



Special Meeting – Tax Assessment Appeal Hearings

Wednesday, July 29, 2026, at 6:00 PM

Community Room, 43 Bombardier Road, Milton, VT 05468

In Person and/or Via Zoom

Members Present: Charles Barsalow, JP; Kristin Beers, Clerk; Steve Burke, JP; Edgar Clodfelter, Assessor; John Gifford, Treasurer; Mary Ann Duffy Godin, JP; Reginald Godin, JP; Denise Hughes, JP; Jon Hughes, Chair; Wendell Noble, JP; Lonnie Poland, JP; Brenda Steady, JP; Kary Towne, JP

Members Absent: Darren Adams, Selectboard Member; Diane Barrows, Selectboard Member; Jean Anne Branch, JP; Kevin Endres, JP; Leland Morgan, JP & Selectboard Member; Michael Morgan, JP & Selectboard Member; Betsy Paret, Selectboard Member; Robin Woods-Brisson, JP

Others Present: Adam Manor, Richard Desouza, Jen Murray

I. Call to Order

The Board of Civil Authority meeting was called to order by Jon Hughes at 6:02 PM.

Before beginning the meeting, Jon announced the passing of Ron Hubert, shared a few words in his honor, and asked those in attendance to pause for a moment of silence.

II. Flag Salute

Brenda Steady led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Public Forum

None.

IV. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes from June 22, 2026

Wendell Noble made a motion to approve the BCA minutes from the June 22, 2026 meeting, with a second by Denise Hughes. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Tax Assessment Appeal Hearings

a) Vermont Telephone Company, Inc. / Land lines (throughout Milton)

Jon Hughes opened the hearing of the Vermont Telephone Company by stating the property is made up of land lines throughout town, with a parcel ID # 500014.000000.

Jon acknowledged that the appellant was not in attendance. Jon administered the oath to the assessor. Board members took the oath as they entered.

Jon confirmed the appellant was sent a copy of the Milton BCA Rules of Procedure. He then asked the BCA to disclose any conflict of interest or ex parte communication, of which there was none.

Edgar Clodfelter explained that approximately five years ago, utility valuations around the state were a bit of a free-for-all. The state worked out an agreement with the utilities on how they would value lines and poles, properties that were not assessable at that time. The state went through a process and hired someone to do a valuation of all utilities in the state, and created a new classification called "TC", short for telecommunications. This new category includes cell towers, land lines, fiber lines, cell equipment, etc.

Ed continued to explain that the state passed legislation two years ago that local listers and assessors must use telecommunication values assigned by the state. A lot of the telecommunication companies are automatically appealing the values, the only way to get to the state to discuss the process and values assigned. Ed received the list from the state, created the parcels and entered the numbers in our system. With the newly assigned values, Milton's Grand List experienced an overall net gain.

Kristin Beers read the letter submitted by Vermont Telephone Company asking for a BCA appeal in response to the Assessor's grievance denial.

Jon invited questions from the BCA members. It was asked if Milton was unique in this process and Ed confirmed that it is affecting all towns across the state. It was explained that for these companies to go before the state with questions, they must follow due process as currently outlined in state law, by requesting a grievance hearing with the town assessor, appealing to the local BCA, to only then be able to appeal to the state. This all seems to be caused by an oversight by VT legislature. It was asked why Milton didn't use the stipulation agreement to bypass this process, and that's because the town attorney advised against entering into such an agreement, since current law does not allow such agreements.

It was asked if we, the BCA, have any choice but to deny this appeal. The BCA can assign any value it determines appropriate, but the BCA decision will be appealed by either the appellant or our town Assessor. There was a quick question about the bill number from 2024, which was Act 145 (H.657). Regarding the land lines, it was asked if all the lines are all active now. They may not be, they could be fifty years old, but we still need to assess a value to them. There was discussion that without some guidance, we BCA members will not know how to assess a value. The BCA just needs to follow due process and do our best. If the BCA assigns any valuation other than the \$76,400 provided by the state, the Assessor will appeal our decision.

Jon Hughes asked for inspection committee volunteers. Denise Hughes, Lonnie Poland and Kary Towne agreed to be on the Inspection Committee.

Lonnie Poland made a motion to recess the hearing until Wednesday, August 19 at 6:00 PM, with a second by Denise Hughes. The motion passed unanimously.

b) VTel Wireless, Inc. / Cell (silo mounted equipment on private property at 129 Mears Road)

Jon Hughes opened the hearing of VTel Wireless by stating the cellular equipment is located on private property mounted on a silo at 129 Mears Road, with a parcel ID # 500015.000000.

The assessor was already sworn in, and Jon confirmed the appellant was sent a copy of the Milton BCA Rules of Procedure. He then asked the BCA to disclose any conflict of interest or ex parte communication, of which there was none.

Edgar Clodfelter described the property as cell equipment and its present valuation, provided by the state, is \$66,000.

Jon summarized the appellant's letter asking for the BCA appeal.

Jon invited questions from the BCA members. There was a question about what part of the State is doing this, and Ed responded that it was Property Valuation and Review, a division of the Department of Taxes. The location was clarified as a silo at 129 Mears Road, known as Paul Mears' silo.

Jon Hughes asked for inspection committee volunteers and Denise Hughes, Lonnie Poland and Kary Towne again agreed to be on the Inspection Committee.

Brenda Steady made a motion to recess the hearing until Wednesday, August 19 at 6:00 PM, with a second by Denise Hughes. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Other Business

None.

VII. Recess

The motion to recess was made at 6:29 PM by Brenda Steady, with a seconded by Denise Hughes. The motion passed unanimously.

All documents pertaining to this meeting may be viewed using the following link:

https://miltonvt.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/TownOfMiltonFilesFolders/IgBpiTYHP9beRqevjATGVujzAfmUHaoTWV3fNE_87_L4SLM?e=5tAYsB

A video recording of this meeting can be found at the following location:

<https://miltonvt.gov/AgendaCenter>

Minutes recorded and submitted by Kristin Beers, Town Clerk

APPROVED
MINUTES:

Chair

Date

ATTEST:

Milton Town Clerk

Filed this day with the Milton
Town Clerk's Office.