

ASSESSORS NEWS**FY18 Triennial Revaluation - Property Values and Tax Rates (UPDATE)**

FY18 was a triennial revaluation year. Updated values were determined for residential, commercial, and industrial properties through the use of appraisal consultants. Mark Rodriguez of MRValuation was contracted jointly by the Towns of Rowe, Florida, and Monroe for appraisal of the Brookfield and TransCanada (now Great River Hydro) hydroelectric generating facilities. Glenn Walker of GESansoucy PE was contracted for appraisal of the Yankee-Rowe Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation (ISFSI). Duane Adams of Mayflower Valuations was contracted to assist with appraisal of the residential properties.

FY18 proposed values were submitted to the MA Dept of Revenue (DOR) on September 15 and preliminary certification was received on September 28. A public disclosure period (from September 30 – October 11) was publicly noticed in the Greenfield Recorder and the new property values were posted at the Town Hall, Post Office, Refuse Garden and on the town website (rowe-ma.gov). Final certification of values from the DOR was received on October 27.

Total town valuation for FY18 *decreased ~4%* to \$283,608,234. This change was primarily due to decreases in hydroelectric facility property values whereas home, building lot, and excess land values generally increased based on the real estate sales analysis:

- Home values *increased ~1%*
- Bldg lot values *increased ~13%*
- Excess Land values *increased ~11%*

A Tax Classification Hearing with the Board of Selectmen was held on November 1 to select the Minimum Residential Factor (MRF). The Minimum Residential Factor (MRF) determines the amount the tax burden will be shifted from Residential (R) to Commercial-Industrial-Personal (CIP) and establishes the split tax rates (R/CIP). The Board of Assessors signed the warrants for the FY18 Real Estate and Personal Property taxes on November 8 and the tax bills were mailed on November 12.

The **FY18 tax rates** are as follows: (note these tax rates ended up higher than what had been projected in May primarily due to the decrease in total town valuation)

<b>Residential:</b>	<b>\$6.86</b>	(FY17 tax rate: \$6.19)
<b>Commercial-Industrial-Personal:</b>	<b>\$14.73</b>	(FY 17 tax rate: \$13.67)

## **Applications for Property Tax Abatement**

Applications for abatement for FY18 real estate and personal property taxes must be submitted to the Assessor's Office no later than **one month** after the first half tax bills are mailed (**due December 12**). Contact Sandy Daviau, Assessors Clerk at the Town Hall (339-5520) with any questions or to request an Abatement Application Form.

Note that the filing of an Abatement Application does not stay the collection of your taxes. The Assessors have three months from your submittal date in which to act upon your Abatement Application.

## **Applications for Property Tax Exemptions**

The following Mass General Laws (MGL) Chapter 59, Section 5 property tax exemptions are currently available to eligible Rowe taxpayers:

- **Clause 17D** – Surviving Spouse, Minor Child, Seniors (Exemption amount: **\$175**)
- **Clause 22, 22A-E, Paraplegic** – Qualifying Veterans (Exemption amount: **varies**)
- **Clause 37A** – Blind Persons (Exemption amount: **\$500**)
- **Clause 41A** – Seniors Property Tax Deferral (**not an exemption**)
- **Clause 41C** – Seniors (Exemption amount: up to **\$1000**)

Some exemption applications require the disclosure of certain personal financial information. Applications must be submitted to the Assessors Office no later than **three months** after the first tax bills are mailed (**due February 12**). Contact Sandy Daviau, Assessors Clerk at the Town Hall (339-5520) for more information on eligibility requirements, exemption benefits, and to obtain an Exemption Application Form.

Note that the filing of an Exemption Application does not stay the collection of your taxes. Following submittal, the Assessors have three months in which to act upon your Exemption Application.

## **Personal Property Exemption**

The Town previously adopted provisions of Mass General Laws Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 54 to establish an exemption from taxation on personal property valued less than or equal \$10,000. This automatic exemption is only applicable to residents, businesses, or second home owners whose personal property is valued at less than or equal to \$10,000. Those taxpayers with personal property assessed at greater than \$10,000 will receive a personal property tax bill, based on the full assessed value of their personal property, for FY18.

## **Tax Breaks for Active Military Personnel**

Certain tax breaks are also available for Rowe taxpayers who are active military personnel per the referenced MGLs, as described below:

- **MGL Chapter 59, Section 5L** provides a **deferral of property taxes** due by a member of the Massachusetts National Guard or reservist, or a dependent of a member of the Massachusetts National Guard or reservist, on active service outside the Commonwealth and for the next 180 days after that service.
- **MGL Chapter 60A, Section 1** provides an **exemption from motor vehicle excise** for Massachusetts residents who are on active military duty outside the country for at least 45 days of the excise calendar year, or if wounded or killed in an armed conflict, the exemption applies regardless of the number of days deployed.
- **MGL Chapter 60A, Section 9** provides a **deferral of motor vehicle excise** due by a member of the Massachusetts National Guard or reservist, or a dependent of a member of the Massachusetts National Guard or reservist, on active service outside the Commonwealth and for a period of up to 180 days after completion of that service.

For more information, on the tax breaks for military personnel, please contact Sandy Daviau, Assessors Clerk at the Town Hall (413-339-5520).