

## BOARD OF ASSESSORS

With each new year brings new legislation that needs to be implemented. Fiscal year 2005 brought Interim Year Adjustments. This is the first year that the Board of Assessors was required to review property sales in a non-revaluation year to make sure that our assessments and recent sales were within acceptable ratio ranges put forth by the Department of Revenue. We found that the assessment to sales ratio was well below the acceptable level. The average residential assessment was increased approximately 18%. This came as no surprise to residents when they compared their assessment to sale prices of homes similar to theirs that had sold recently. In reviewing the commercial properties the market remained unchanged since our last full revaluation.

The Board of Assessors also advocated for new guidelines for Statutory Exemptions for Senior's (70 and older). The dollar amount of tax relief was increased as was the minimum income and asset guidelines. This board realized that more and more seniors were struggling to make ends meet on fixed incomes so when our Legislators modified the current regulations though a local acceptance option, we brought this article to Town meeting floor and was approved overwhelming.

New legislation or current legislation that has been amended brings additional work to each municipal office. This office is no exception as we have new guidelines for excise abatements, Veteran's Statutory Exemptions, Senior Exemptions, Community Preservation Surcharge exemptions and the additional task of Interim Year Adjustments, just to name a few. With a staff of one and limited hours we take pride to meet all requirements and deadlines. We have dedicated regular blocks of times to be able to provide the best customer service we can. We also have hours reserved to be able to complete all necessary state and local reports, processing abatements and exemptions, updating our database and mapping. We want to thank the patience of all our residents who may have been greeted by our answering machine or a closed door. We are working hard to serve you, the taxpayer, in person and behind the scenes. This Board would not be able to achieve all that was accomplished this past year without our assistant, Ann Murphy. It never ceases to amaze this three-member board Ann's dedication to the town residents and co-workers. She is constantly educating herself to better serve the town through seminars, workshops and networking with other municipalities assessing departments.

On a final note the Board would like to thank all town officials and townhouse staff who assist this office throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane L. Hildreth, MAA, Chairperson  
Stanley W. Witkop, Assessor  
MaryLou Majkut, Assessor  
Ann Murphy, Assistant to the Board