

**ST. LOUIS COUNTY SPECIAL BOARD
OF APPEAL AND EQUALIZATION
FOR THE ASSESSMENT YEAR
OF 2021 PAYABLE 2022**

The meeting of the 2021 St. Louis County Board of Appeal and Equalization (the “Board”) was called to order at 10:07 a.m. on Tuesday, June 15, 2021, from the St. Louis River Room, Government Services Center (GSC), Duluth, MN, by Phil Chapman, Deputy County Auditor/Clerk of County Board. By Resolution No. 21-298, adopted May 11, 2021, the St. Louis County Board of Commissioners appointed the following members to serve on the Special Board of Appeal and Equalization; roll call was taken:

John Vigen	District 1, present (WebEx)
John Doberstein	District 2, present (WebEx)
Leonard Cersine	District 4, temporarily absent – technical issues
Tim Peterson	District 5, present (WebEx)
Dawn Cole	District 6, present (WebEx)
Frank Bigelow	District 7, present (in-person)

The oath of office was administered to each member present by Deputy Auditor Chapman.

Deputy Auditor Chapman asked for nominations for Chair of the 2021 Special Board of Appeal and Equalization. John Vigen nominated John Doberstein for Chair; no other nominations were received. Leonard Cersine entered the meeting, via WebEx, at 10:10 a.m.; Deputy Auditor Chapman administered the oath of office to Leonard Cersine. Bigelow/Vigen moved to close nominations and declare John Doberstein Chair by unanimous ballot. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

Chair Doberstein asked for nominations for Vice-Chair of the 2021 Special Board of Appeal and Equalization. John Vigen nominated Dawn Cole for Vice-Chair; no other nominations were received. Vigen/Cersine moved to close nominations and declare Dawn Cole Vice-Chair by unanimous ballot. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

County Assessor David Sipila was present (WebEx) for all meetings of the Special Board of Appeal and Equalization.

Hearing appeals start time: 10:18 a.m.

Case No. 4A, Richard Voltzke, 3204 W. Tischer Rd., Duluth, MN, appealing parcel 415-0070-01830. Richard Voltzke, appearing in-person, disagreed with the assessor’s recommendation to reduce the building value by \$15,900, bringing the total assessment to \$287,300. Mr. Voltzke questioned the homestead classification and equalization of the property. The assessor commented that the homestead classification would carry over from the previous owner and noted that the initial assessor report listed the incorrect number of baths. After the correction, the assessor recommended that building value be decreased by \$18,000; total assessment of \$285,200. After further discussion, Vigen/Cersine moved to accept the assessor’s recommendation to reduce value by \$18,000 for a total assessment of \$285,200. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

Case No. 9A, James Ryan, Home on the Range Corp., 237 E. College Ave., Westerville, OH, appealing parcel 370-0040-00120. James Ryan, appearing by WebEx, said that he disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$265,600 because the cabin is not a full-year residence; whereas, adjoining properties are full-year residences. In addition, comparisons used by the assessor excluded family/friendly transfers of property. Vigen/Peterson moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call was taken. (5-1, Bigelow nay)

Case No. 10A, James Ryan, Ryan Family Cabin LLC., 10 W. Broad St., Ste 2100, Columbus, OH, appealing parcels 370-0063-00090, 370-0063-00091. James Ryan, appearing by WebEx, said that he disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$640,500 due to the minimal amount of frontage on the lake. In addition, the appellant was unable to sell a northern section of the property. The assessor commented that after review of the property, discrepancies were identified and corrected. Corrections included the foundation, bath count, and a garage bunkhouse. The corrections resulted in a net change of \$39,200 (\$50,100 building, -\$10,900 land); total assessment of \$640,500. Vigen/Cersine moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

Case No. 7L, Wayne Dubbin, 6226 Heldt Road, Hibbing, MN, appealing parcels 755-0010-04740, 755-0010-04655. The appellant disagreed with the Assessor's recommended assessment of \$185,900. The appellant disputed property valuation compared to neighboring properties. Bigelow/Peterson moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

Case No. 14L, Craig & Keri Whitman, 6429 McCormack Lake Rd., Chisholm, MN, appealing parcel 755-0050-00620. The appellant agreed with the assessor's recommendation to reduce building value by \$28,500 due to the quality of construction and basement finishing. In addition, the garage value was lowered due to more than typical foundation cracking and crumbling. The decrease in value of \$28,500 resulted in a recommended total assessment of \$229,000. Peterson/Cersine moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

Case No. 18L, Thomas Gavin, 1199 Culligan Ln., Mendota Heights, MN, appealing parcel 010-4045-00030. The appellant disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$932,900. Dawn Cole asked if the Board has historically adjusted properties that are pending tax court cases. County Assessor Sipila responded that the Assessor's office has received clarification from the MN Department of Revenue; nothing prevents the Board from acting on a parcel that is being appealed in tax court. However, the assessor staff does not recommend making an adjustment to the valuation of the property. After further discussion, Peterson/Cersine moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

The Board recessed at 11:30 a.m. At 11:36 a.m., the Board reconvened with all members present.

Case No. 27L, Jill Jacoby, 3971 Rehbein Rd., Duluth, MN, appealing parcel 520-0016-00700. The appellant disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$112,800 due to various issues related to the neighboring property. Peterson/Doberstein moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

Case No. 25A, Kevin Lund, 6434 Island Lake Dam Rd., Duluth, MN, appealing parcel 365-6000-33705. Kevin Lund, appearing by WebEx, said that he disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$400,500 due to the non-typical shape and depth of the property. Frank Bigelow made a motion to reduce the value of the upper/narrow portion of the property by 20%. John Vigen noted that the upper part already had a 50% reduction in value; Bigelow withdrew the motion. Vigen/Bigelow moved to reduce value of 170' of the property by 20% due to the depth and quality factor of the site. The result was a reduction in land value of \$15,700; total assessment is \$384,800. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

The Board recessed at 12:11p.m. At 2:04 p.m., the Board reconvened with all members present except John Vigen.

Case No. 30A, Betty McGiffert, 4954 8th Ave., Duluth, MN, appealing parcel 365-6000-03000. Betty McGiffert, appearing in-person, disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$245,900 due to the cabin being seasonal, unusable land due to steep banks on each side of the property, and limited use of the lake frontage. Ms. McGiffert also questioned the timing of the valuation in relation to sale of leased land by Minnesota Power. The assessor commented that re-appraisal happens on a 5-year schedule and has no relation to the Minnesota Power sale of leases. After further discussion, Cole/Cersine moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (4-1, Bigelow nay, Vigen absent)

Tim Peterson was temporarily out of the meeting from 2:27 p.m. to 2:34 p.m., technical issues.

Case No. 26AR, Luke Miller, 1614 Swan Lake Rd., Duluth, MN, appealing parcel 010-0530-02300. The appellant agreed with the assessor's recommendation to reduce building value by \$11,600. The reduction was made after performing a more thorough adjusted comparable analysis, which resulted in an adjustment to the overall age of the home. After the reduction, the total recommended assessment is \$127,300. Bigelow/Cersine moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. (4-0 Vigen, Peterson absent)

Case No. 15AR, Michael Erjavec, 7547 Airport Dr. N., Eveleth, MN, appealing parcel 340-0010-01960. The appellant agreed with the assessor's recommendation to reduce land value by \$8,500. Review of the parcel land attributes determined that there was lower quality land on the south and east side of the property. After the reduction, the total recommended assessment is \$118,000. Bigelow/Cersine moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. (5-0, Vigen absent)

Case No. 19AR, Larry Klocke, 21202 State Highway 30, Hayfield, MN, appealing parcel 335-0010-05800. The appellant agreed with the assessor's recommendation to reduce land value by \$2,500. During the re-appraisal a well was added to the record in error; the record was corrected and the well was removed and a holding tank was added. After the correction, the total recommended assessment is \$82,300. Bigelow/Peterson moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. (5-0, Vigen absent)

The Board recessed at 2:41 p.m. At 4:00 p.m., the Board reconvened with all members present.

Case No. 28L, Michael and Denise Effhauser, 7274 NE Birch Isle Rd., Duluth, MN, appealing parcel 660-6000-54615. The appellant disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$373,300 due to the deterioration of the property. After further discussion, Peterson/Bigelow moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

Case No. 29L, George Radosevich, 159 W. Orange St., Duluth, MN, appealing parcel 660-6000-40315. The appellant disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$122,500 due to the lack of a well, electricity, indoor plumbing, garage, or central heating. Vigen/Bigelow moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

Case No. 16A, Wendy Vondane, 2201 Norton Rd., Duluth, MN, appealing parcel 375-6000-07140. Wendy and Jim Vondane appeared in-person, said that they disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$230,800. Mr. Vondane said the land is narrow and has a swamp area. Mr. Vondane asked if there was a rule that restricts value increases of more than 10%. In response, Assessor Sipila commented that the limited market value law is no longer in effect. Ms. Vondane commented that they only use the property from June to August, and questioned the timing of the re-appraisal in relation to the sale of leased land by Minnesota Power. The assessor mentioned that adjustments have been made for the shape of the property. The assessor commented that re-appraisal happens on a 5-year schedule and has no relation to the Minnesota Power sale of leased land. After further discussion, Vigen/Cersine moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

At 4:56 p.m. Chair Doberstein recessed the County Board of Appeal and Equalization.

On Thursday, June 17, 2021, at 10:05 a.m. the County Board of Appeal and Equalization reconvened from the Government Services Center, Liz Prebich Room, Virginia, MN. The following members were present by WebEx: John Vigen, Tim Peterson, Dawn Cole, Frank Bigelow, and Chair John Doberstein – 5. Absent: Leonard Cersine (technical issues) - 1.

Leonard Cersine entered the meeting, via WebEx, at 10:18 a.m.

Case No. 2A, John L. Roskoski, 5409 North Court, Mountain Iron, MN, appealing parcel 175-0010-02500. Edmund Roskoski, on behalf of John Roskoski, appeared in-person at the Virginia GSC, disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$37,600 due to the overall condition of the property. The Assessor noted that the value was reduced by the Board in 2020; that same value was used for the 2021 recommended assessment. Vigen/Cersine moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (5-1, Cole nay)

Tim Peterson was temporarily out of the meeting from 10:27 a.m. to 10:38 a.m., technical issues.

Case No. 20L, Darwin and Kim Rasmusson, 6913 Taylor Rd., Virginia, MN, appealing parcel 570-0200-00100. The appellant agreed with the assessor's recommendation to reduce land value by \$4,500 and reduce building value by \$3,400; a total reduction of \$7,900. Upon review of a plat, river frontage was removed and adjustments were made to building attributes. The decrease in value of \$7,900, resulted in a recommended total assessment of \$391,500. Bigelow/Peterson moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (5-0, Cersine absent)

Case No. 12A, Gregory & Julie Michalski, 8240 Long Lake Lane, Eveleth, MN, appealing parcels 340-0110-00070, 340-0110-00080. The assessor's recommended assessment is \$298,000. Gregory Michalski, appearing in-person, said that the value should be reduced due to activity on a neighboring property. Cole/Bigelow moved to table discussion until photos of the neighboring property could be presented to the Board. The assessor presented an aerial view of neighboring properties, which detailed a pole building and neighboring property in relation to the appellant's

property. Cole/Bigelow withdrew the tabling motion. After further discussion, Peterson/Vigen moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (5-1, Bigelow nay)

Case No. 6L, Patty Lou Tuomi, 3103 Outer Dr., Hibbing, MN, appealing parcel 140-0097-00070. The appellant disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$155,600 due to various property issues. Chair Doberstein commented that letter appeal noted that the basement tested positive for radon gas and asked if the county reviews radon gas issues when determining value. The assessor responded that radon gas issues are not included as part of the valuation process. Vigen/Cole moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

Case No. 24L, Catherine Rackliffe, 5037 Lindahl Rd., Duluth, MN, appealing parcel 280-0015-00275. The appellant disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$292,900 and requested that valuation be reduced to \$247,904 due to the layout of the house, lack of a basement, and other various issues. The assessor said in 2017 the Board approved a 10% value reduction due to the layout of the house. The assessor recommended that the 10% value reduction be removed to bring the property value in line with a value the sales grid supports. This would increase the value of the property to \$316,800. After further discussion, Vigen/Peterson moved to accept the assessor's initial recommended assessment of \$292,900. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

The Board recessed at 11:25 a.m. At 1:03 p.m., the Board reconvened with all members present.

Case No. 3A, Edmund Roskoski, 5409 North Court, Mt. Iron, MN, appealing parcel 175-0012-00150. Parcels 175-0012-00150, 175-0012-00160, 175-0069-00900 were included in the Assessor's report to the Board, since they are contiguous properties. Edmund Roskoski, appearing in-person, disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$116,900 for parcel 175-0012-00150. Mr. Roskoski felt that parcel 175-0012-00150 should be valued at \$102,500 due the overall condition of the property. After further discussion, Vigen/Bigelow moved to accept the assessor's recommended assessment of \$116,900 for parcel 175-0012-00150 and the overall assessment of \$144,600 for all three parcels included in the assessor's report. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

Case No. 13A, Dave Orman, S Elect Homes Inc., 2230 London Rd., Ste. 200, Duluth, MN, appealing parcels 010-3830-07470, 010-3830-07480, 010-3830-07490, 010-3830-7500, 010-3830-07510, 010-3830-7520, 010-3830-07560. Dave Orman, appearing in-person, disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$3,574,100 because S Elect Homes is a non-profit that offers below market rent and based on the valuation of other comparable buildings. The assessor commented that according to state statute, any low income rental housing must be based on the normal approach to value using normal unrestricted rents. Chair Doberstein questioned if the property value was too high based on property restrictions. After further discussion, Vigen/Bigelow moved to accept the assessor's recommendation. A roll call vote was taken. (5-1, Doberstein)

Case No. 17A, Keith Kern, 11234 Belgian Dr., Belle Plaine, MN, appealing parcel 735-0010-01992. Keith Kern, appearing by WebEx, said that he disagreed with the assessor's recommended assessment of \$195,500 due to the valuation of his neighbor's property and equity of the properties. Mr. Kern commented that he and his neighbor purchased approximately 56 acres of land in 2019 for \$215,000 and split the property evenly at approximately 28 acres with

similar shoreline. Mr. Kern said his valuation increased from \$109,400 in 2020 to \$195,500 in 2021; whereas, his neighbor's parcel decreased in value from \$107,000 to \$94,500. The assessor commented that because his neighbor's property was a contiguous property with a cabin property, he was receiving a discount due to economies of scale. After further discussion, Bigelow/Cersine moved to reduce land value by \$55,500, for a total valuation of \$140,000. A roll call vote was taken. (5-1, Cole)

County Assessor Dave Sipila presented a list of appellants who agreed no change was required and withdrew their appeal. Peterson/Bigelow moved to approve the list as presented. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

County Assessor Dave Sipila presented a spreadsheet of current year administrative changes. Bigelow/Cole moved to approve the list as presented. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)

With no further appeals to consider, Vigen/Cersine moved to approve the following resolution:


COUNTY BOARD RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, That the assessment rolls from the several assessment districts of the County of St. Louis, Minnesota, for the year 2021, to-wit: Cities of Aurora, Babbitt, Biwabik, Brookston, Buhl, Chisholm, Cook, Duluth, Ely, Eveleth, Floodwood, Gilbert, Hermantown, Hibbing, Hoyt Lakes, Iron Junction, Kinney, Leonidas, McKinley, Meadowlands, Mountain Iron, Orr, Proctor, Rice Lake, Tower, Virginia, and Winton; and Towns of Alango, Alborn, Alden, Angora, Arrowhead, Ault, Balkan, Bassett, Beatty, Biwabik, Breitung, Brevator, Camp 5, Canosia, Cedar Valley, Cherry, Clinton, Colvin, Cotton, Crane Lake, Culver, Duluth, Eagle's Nest, Ellsburg, Elmer, Embarrass, Fayal, Fairbanks, Field, Fine Lakes, Floodwood, Fredenberg, French, Gnesen, Grand Lake, Great Scott, Greenwood, Halden, Industrial, Kabetogama, Kelsey, Kugler, Lakewood, Lavell, Leiding, Linden Grove, McDavitt, Meadowlands, Midway, Morcom, Morse, Ness, New Independence, Normanna, North Star, Northland, Owens, Pequaywan, Pike, Portage, Prairie Lake, Sandy, Solway, Stoney Brook, Sturgeon, Toivola, Van Buren, Vermilion Lake, Waasa, White, Willow Valley, Wuori and all the Unorganized Towns, as returned by the respective assessors and local Boards of Review, are hereby ordered placed upon the tax lists by the County for the year 2021.

YEAS: Vigen, Peterson, Cersine, Cole, Bigelow, and Chair Doberstein - 6
NAYS: None - 0
ABSENT: None - 0

John Doberstein was temporarily out of the meeting from 3:38 p.m. to 3:41 p.m., technical issues.

At 3:41 p.m., June 17, 2021, Cole/Peterson moved to adjourn the 2021 Special Board of Appeal and Equalization. A roll call vote was taken. (6-0)



Phil Chapman, Deputy Auditor/Clerk of the County Board