

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 10, 2009
TO: Town Council
FROM: Anne Gregory, Assessor
RE: Assessing Dept Operations

As the town's appraiser, the Assessor is mandated by Maine's constitution to determine the market value of property for the collection of property taxes. According to MRSA Title 36, the Assessor must:

- Be a Certified Maine Assessor and complete 12 hours of annual continuing education
- Maintain an assessment-to-sale price ratio average of 70% minimum to 110% maximum
- Sustain a Coefficient of Dispersion (COD) rating that is less than 20

Per the State's last ratio study, for sales from July 2007 to June 2008, the average ratio was 94%; COD at 7.

Annual Work (2008 statistics)

- Inspect and revise assessments with building permit activity (494).
- Inspections to qualify sales for revaluation (295).
- Create new lots from Planning Board approvals and recorded deed "splits" (19).
- Process Personal Property/Business Equipment §706 forms (507).
- Change ownership per monthly deeds received from County Registry (391).
- Process Tree Growth, Farmland, Open Space, Homestead, Veteran & Blind exemptions (3,518).
- Track and report TIF Districts real and personal property growth (152 parcels/135 PP accts).
- Edit maps and compile documentation for annual mapping changes (256).
- Complete annual reports: Commitment/Tax Rate Year End, Municipal Valuation Return, Ratio Study, Maine Forest Service, Personal Property-Business Equipment BETR 801s.

2008 Revaluation

In addition to the annual assessment work, the assessing department finalized a revaluation. The two year project was completed by the Assessor; Administrative Assistant Pam Given; consultant Diana Calder, CMA; and commercial appraiser Steve Traub. In August, the assessor met with 460+ taxpayers.

The 2008 valuation model was created from qualified sales that occurred from January 2006 through October 2007. While the volume of sales has decreased by 40% since then, the average residential sale price has remained stable at \$460,000. Currently, there are very few vacant lot sales.

On April 2, 2009, the 2008 appeal deadline, 30 taxpayers filed appeals. One taxpayer appealed the assessor's denial to the Board of Assessment Review where it was also denied. Currently the BAR is scheduled to hear four additional appeals in July. The Assessor has 10 appeals to respond to before July 31.

2009 Assessment Year

Before the 2009 assessments can be committed in September, the assessing office must:

- Finalize real estate assessments (95% complete).
- Process personal property returns (70% complete).
- Create new lots (30% complete).
- Approve new Homestead, Veteran and Blind exempt applications (10% complete).
- Data enter deeds from April 2008 to March 2009 (80% complete).
- Data enter deeds from April to July 2009 for Tax Collection's "future owner" request (0% complete).
- Mail change of value letters (0% complete).
- Update Tree Growth parcels with 2009 rates (0% complete).