

The Board of Equalization Meeting on April 12, 2016 was called to order at 6:00 pm at Beulah City Hall by Mayor Darrell Bjerke.

Present: Ben Lenzen, Clyde Schulz, Alan Kok, Brant Keller, Roger Gazur, Kathy Kelsch

Absent: Travis Frey, Kirby Morgenstern

Also Present: City Assessor Soojin Lee, City Coordinator Russell Duppong, Kate Johnson, Administrative Assistant Renee Carlson, Beulah Residents

Bjerke commented we are required every year by the State of North Dakota to hold a Board of Equalization meeting to make sure property assessments are in order as comparable sales would indicate. The values in the letters meet the median percentage of 93%. The State requires between 90 and 100%. If we don't meet the minimum, the State will increase properties to 100%. Beulah is in the same grouping with the other cities in the County since we don't have a population of 5,000. There aren't too many changes we can make unless there is a mistake in the records of your property or if you have had a recent appraisal by a reputable firm.

Gazur commented that the Council challenged the numbers in the past and the County overrode it, but we had just cause to challenge it. He commented on two of the criteria used by the State to judge the accuracy of assessments and stated Beulah is at an acceptable level for each one after the current adjustments. He stated looking at the procedure and results; it would be baseless for the Council to challenge the County's evaluations. Gazur indicated the publication he referred to is available on the ND State Tax Commissioner's website.

Larry Gabriel questioned new construction and how it factors into these sales. He questioned how the values are determined. Bjerke stated the building permit and land value is what the value is based on. Schulz stated a new house construction value would be set but not used as part of comparable sales. Discussion followed on sales differential. Amanda Hoffer questioned why their house isn't on the list of house sales. Bjerke stated the list is provided by the Register of Deeds in Stanton and that could be researched. Dave Staloch stated the land value has not gone up or down and questioned what that is based on. Schulz stated in the past the value of the land has pretty much stayed the same. He stated commercial properties have not gone up because there are not any comparable sales to use. Hoffer questioned if the comparable sales of land could figure in to commercial properties so those values would increase. Gabriel questioned the number of sales needed for a reassessment. Gazur stated a minimum of 30 sales is required or previous year sales are added in. Gabriel questioned the time an appraisal would be needed and Bjerke stated it would be needed now. Hoffer commented on the house they purchased in August and stated an appraisal was done at that time by someone certified by the State. She stated they were denied the decrease in value. Schulz stated the County has the final say as far as adjusting a value based on an appraisal. Hoffer presented NDCC 57.11.03 on the duties of the City Board of Equalization. Bjerke stated we do have the authority to make changes, but we also have the choice to defer it to the County

to help make that decision. A resident questioned if the City is broken up by area in town. Lee commented on the factors taken into consideration when determining the value: year built, grade, style, condition and square footage. Bjerke commented if you are in the flood plain that factor would be taken into account.

Bjerke commented on the City mill levy. Dittus questioned why we use Vanguard. Bjerke stated they were hired to visit each property initially and it is the software we use now. Blaisdell questioned if this will turn out to be common by the State, County and City where every year the values continue to go up. Bjerke stated if sales continue to go up then it will continue. Kelsch stated the true concern is not the values of the properties but how those values translate to our taxes. She suggested those concerned go to the budget meetings of all taxing entities using the tax dollars. Lenzen commented it would be good to have a preliminary meeting before the equalization meeting in the future. He stated the downtown business district is undervalued and some items need to be looked into. Gabriel thanked Gazur and Bjerke for approaching the County. Blaisdell questioned property taxes of Beulah compared to Bismarck for the same value house. Keller stated the tax rates of each County are listed on the ND Tax Commissioner's website. Kok commented on the wide range of taxes in different areas.

Gazur made a motion seconded by Schulz to accept the report of property values from the City Assessor with the exception of any appraisals turned in tonight. Roll call vote found Lenzen, Schulz, Keller, Kok, Kelsch and Gazur in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

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Darrell R. Bjerke, Mayor

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Heather Ferebee, Auditor