mr. Marazoff began by outlining the state requirement for a community to have a reassessment every five years with equity levels monitored annually. He went on to go over the fact that assessments are statistically based and reviewed the two levels of uniformity that the state uses to determine the median ratio for a community.

Mr. Marazoff discussed the revaluation process and said that revaluations are based on what is needed. If the levels of equity are off, the scope of work is such that the assessments need to be brought back to 100% and the levels of uniformity into acceptable ranges. He said that over a four year period, measurements of properties were verified as part of the process and sales over the last two years were verified for validity and accuracy. Over the last 18 months, there were a rash of foreclosure properties, short sales and distress sales. Since these transactions are not considered typical, the State of NH says they don't have to be used. Mr. Marazoff explained that various resources are used such as PA34 forms, the Multiple Listing Service (MLS), County Deeds, etc.

The computation of the tax rate was briefly discussed among those in attendance and it was explained by Laura Buono that there are many factors used in determining the tax rate. It is based on the budgets of the Town, School, County, and Water Precinct for those covered by the Precinct. On top of that various other items are pulled into the equation such as revenues, Veteran's Tax Credits, Elderly Exemptions, etc. If the overall valuation of a community decreases, even if nothing changes with any of these items, the tax rate will increase in order to

raise the amount of money needed to cover the net result of the equation. She stated that if the valuation of the town has increased, then the tax rate decreases.

Mr. Marazoff went on to discuss the area in the center of town and said that the residential properties were easier to show a decline in whereas it was not as easy with commercial properties. Mr. Marazoff went into a lengthy discussion and question answering period with regard to the method of determining the values for commercial properties. At the end of the discussion, it was mentioned that perhaps Hillsborough needs a downtown adjustment or condition factor applied to the values. It was decided that the EDC and Mr. Marazoff would explore this and have discussions about it over the next few months so that whatever the outcome is, can be presented to the Selectmen for their approval.

Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.