

1 Sec. X. 1 V.S.A. § 312a is added to read:

2 § 312a. MEETINGS OF PUBLIC BODIES; STATE OF EMERGENCY

3 (a) For purposes of this section:

4 (1) “Affected public body” means a public body whose regular meeting
5 location is within an area affected by a hazard.

6 (2) “Hazard” means an “all-hazards” as defined in 20 V.S.A. § 2(1).

7 (b) Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 312, during a declared state of emergency
8 under 20 V.S.A. chapter 1:

9 (1) a quorum or more of an affected public body may attend a regular,
10 special, or emergency meeting by electronic or other means without
11 designating a physical meeting location where the public may attend;

12 (2) the members and staff of a public body shall not be required to be
13 physically present at a designated meeting location;

14 (3) an affected public body of a municipality may post any meeting
15 agenda or notice of a special meeting in two designated electronic locations in
16 lieu of the two designated public places in the municipality, or in a
17 combination of a designated electronic location and a designated public place;
18 and

19 (4) in the event of a staffing shortage, an affected public body may
20 extend the deadline for the posting of minutes under 1 V.S.A. § 312(b)(2) to
21 not more than 10 days from the date of the meeting.

1 all questions and objections are heard and decided. Each property, the
2 appraisal of which is being appealed, shall be inspected by a committee of not
3 less than three members of the board who shall report to the board within 30
4 days from the hearing on the appeal and before the final decision pertaining to
5 the property is given. If, after notice, the appellant refuses to allow an
6 inspection of the property as required under this subsection, including the
7 interior and exterior of any structure on the property, the appeal shall be
8 deemed withdrawn. The board shall, within 15 days from the time of the
9 report, certify in writing its notice of decision, with reasons, in the premises,
10 and shall file ~~such~~ the notice with the town clerk who shall thereupon record
11 the same in the book wherein the appeal was recorded and forthwith notify the
12 appellant in writing of the action of such board, by certified mail. If the board
13 does not substantially comply with the requirements of this subsection and if
14 the appeal is not withdrawn by filing written notice of withdrawal with the
15 board or deemed withdrawn as provided in this subsection, the grand list of the
16 appellant for the year for which appeal is being made shall remain at the
17 amount set before the appealed change was made by the listers; except, if there
18 has been a complete reappraisal, the grand list of the appellant for the year for
19 which appeal is being made shall be set at a value which will produce a tax
20 liability equal to the tax liability for the preceding year. The town clerk shall
21 immediately record the same in the book wherein the appeal was recorded and

1 forthwith notify the appellant in writing of ~~such~~ the action, by certified mail.

2 Thereupon the appraisal so determined pursuant to this subsection shall

3 become a part of the grand list of ~~such~~ the person.

4 (2) During a declared state of emergency under 20 V.S.A. chapter 1, a
5 board of civil authority within a municipality affected by the hazard shall not
6 be required to physically inspect any property that is the subject of an appeal.
7 If the appellant requests in writing that the property be inspected for purposes
8 of the appeal, a member or members of the Board shall conduct the inspection
9 through electronic means. If the appellant does not facilitate the inspection
10 through electronic means, then the appeal shall be deemed withdrawn.

11 (3) As used in this subsection, “electronic means” means the transmittal
12 of video or photographic evidence by the appellant at the direction of the
13 Board members conducting the inspection.

14 * * *

15 Sec. Z. 32 V.S.A. § 4467 is amended to read:

16 § 4467. DETERMINATION OF APPEAL

17 (a) Upon appeal to the Director or the Court, the hearing officer or Court
18 shall proceed de novo and determine the correct valuation of the property as
19 promptly as practicable and to determine a homestead and a housesite value if
20 a homestead has been declared with respect to the property for the year in
21 which the appeal is taken. The hearing officer or Court shall take into account

1 the requirements of law as to valuation, and the provisions of Chapter I, Article
2 9 of the Constitution of Vermont and the 14th Amendment to the Constitution
3 of the United States.

4 (b) If the hearing officer or Court finds that the listed value of the property
5 subject to appeal does not correspond to the listed value of comparable
6 properties within the town, the hearing officer or Court shall set ~~said~~ the
7 property in the list at a corresponding value. The findings and determinations
8 of the hearing officer shall be made in writing and shall be available to the
9 appellant.

10 (c)(1) If the appeal is taken to the Director, the hearing officer may inspect
11 the property prior to making a determination, unless one of the parties requests
12 an inspection, in which case the hearing officer shall inspect the property prior
13 to making a determination. Within 10 days of the appeal being filed with the
14 Director, the Director shall notify the property owner in writing of his or her
15 option to request an inspection under this section.

16 (2) During a declared state of emergency under 20 V.S.A. chapter 1, a
17 hearing officer shall not be required to physically inspect any property that is
18 the subject of an appeal. If the appellant requests in writing that the property
19 be inspected for purposes of the appeal, the hearing officer shall conduct the
20 inspection through electronic means. If the appellant does not facilitate the

1 inspection through electronic means, then the appeal shall be deemed
2 withdrawn.

3 (3) As used in this subsection, “electronic means” means the transmittal
4 of video or photographic evidence by the appellant at the direction of the
5 hearing officer conducting the inspection.

6 Sec. XY. REPEAL

7 19 V.S.A. § 312 (use of town highway funds) is repealed.

8 Sec. XYZ. EFFECTIVE DATES

9 (a) Secs. X, Y, Z, and this section shall take effect on January 1, 2021.

10 (b) Sec. XY shall take effect on July 1, 2021.