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**John Murray**

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**From:** John Murray  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2004 5:30 PM  
**To:** Board of Selectmen  
**Cc:** Bill Ryan; Don Johnson; Stephen Barrett  
**Subject:** A-B Regional Debt Exclusions (Assessment) for FY '04 and Jim Johnson of DOR

As the Board may recall, our ability to complete the Tax Classification process was contingent upon the Region obtaining a variance from the Department of Revenue. Bill Ryan had attempted several times to reach Mr. James Johnson of DOR to obtain his determination upon the Region's request (to offset the FY '05 requirement to net the appropriate portion of Bond Premium against the amount of the Debt Exclusion by the methodology employed by the Region in determining the FY '04 Debt Exclusion amount/Assessment). Bill's attempts were unsuccessful. Bill called yesterday and asked the Town to intervene on the Region's behalf.

Don was able to speak to Mr. Johnson a few minutes ago and Jim Johnson has not completed his review at this time. Consequently, the Board will need to continue the Classification Hearing to 8:00 PM on March 8, 2004. Mr. Johnson has assured Don that he will complete his analysis by that date.

The Town's Tax program, as with all Mass. property tax programs, are programmed to convert the first two preliminary tax bill payments into a final bill calculation in December. Due to the Region's issue with DOR, we are required to change the code of our Tax Program. Concluding the Tax Classification Hearing on March 8 (the last possible date) places a significant burden upon Finance Department Staff to determine if there are any unintended consequences of the required reprogramming. In order to have the Classification Hearing on March 8 and issue the final tax bill of FY '04, we need the Region's cooperation to insure every base is covered prior to the March 8. Those bases are:

1. A final written determination by DOR.
2. If the determination is unfavorable - a revised Regional Assessment Vote.
3. Realignment of Revenues due to "Pothole Funds", Revised Minuteman Assessment, etc.
4. A certification signed by the Treasurer of the Region stating "The following amounts may be added to the tax levy by means of Regional Debt excluded from the Limits of Prop 2 1/2, so called, under Massachusetts Law and all rules and regulations of the Department of Revenue
  - a) a reconciliation of the amounts taxed and the actual amount incurred for FY '02 and FY '03
  - b) The projected amount to be taxed for FY '04, including the delineation of any adjustments from FY'

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John

2/20/2004