

The Committee of the Whole met on Thursday, February 7, 2019 at 6pm

Members present were Councilor Richard Dell Isola, presiding, Councilors Fred Capone, Anthony DiPierro, John Hanlon, Wayne Matewsky, Michael Mclaughlin, Peter Napolitano and Stephen Simonelli.

Members absent were Councilors Rosa DiFlorio, Michael Marchese and John McKinnon.

The Committee considered a Resolution offered by Councilors Fred Capone and Michael Mclaughlin: That a Representative from the Assessor's office appear to discuss and explain the assessment process and the steps implemented to ascertain property values.

Chief Financial Officer Eric Demas and City Assessor BJ Devereux were also present.

Councilor Capone asked the guests if they could provide an overview of the tax bill process and asked how frequent assessments were done and if they were being done by the same vendor. Mr. Devereux responded that the assessed value of homes were determined by the sales on the market, however he noted that sales on lower Broadway were coded out and not used to determine assessments sales were not of the norm due to the new Resort on lower Broadway. He explained that a large sample size was needed in order to adjust the values, but acknowledged that commercial sales were less frequent. He informed the members that all assessments were predicated and approved by the Department of Revenue with the City required to do a recertification every five years. He disclosed that Patriot Properties was the Vendor the City had been contracting with since 2012 to take the data and develops the breakdown for assessment purposes with values being adjusted yearly. Mr. Demas provided an overview of the tax rate process which started with the annual appropriation budget – then anticipate revenue projections that would ultimately determine between the budget and revenue on what the net amount the City needed to raise. The next part of the process would be for Patriot Properties to compile all the market data so that the Department of Revenue could certify the values. Mr. Demas noted that this could be a daunting task in which residential property values have doubled from year to year while commercial and industrial values remained mostly stagnant until most recently. He then explained that he would be required to provide all supporting documentation to DOR on public hearings held on tax rate as well as City Council votes taken on the subject matter. He told the members that there quite a few new people working at DOR due to a number of recent retirements in the State agency that made the whole process take a little longer since they need to look at everything. Mr. Demas reminded the Committee that even though proposition 2 ½ still comes into play it also is in addition to new growth. Councilor Matewsky remarked that the people of Everett would like to see their tax bills go down especially with all the new development going on. Mr. Demas expressed his belief that values would eventually stabilize which would make things more predictable in setting assessments and tax rates.

The Committee voted: To report back to the City Council with a recommendation to place on File.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley  
Clerk of Committees