

TOWN OF MADISON - PUBLIC NOTICE

The Inhabitants of the Town of Madison are hereby notified of a public meeting, The time, place and purpose of which are as follows:

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF ASSESSORS  
Monday September 26, 2016  
5:30pm Old Point School Meeting Room**

- A. Salute to the flag: Meeting was called to order at 5:30pm.
- B. Roll Call: Assessors Al Veneziano, Jack Ducharme, Paul Fortin and Ron Moody were present. Mike Edgerly was absent. Assessing Agent Shirley Bartlett and Town Manager Tim Curtis were also present.
- C. Discuss acceptance of meeting minutes of Aug 29, 2016: Motion to approve by Mr. Moody, seconded by Mr. Fortin. Motion carries 4-0.
- D. Old Business (Assessor's concerns from immediately preceding meeting): There were a number of residents in attendance at the meeting and Mr. Ducharme asked if a part of the discussion could be held in open session. Town Manager Curtis referred to the State Statute that said if the discussion included proprietary information pertaining to UPM or Madison Paper then that had to be discussed in executive session, other than that the board could discuss things publicly.

Town Manager Curtis read the abatement request filed by Pierce Atwood on behalf of Madison Paper Industries. The total amount requested is \$47,759,800. The abatement request asserts a value of \$25,000,000 for the mill property. The most current valuation of Madison Paper by the Town is \$72,759,800.

The abatement request states that the Town's assessment is wrong for the following reasons:

- a. The mill was operating at a loss as of April 1, 2016
- b. No one would have purchased the subject property on April 1, 2016 for more than \$25,000,000.
- c. The assessor did not use proper valuation techniques to value to the property

Assessor Fortin made a motion to deny the abatement request from Madison Paper. Seconded by Mr. Ducharme. The Town Manager asked if it would be prudent to have an attorney review our case before sending a letter of denial. Mr. Moody asked if the Town Manager had an attorney in mind. Mr. Curtis said he and Assessing Agent Bartlett had both made inquiries about attorneys and they had the names of two potential firms.

Mr. Ducharme asked if the Town had money in the budget to hire an attorney. Town Manager Curtis said it would depend on what they charge, but yes there is money budget for legal expenses.

Mr. Curtis and Ms. Bartlett explained the process if Madison Paper chose to appeal the denial. The case would go before the State Board of Assessment Review where both sides would make their case for the valuation. Shirley Bartlett noted that the Board could rule on a valuation number higher, lower or somewhere in between \$25M and \$72M.

Mr. Ducharme confirmed that the Town had 60 days to respond to the abatement, and asked if there would be any value in waiting to see if the mill sells. Town Manager Curtis said that there may be more public information that would help determine a value of the mill. But that may not help determine a value as of April 1, 2016 which is what the abatement request is based on. Mr. Curtis asked if the board wanted to send representatives to meet with representatives from the mill without attorneys. Mr. Fortin said any discussion about strategy should be in executive session.

Mr. Ducharme wanted to hear from members of the public before going into executive session. Resident Buddy Goodwin said he realized that we should be careful what we say in public, but he said the taxpayers need to know what's going on. Resident Kerri Ann Davis said the decision to deny the abatement would not be the end and that Madison Paper would most likely appeal.

The Board could not enter executive session while there was a motion on the floor. Mr. Fortin withdrew his motion, allowing the board to vote to go into executive session. Mr. Ducharme withdrew his second.

- E. Executive session pursuant to 1M.R.S.A §405(6) F, Title 36 §706 to discuss valuation issues related to Madison Paper Industries. Motion from Mr. Ducharme, seconded by Mr. Fortin. Motion carries 4-0. The Board entered executive session at 5:50pm.

The Board came out of executive session at 6:10pm. Assessor Fortin made a motion to deny the abatement request from Madison Paper. Seconded by Mr. Ducharme. Motion carries 4-0.

Town Manager Curtis informed the board that he would look into applying to the state for sudden and severe assistance in the spring, regardless of the outcome of the Madison Paper abatement request.

- F. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:13pm.