BOARD OF TAX ABATEMENT
Minutes
September 28, 2026
5:30 P.M.

Board Members Present: Amie Record; Russell Monier; Larry Semones; Deborah Aldrich; Peter Hudkins; Linda Diak; Kenneth D. Barrett; Gerald Gleason; Tim Roper; Ed Grossman; Cheryl LeClair; Philip Perlah; Arne Jonynas; Catherine Hasbrouck; Pat Budnick; Lise Duncan; A. Lee Gustafson

Visitors: Samantha Vertefeuille; Thomas Jarvie; Lynne Gutierrez (phoned in)

1. Citizens Comments

   None

2. Abatements

   Chair Heather Chase was unable to attend the meeting. Vice Chair Russell Monier began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the first item of business, citizens' comments. He explained that four tax abatement requests were scheduled for consideration: Thomas Jarvie, associated with parcel ID 302003 at 2255 Flamstead Road; Lynn Gutierrez, associated with parcel ID 535016 at 784 Vermont Route 103 North; William Gorski Sr., associated with parcel ID 222020.100 at 1983 Dean Brook Road; and Blanche Kennedy, associated with parcel ID 615071 at 34 Marshall Road. Before beginning the hearings, the board was asked whether anyone had any ex parte communications or conflicts of interest concerning the applications. No conflicts or ex parte communications were disclosed.

   The board then began the hearing on Thomas Jarvie's abatement request. Jarvie was placed under oath and confirmed that the testimony he provided would be truthful. The board also confirmed that he had received information concerning the Board of Abatement's rules and procedures. There was some discussion about whether he had reviewed the procedures, and the board explained that the rules describe how the board conducts the meeting and how applicants are given an opportunity to present their case before board members ask questions. Jarvie indicated that he understood that process and was given an opportunity to make an opening statement.

   Jarvie stated that he did not have much to add beyond the written statement and documentation he had already submitted. He asked the board to consider the circumstances of people seeking abatements and to consider what they themselves would want if they were in a similar financial position. His request was based on the provision allowing an abatement for a person who is unable to pay taxes, charges, interest, and/or collection fees. When asked about the specific relief he was seeking, Jarvie said that a

complete abatement of the amount he owed would be ideal because he was still unemployed and did not know when he would be able to obtain work or begin making payments. He explained that even with his Homestead exemption, he was struggling to afford necessities such as food, gasoline, and transportation to medical appointments.

Jarvie emphasized that he was actively trying to improve his financial situation rather than simply waiting for assistance. He had recently obtained his commercial driver's license and explained that the training had been funded through a state grant of approximately $7,500 for Northeast Driver Training. At the time of the hearing, his CDL had been obtained only about two weeks earlier. He said he had been looking extensively for employment, including contacting numerous municipalities and neighboring communities about driving and public-works positions. He had looked into opportunities with communities including Ludlow, Weathersfield, Cavendish, and others, and had also contacted the state garage regarding employment. He said that he had missed some opportunities by only a matter of days but had one promising employment lead and hoped to hear from the potential employer by the end of the week. At the time of the hearing, however, he had no employment commitment.

Jarvie explained that if complete forgiveness of his tax obligation was not possible, his second request was that the penalties and interest be forgiven so that he would only have to address the underlying tax amount. He said that even this would make a significant difference because he had not worked since November of the previous year. The board asked whether he had discussed establishing a payment plan with the town. Jarvie said that he had not yet done so, although the possibility had been mentioned to him. He and the town intended to discuss a payment plan after the abatement hearing. Jarvie said that if he obtained the anticipated job, he would be able to work with the town to establish a payment arrangement and begin resolving the tax debt.

The board also discussed how penalties and interest were being added to Jarvie's outstanding balance. The transcript indicates that his underlying tax amount was approximately $3,500, with additional penalties and monthly interest accruing separately. The board explained that an additional 5 percent penalty would be added on October 1 and that interest would continue to accrue monthly, with the rate described during the discussion as 1 percent for the first three months and 1.5 percent thereafter. Jarvie indicated that he could not realistically promise a particular monthly payment while he remained unemployed. After the board finished its questions, it explained that it would enter deliberative session to discuss his request and would provide a written decision within 30 days. The board also indicated that Jarvie could check back the following week because a decision might be available sooner. Jarvie subsequently left the meeting so that the board could deliberate.

A motion was made by Gerald Gleason to enter Deliberative Session. Seconded by Linda Diak. The motion passed at 5:45p.m.

A motion was made by Tim Roper to abate the Penalty and Interest for the 2026 tax year for Thomas Jarvie, parcel ID 302003, 2255 Flamstead Road with the expectation that he set up a payment plan within 90 days. Seconded by Ed Grossman. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Linda Diak to exit Deliberative Session. Seconded by Gerald Gleason. The motion passed at 6:02 p.m.

Lynn Gutierrez attempted to join the meeting by Zoom. The board exited Deliberative Session to allow her to join the meeting to give testimony. Gutierrez telephoned in and was placed on speakerphone so that she could participate in the hearing remotely.

Gutierrez's hearing began with the board identifying her application, parcel ID 535016, and her property at 784 Vermont Route 103 North. She was placed under oath and affirmed that the evidence she provided would be truthful. The board also confirmed that she had received the Board of Abatement's rules of procedure. Gutierrez was then asked to explain her circumstances and why she was unable to pay her current tax bill.

Gutierrez explained that she had undergone three surgeries on her knee while trying to obtain employment. At the time of the hearing, she was still recovering from the most recent surgery, which had taken place approximately three weeks earlier on her right knee. She explained that the surgeries and her inability to secure employment had significantly disrupted her efforts to become financially stable. Because she had been unable to earn enough income, she had increasingly relied on credit cards to cover her expenses. By the time of the hearing, however, her credit cards were essentially maxed out and she was no longer able to use them to meet her financial obligations.

Gutierrez said that she had placed an advertisement seeking a roommate as one way to reduce the financial pressure on her household and make it easier to pay her bills going forward. She emphasized that she was still pursuing employment and intended to continue looking for work. Her medical circumstances, however, had made that process particularly difficult. She described the year as financially very difficult and explained that she was living alone, which made it harder to manage her expenses. She expressed appreciation for assistance she had received from Neighborhood Connections, which had been providing transportation to medical appointments and physical therapy. She also said that the local food shelf had been helping her obtain food. Despite these sources of assistance, she said she had reached a point where she could no longer put expenses on her credit cards and could not pay the current year's property tax bill.

The board then asked Gutierrez several questions about her property and financial circumstances. One board member had found what appeared to be a listing for her house with a real estate service and asked whether she intended to sell the property. Gutierrez clarified that the house was not currently listed for sale and that the listing the board had found was from approximately two years earlier. Gutierrez stated that if the house were listed for sale, she would make paying the taxes a priority, but she emphasized that the

property was not currently on the market. She also confirmed that she had purchased the property on November 1, 2024.

After the board completed its questions, Gutierrez was thanked for appearing and was told that the board would enter deliberative session to discuss her request. The board explained that a written decision would be provided within 30 days. Gutierrez thanked the board for considering her circumstances and then ended the telephone portion of the hearing.

A motion was made by Deborah Aldrich to enter Deliberative Session. Seconded by Gerald Gleason. The motion passed at 6:19 p.m.

A motion was made by Tim Roper to abate the Penalty and Interest for the 2026 tax year for Lynn Gutierrez, parcel ID 535016, 784 Vermont Route 103 North with the expectation that she set up a payment plan within 90 days. Seconded by Pat Budnick. Gerald Gleason abstained from the vote. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Linda Diak to grant the $40,000 Veteran's Exemption for William Gorski Sr., parcel ID 222020.100, 1983 Dean Brook Road keeping the adjusted amount as a credit on the account towards future years. Seconded by Tim Roper. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Gerald Gleasn to grant the abatement for Blanche Kennedy, parcel ID 615071, 34 Marshall Road in the amount of $872.28. Seconded by Catherine Hasbrouck. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Tim Roper to exit Deliberative Session. Seconded by Gerlad Gleason. The motion passed at 6:53 p.m.

A motion was made by Gerald Gleason to allow Vice Chair Russell Monier to sign the Board of Tax Abatement Notice of Decision for Thomas Jarvie; Lynn Gutierrez; William Gorski Sr.; and Blanche Kennedy. Seconded by Cheryl Leclair. The motion passed.

3. Other Business

None

4. Adjourn

A motion was made by Deboarh Aldrich to Adjourn. Seconded by Arne Jonynas. The motion passed at 6:55 p.m.

Amie Record
Town Clerk