

LUNENBURG BOARD OF ASSESSORS
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2026
RITTER BUILDING, LOWER LEVEL
960 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE

Minutes Approved Date
BPL April 8, 2026

Present Members: Chair Brian Laffond, Member Brian Marple,
Principal Assessor Lynda Cajka

Absent Member: Vice Chair Sarah Cammer

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting opened at 6:35p.m..

Note: The Chair incorrectly stated that the meeting was being held on January 6, 2026.

The posted Agenda (and these minutes) reflect the correct date of January 7, 2026.

OPENING COMMENTS

- Board

Brian Marple confirmed he completed 7 out of the 10 Assessor Training modules, including the modules that allow him to vote on substantive matters.

- Public

There were no comments from the public.

STATUS REPORT FROM PRINCIPAL ASSESSOR

- Update on Tax Billing/Munis Update. Other items as needed.

Lynda Cajka provided the following updates from last month.

- 11 abutters list requests were received for the month of December.
- 27 motor vehicle excise tax abatements were received and processed.
 - They are currently awaiting payment from the tax collector.
- All tax bills were sent to the company to print and were mailed on December 19, 2025.
- The FY26 tax rate of \$14.39 per thousand was certified by the Massachusetts Bureau of Accounts on December 4, 2025.
 - This is a 3% increase from last year.
- The Assessing Assistant has processed all warrants and commitments.
The warrant for real estate totaled \$17,429,871.19.

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The Assessors Office plans to add real estate exemptions into Vision for tracking purposes.

The position of Special Assistant to the Assessor (in support of the Neighborhood Directive from the DOR) needs to be posted.

Lynda Cajka and Randy Mercier will be meeting next month to discuss the personal property bridge issue that has not been corrected.

CURRENT BUSINESS

- Review and Approve Minutes of September 3, 2025, & October 1, 2025, October 16, 2025, October 22, 2025, November 3, 2025, November 19, 2025 & December 3, 2025, & Executive Session Minutes for November 19, 2025 & December 3, 2025.

This topic was postponed until the next meeting when Sarah Cammer will also be present.

- Assessor Website Change and Approval by Board of Assessors.

Brian Laffond states there haven't been many changes over the last several months.

There was some discussion about formatting issues, broken links, and minor changes to address.

Brian Laffond wants to have the YouTube links added to the minutes for accessibility.

- FY2027 Overlay and Growth Estimates

There was a motion to maintain the \$400,000 growth for the year by Brian Laffond, seconded by Brian Merple.

The estimated overlay budget for FY2026 was originally \$175,000. We wound up with ~\$164,000. We will exceed that amount.

- FY2026 there were a total of 8 applications for Senior Means Tested Exemption (SMTE). 6 of those applications were approved.
- FY2026 SMTE totaled \$16,380. Lynda Cajka estimated that we could expect about 20 applications for FY2027 (for about \$56,400).
- Based on the aforementioned factors, (the increases in maximum income and asset qualifying criteria, increases to the exemptions amounts (including COLA), and the potential for an increase in the Senior Means Tested Exemptions, we should expect significant use of the Overlay.

- There was a motion to set the target overlay for FY27 at \$260,000 by Brian Laffond, seconded by Brian Marple. All in favor.
- Budget:
 1. There was a brief review of the budget for the Assessor's Office provided by Lynda Cajka. In total there was a +5% increase from last year. This is largely driven by inflation and existing contracted services.
- Mapping Software
 1. Lynda Cajka followed up with Data Scout and wants them to come in for a presentation. She was informed that their system has the capacity and accessibility to update information from the field.
- Land Condition Factors/DOR Objective
 1. There have been 358 land condition adjustments identified that need to be inspected. 289 parcels are residential and 69 are commercial/industrial.
 2. A letter will be sent to homeowners of all land parcels.
 3. The DOR doesn't want an excessive number of adjustments.
- The Board signed the warrant to be submitted to the tax collector regarding the excise tax bills.
- In the next several weeks, the office anticipates starting the neighborhood directive, finalizing map updates, and starting to prepare for FY27.

POSTPONED TOPICS

- BOA Policies Binder
- Update to New Mapping Software
- Criteria for Clause 18
 1. After much research, Brian Laffond found 2 communities that actually have written criteria for Clause 18. The main consensus was hardship eligibility is determined to be at the discretion of the Assessors, especially for military and seniors. Brian Laffond proposed waiting to create criteria until an application has been submitted. There will be further discussion at upcoming meetings.

UPCOMING MEETING/EVENTS SCHEDULE

Upcoming Tentative Meetings: February 4, 2026, February 25, 2026 & March 4, 2026.
(All meetings scheduled for 6:30p.m. with location varying each meeting).

CLOSING COMMENTS

- Public

There were no comments from the public.

- Board

Brian Laffond received a message from Melissa Richard (Executive Assistant to the Town Manager & Select Board) stating the annual town report for FY25 is due February 19, 2026. Brian Laffond will draft a document for the Board to review at the next meeting.

ADJOURN

There was a motion to adjourn the open meeting and enter executive session, not to return to the open session after exiting the executive session by Brian Laffond, seconded by Brian Marple. All in favor.

The meeting closed at 8:27p.m..

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
2/4/26
R.P.L.



**TOWN OF LUNENBURG
BOARD OF ASSESSORS
Minutes, January 7, 2026
Executive Session**

Executive Session started at 8:35 p.m..

Attending the executive session were the Chair, Brian Laffond and Board member Brian Marple. A total of 5 real estate exemptions were reviewed with Lynda Cajka, the Assessor. All of the 5 real estate exemptions were approved by the Board of Assessors.

The breakdown of the 5 real estate exemption applications that were approved include:

- 2 of Clause 22/Veteran Applications
- 1 of the Clause 22E Application
- 1 of the Clause 22D Application
- 1 of the 41D Clause Application

The Assessor also discussed the 3 Real Estate Abatements for FY2026 that were received, but no further discussion nor vote was taken by the Board of Assessors as these would be discussed and voted at the next meeting in February.

Meeting adjourned 9:03 p.m.