



**BOARD OF ABATEMENT MEETING
May 8, 2024**

AGENDA

1. Call to order.....5:30 p.m.
2. Roll call
3. Approve the agenda
4. Public Comment
5. Approve the April 25, 2024 meeting minutes
6. Hear requests for abatementw
7. Consider approving new abatement documents: a) Cover Sheet for Application; b) Application; c) Information Sheet; d) Rules of Procedure; e) Notice of Decision f) Definitions from Vermont Statutes
8. 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, May 8, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

Board of Abatement Member Present: Justin Bolduc, Mike Gilbar, JP Isabelle, Donna Kelty, Tom Koch (6:01 p.m.), Norma Malone, Paul Malone, Bob Nelson, Edward Paquin, Virginia Poplawski, Dean Preston, Randy Treis, R. Lee Walther, Sheila Walther, Paul White, and Tina Lunt.

Board of Abatement Members Absent: Lori Cohen, Jeanne Daniele, J. Guy Isabelle, Jennifer Allard, Terry Reil, Frederick Thumm, Assessor Russ Beaudoin.

Others Present: Antonio Cassani and Jade Spinks.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Malone called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and proceeded with roll call.

APPROVE THE AGENDA:

On a motion by Mike Gilbar, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Board of Abatement voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

APPROVE THE MINUTES:

On a motion Ed Paquin, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Board of Abatement voted unanimously to approve the April 25, 2024 meeting minutes with amendments as provided to the Clerk.

ABATEMENT REQUESTS:

BOARD OF ABATEMENT MEETING OF May 8, 2024 continued:

1. Antonio Cassani
Abatement request for: Ambulance bill
Amount: \$801.24

Mr. Cassani and Ms. Jade Spinks were present and sworn in by Clerk Lunt. Mr. Cassani is requesting abatement of an 2021 ambulance bill due to financial burden.

Chair Malone asked Board members if there were any conflicts of interest or ex parte communications, and none were disclosed.

Discussion began as Mr. Cassani and Ms. Spinks were asked to present their case. Mr. Cassani stated he was uninsured at the time of the transport. Central Vermont Hospital requested he take an ambulance to Burlington as they did not have the appropriate staff to treat his condition. Mr. Cassani added that he feels the cost of the transportation was excessive when no other services were utilized. Since receiving this bill, the couple has been dealing with the consequences of this delinquent account and it has been affecting their credit score. The couple shared that they would be interested in negotiating a settlement of the bill by paying half which is what they could afford to pay at this time.

JP Isabelle thanked the couple for the completeness of the application. Additionally, Paul White asked the couple if they were offered a payment plan in 2021 when they received the bill. Mr. Cassani said he does not recall being offered a payment plan at that time. Furthermore, Mr. Cassani said he was not offered a payment plan with the collection agency. Mr. White confirmed that once a bill goes to collections individuals are not offered a payment plan at this point in the collection process. Conversation continued as Board members addressed the couple's financial statements. Board members noted the couple's monthly income exceeds their monthly expenses. Ms. Spinks stated they have family obligations and an unreliable vehicle that impacts their monthly surplus income.

DELIBERATIVE SESSION:

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Board of Abatement voted unanimously to move into deliberation session at 6:01 p.m.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Donna Kelty, the Board of Abatement voted unanimously to come out of deliberation session at 6:22 p.m.

DECISIONS:

The following decision was rendered.

1. Antonio Cassani
Abatement request for: Ambulance bill
Amount: \$801.24

The Board of Abatement voted to deny the abatement request totaling \$801.24 under the statutory criteria that the persons liable for the tax are financially unable to pay.

The Board finds abatement is not warranted for the ambulance bill based on the following:

BOARD OF ABATEMENT MEETING OF May 8, 2024 continued:

- Testimony presented by applicant, Mr. Antonio Cassani and Ms. Jade Spinks.
- The applicant has provided evidence of income sufficient to support payment as noted in the applicant’s Income, Expense, Resource, and Asset Statement.
- The applicant has not met the burden of proof required to demonstrate that he is financially unable to pay.

CONSIDER APPROVING NEW ABATEMENT DOCUMENTS:

Clerk Lunt shared the following documents for consideration:

1. Cover sheet for application
2. Abatement application
3. Information sheet
4. Rules of Procedure
5. Notice of Decision

Board members reviewed each document, with consideration of edits. Clerk Lunt will share a new draft of each document at the Board’s next meeting with the goal to consider approving the new abatement documents at the next meeting.

ADJOURN:

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Board of Abatement voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:54 p.m.

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

Filed in the Barre Town Clerk’s Office on this _____ day of _____, 2024.

_____,
Barre Town Clerk.
Tina Lunt, Town Clerk