

*Approved*

**Lutsen Township Board of Appeals & Equalization  
Meeting Minutes  
April 16, 2019  
Lutsen Township Hall**

**Present:** Sharon Hexum-Platzer, Todd Smith, Rachel Espe, Bob Thompson, Kyle, Nelson, Christine Ordemann, Kyle Nelson, Andrew Beavers, Carl Friesner, Steve & Deb Dobbelmann

**Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 6.00 pm by Andrew Beavers

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Flag addressed

**Board of Appeals Business:**

Todd Smith, county assessor, explained that this meeting is meeting to share the process of valuation, classifications and any disputes property owners have. Each property value is based on several factors, size, age, amount of property, improvements –if any, changes since the last assessment and the sales that occurred in the marketplace. Smith explained that the summary of the valuation requests from Lutsen resident is available in the Assessor's office.

Each person requested to be heard was asked to explain his/her request. Sharon Hexum-Platzer shared that she had contacted the Assessor's office about the increase in valuation and that she called a second time to request information on neighbor property changes for a comparison. She shared that information. While her home is the oldest on Evergreen Road some of the other homes went down in value. All others' land values [except one] including hers went up a great deal. But there was inconsistent increases. Smith explained differences and that the previous valuation of properties was in 2009. Thompson added more information by showing sales of Caribou Lake properties. He also explained that with Hexum-Platzer's improvements the home & buildings were rated above average. A Beavers asked if the new valuation was accepted by Hexum-Platzer and she agreed and thanked the assessment team for their consideration.

Next was K. Nelson who thanked the assessment team for previous work and asked if they could explain market valuation. T Smith explained that the assessor's job is to insure that property is properly assessed and properly valued. The bases of that information included that most 2020 values went up by 20% county wide. He added that there were over 350 sales in the county. The average value of a home in Cook County is \$254,000 whereas the average value of a home in Lake County is \$150,000. Our taxes are higher. Period. Nelson shared amounts and changes to nearby neighbors and felt this variable needs an explanation since those with vast improvements have not seen a value increase. T Smith again offered another review and enter the home evaluate any change Nelson property but it may decrease or increase valuation.

Steve and Deb Dobbelmann said they too asked about market valuation but after listening to the previous answers understood more. Their taxes have doubled in the last year with this valuation. T Smith said they after this meeting they could bring their concerns and questions to the County commissioners. Smith reminded those whose property tax increased at least 12% [not including levy] can also apply for a refund using the MPR1 form which is also available in the Assessor's Office.

**Citizen Comments:** Vacation rentals have been classified as seasonal/recreational which was originally intended to help those who had a cabin as a part time use home. K Nelson reiterated his point that if someone can afford second and third homes, they should be paying more in taxes than those residents who make their single home here. The discussion included recent work to change vacation rentals from the seasonal/recreational to residential non-homestead which will keep the tax monies in the County. This issue is being addressed at a May meeting. Several other counties have already made this decision. B Thompson shared that the increased monies will give a 10% increase in funds for County budget.

The updated list of properties with valuation changes was presented by R Espe and T Smith. C Ordemann made a motion to accept these changes. C Friesner seconded. Motion passed.

**Adjournment:** A Beavers made a motion to adjourn. C Friesner seconded. Motion passed Meeting adjourned the meeting at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Hexum-Platzer  
Clerk