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Subject: Open seat on the Board of Assessors

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Dear Members of the Select Board,

Please find attached a letter requesting consideration for the open seat on the Board of Assessors.

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Respectfully,
Phillip Lohnes CPA

Phillip Lohnes, CPA
22 Bartlett Ave
Arlington, MA 02476

August 12, 2021

The Select Board and
The Board of Assessors
Arlington Town Hall
760 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington MA, 02476

Dear Board Members,

I would ask for your consideration for appointment to the open seat on the Arlington Board of Assessors. As you may be aware I ran a close second to Mr. Feeley in the recent election for this seat. During my concession to Mr. Feeley, I came to learn what big shoes I had been attempting to fill by running. He and I had planned to get together sometime this summer because of our common interests and my desire to learn from him the history (from a building perspective) of Arlington. A treasure of public service was lost with his passing.

I ask for your consideration because I bring these strengths to the position.

Understanding

My first job out of college was a startup software company in 1981. Our first client was a real estate appraiser: the people you hire to appeal your real estate assessment. We obtained raw data and organized it for non-computer literate (typical at the time) appraisers to access easily. We worked with the appraisers to collate the data in ways that allowed them to accurately understand the comparable buildings for each class of real estate.

Fiduciary responsibility

The assessors' office's job is to determine, fairly, the value of each piece of real estate in town. Just as a CPA is required to present, fairly, financial data to various stakeholders (Banks, Investors, etc.). I take that responsibility seriously, and feel it is what I owe to every voter in town. There should be confidence that everyone is paying their fair share.

Transparency

Hand in hand with Fiduciary responsibility is transparency. If the Assessors' office does not communicate what it does and how it does it, and in an accessible way, it is hard for the average voter to have confidence in the process even if it is done well. Having to explain the subtlety of financial statement and the complexity of taxes, as I do, has prepared me to bring clarity to the process of assessment.

I thank you for your consideration of me for this position.

Sincerely,

Phillip P. Lohnes