

**TOWN OF BARRE**  
**BOARD OF ABATEMENT MEETING**  
**November 3, 2021**

**AGENDA**

1. Call to order.....6:30 p.m.
2. Remind those present that the meeting will be audio taped.  
Please speak clearly and identify yourself.
3. Roll call.
4. Approve the agenda.
5. Approve the June 2, 2021 meeting minutes (abatement section).
6. Administer abatement oath to BOA.
7. Hear requests for abatement.
8. Public comment.
9. Adjourn.

**BOARD OF ABATEMENT MINUTES**

The duly warned Board of Abatement meeting was held at the Municipal Building, Selectboard meeting room, in Lower Websterville on Wednesday, November 3, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

The following members were in attendance: Justin Bolduc, Jeff Blow, William Bugbee, Charles “Chip” Castle, Lori Cohen, J. Guy Isabelle, JP Isabelle, Thomas Koch, Norma Malone, Paul Malone, W. John “Jack” Mitchell, Jay Perkins, Virginia Poplawski, R. Lee Walther, Sheila Walther, Paul White, and Tina Lunt (Board Clerk/Assistant Town Treasurer). Attendance by phone: Ed Paquin.

The following members were absent: Jeanne Daniele, Donna J. Kelty, Jennifer Allard, and Bob Nelson.

Also in attendance: Russ Beaudoin, Becky Ruel and Roger Ruel.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Malone called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. and proceeded with roll call. Those present were reminded that the meeting is being audio taped and to speak clearly and identify yourself.

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

*On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Jack Mitchell, the Board of Abatement voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.*

**MINUTE APPROVAL**

*On a motion by Paul White, seconded by Chip Castle, the Board of Abatement voted unanimously to approve the June 2, 2021 meeting minutes noting and addition to the list of members present.*

**BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY MEETING OF NOVEMBER 3, 2021 continued:**

**ABATEMENT REQUESTS**

1. Roger and Rebekah Ruel  
Interest, penalties, and fees  
Tax Map: 017/052.00  
Amount: \$15,000 for interest, penalties, and fees.

Mr. and Mrs. Ruel were present and administered the oath.

Mrs. Ruel reported they purchased the property at 25 Baptist Street, Graniteville, at tax sale on October 29, 2020 for \$52,000. On November 7, 2020, a week after the purchase, there was a fire at the property. Mrs. Ruel explained this was their first time purchasing a property at tax sale. They did not realize they could not insure it until the 1-year redemption period had expired. Due to the financial hardship, the Ruel's are asking the Town to consider waiving the accrued delinquent interest, penalties, and fees paid at the tax sale and during the subsequent redemption period totaling \$13,472.65. The Ruel's are also asking for the Town to provide and additional \$1,572.35 to assist with the renovation expenses.

It is noted for the record that Mr. and Mrs. Ruel took legal ownership of the property on November 2, 2021.

During questioning by the Board, it was determined that the Ruel's did not obtain a property inspection or legal advice prior to the tax sale and were unable to secure property insurance after the fire as they were not the property owner.

In 2004 the property was valued at \$139,630. In 2021, following the reappraisal, the assessment was set at \$179,500. The Assessor later reduced the assessment to \$65,760 in consideration of the damage caused by the fire.

During further discussion, it was determined the owner of record during the redemption period was the previous owner. They were the responsible party for the taxes during the redemption period.

The Board thanked Mr. and Mrs. Ruel for attending and they will be receiving a Board's written decision by mail.

**DELIBERATIVE SESSION**

With no other applicants present, the Board agreed to go into deliberative session.

*On a motion by Jeff Blow, seconded by Sheila Walter, the Board of Abatement voted unanimously to move into deliberative session at 7:08 p.m.*

*On a motion by JP Isabelle, seconded by Jack Mitchell, the Board of Abatement voted unanimously to come out of deliberative session at 8:05 p.m.*

**DECISIONS** – The following decisions were rendered.

**BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY MEETING OF NOVEMBER 3, 2021 continued:**

1. Roger and Rebekah Ruel  
25 Baptist Street  
Tax Map: 017/052.00  
Amount: \$15,000 for interest, penalties, and fees.

The Board of Abatement voted to abate interest, penalties, and fees totaling \$717.93, for Roger and Rebekah Ruel, 25 Baptist Street, Tax Map 017/052.00, citing real or personal property lost or destroyed during the tax year.

2. Nancy Baer  
58 Washington Road  
Tax Map: 025/003.00  
Amount: \$2,151.09 for water and, sewer.

The Board of Abatement voted to abate the 5% late charges, 8% collectors fee, and interest totaling \$436.79, for Nancy Baer, 58 Washington Road, Tax Map 025/003.00, citing the applicant is financially unable to pay. The Board of Abatement recommended the Selectboard to check with the Town Manager on what services are available to further assist Mrs. Baer.

3. Timothy and Carol Ayer  
10 Kelley Road  
Tax Map: 006/050.34  
Amount: \$1,000 for water.

The Board of Abatement voted to deny the abatement request of Timothy and Carol Ayer for 10 Kelley Road, Tax Map 006/050.34 in the amount of \$1,000 for a municipal water bill, citing the application was defective: the applicant did not select a criteria allowed in the Town charter and/or under the statutory criteria of 24 V.S.A § 1535.

4. Judith M. Tootle  
8176 US Rte. 2  
Ambulance Run: 21-1872 & 21-2830

The Board of Abatement voted to deny the abatement request of Judith M. Tootle for abatement of two ambulance bills run #21-1872 and 21-2830 totaling \$500.00, citing the evidence presented did not support the criteria cited (that the persons liable for the tax are financially unable to pay).

5. The Treasurer presented three bills for abatement. The Board of Abatement voted to abate the following bills citing the reasoning noted below.
  - A. Invoice #03-070 billed to Pruneau-Polli Funeral Home dated October 25, 2002. The State no longer has funds for pauper burials to cover grave expenses, and there is no reasonable probability that the tax can be collected. Amount abated: \$425.00
  - B. Lance Cargill, Run 20-3306, date of service March 9, 2020 in the amount of \$240.28. Initially had wrong secondary insurance listed. VT Medicaid denied payment following multiple billing attempts and collection of payment would create and undo expense to the Town. Amount abated: \$240.28

**BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY MEETING OF NOVEMBER 3, 2021 continued:**

C. Parcel ID 027/022.15 Sterling Hill Road (7.12 Acres). The Town purchased the parcel on March 26, 2021 and is not required to pay property taxes. The tax was not properly assessed. Amount abated: \$313.23

**OTHER BUSINESS – NONE**

**PUBLIC COMMENT – NONE**

**ADJOURN**

*On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Jack Mitchell, the Board of Abatement voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m.*

These are the minutes as taken by the Clerk of the Board.

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Tina Lunt, Town Clerk