

**BOARD OF ABATEMENT**  
**January 28,2026**  
**Municipal Building, Conference Room at 6:30 P.M.**

BCA members present were Butch Shaw, Dolores Gecha, Mark Winslow, David Mills, Elizabeth Simpson, Thomas Hooker, Donna Wilson, and Ernest Clerihew  
Non-Members present Ann Reed, Corrie Dickman, Mary McNamara, Roger B. Etherington

**Agenda**

Request to amend the agenda-

- Add discussion of Errors and Omission from Xerox Financial
- Adopt Board of Abatement procedures

David Mills made the motion to approve the agenda as amended, second to the motion made by Mark Winslow.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Rules of Meetings**

Butch Shaw presented the draft form of meeting procedures. These procedures were created with guidance from the Secretary of State. A motion to continue with the updated procedures was made by David Mills. A second was made by Mark Winslow. The motion passed unanimously.

**Update on Members**

Butch Shaw advised that three members have resigned:

- Terry Poor has moved
- Bonnie Stewart has resigned
- Matt Candon has resigned.

Reminder for current members to be certain the Ethics training has been completed.  
Butch spoke to the BOA about staffing changes within the Town: Ann Reed as Town Manager; Dolores Gecha current Assistant Clerk/Treasurer, running for Town Clerk/Treasurer; Corrie Dickman as Bookkeeper; Leslie Gandin as Administrative Assistant; and William Pratico as acting Police Chief since Chief Warfle's retirement on December 31, 2025.

**Act on requests for Abatements**

- **Request for Abatement of Interest & Penalty on Parcel 0786 owned by Mary McNamara**

Ms. McNamara was present. Chair asked the board of any members had any exparte communications concerning this request; none noted. Clerk asked the standard oath and Ms. McNamara affirmed

Butch Shaw requested a brief synopsis of the request from Ms. McNamara and confirmed that the request by statute falls under the manifest error.

Ms. McNamara confirmed the property was purchased in April, however she did not moved into it until July. During that time, no mail was received in the previous owner's name, thus taxes were thought to have been settled at the time of the property transfer closing. She was not aware of the past due status until the letter arrived from the town dated November 18, 2025. She promptly went to the town office to pay and request relief from the penalties and interest.

Discussion regarding events of the closing surrounding tax payment. Butch Shaw advised property owners due diligence for tax due dates.

Ms. McNamara was advised that she will be notified of the Boards decision within 30 days. Ms. McNamara left. Chair Shaw moved the meeting into deliberative session at 6:53pm.

After deliberation a motion was made by David Mills, seconded by Mark Winslow, to deny the request for abatement, unanimously agreed upon.

- **Request for Abatement of Interest & Penalty on Parcel 1351 owned by Roger “Barry” Etherington.**

Mr. Etherington joined the meeting attendance at 7:00 PM.

Chair confirmed that Mr. Etherington received the draft rules for the hearing. Chair asked the board of any members had any exparte communications concerning this request; none noted. Clerk asked the standard oath and Mr. Etherington affirmed.

Chair Shaw confirmed the request for abatement was completed and is applicable under the manifest error per VSA. Mr. Etherington was asked to give his testimony at this point. Mr. Etherington stated that on September 27, 2025, or thereabouts, he mailed two checks (#1527 and #1528) within the same envelope, for tax payment of two properties. Mr. Etherington provided documentation, which not submitted to record, to verify one check was processed through his bank on October 3, 2025. He was not aware that the second check was not processed until he received the letter from the Town dated November 18, 2025, applying penalties and interest. Mr. Etherington requests relief of these penalties and interest based on the assumption that clerks’ office inadvertently lost the second check. Butch Shaw opens the discussion up by asking if there are any questions. Mr. Etherington does have one question, what is the best practice for mailing payment in. No clear response, it is advised that the clerk’s office receives payment via mail, drop off, and drop-box. It is the discretion of the payor.

Chair asks the Clerk’s office to advise on procedures for receiving mail payments. In this case, Dolores would have picked up the mail on the date the receipted check was processed. Corrie processed check 1528. Butch Shaw asks Clerk’s office if there is any recollection of this payment and if two checks were noted. Clerk’s office stated that to the best knowledge, a second check was not and has not been located.

Butch Shaw advised Mr. Etherington that a decision will be made and he will be notified in writing within 30 days. Mr. Etherington exited the meeting at 7:13pm and the board began closed session deliberations.

After deliberation a motion was made by Tom Hooker, seconded by David Mills, to deny the request for abatement- voted 6-2-0 in favor of denying the request.

**Other items presented for discussion**

- Request from Ann Reed, Tax Collector, regarding equipment removed from Omya. This equipment totals \$7.17 tax, penalties, and interest due. The request is brought forth under errors and omissions. It was to be brought to the Selectboard; however, the December 31<sup>st</sup> deadline was missed.

Motion to approve the abatement for \$7.17 was made by David Mills, seconded by Tom Hooker. Approved unanimously.

- Chair spoke to the BOA regarding the notification from the USPS for delay of mail, potential to have significant delay from mail drop until postmark. Reminder that the Town does not accept postmarked mail as proof of timely payment towards tax and utility bills. It was suggested that a reminder notification be more prominent in the next billing.

**Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Tom Hooker and seconded by David Mills. Approved unanimously. The Board of Abatement adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Corrie Dickman  
BCA Clerk

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Charles "Butch" Shaw  
BCA, Chair