

Sandstone City Council Meeting Minutes
April 9, 2019

Board of Appeal & Equalization

CALL TO ORDER: 6:06 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Kester, Spartz, Franklin, Palmer

Members absent: Devlin

Staff present: Administrator George

Others present: Lorri Houtsma and Kim Kylander, Pine County Assessor's Office

Board of Appeal & Equalization

The purpose of the meeting was to hold the annual Board of Appeal & Equalization meeting. Previously, the City Council had turned this meeting over to the County to hold an "Open Book" meeting. However, in 2018 the Council voted to hold the meeting themselves. Councilor Kester took the required training.

Mayor Spartz asked Assessor Houtsma to explain the process. Houtsma stated that the purpose of tonight's meeting was to hear from property owners about the 2020 proposed valuation of their property, as noted on the blue valuation notices that were recently mailed out. She explained that the Assessor conducts a sales study of qualified sales that occurred from October 2017 through September 2018 and compares the sale price to the Assessor's Estimated Market Value. The State requires that the ratio be between 90% and 105%. For residential properties, there were 20 qualifying sales during this period. The sales to EMV ratio was 88.1%. Therefore, the Estimated Market Value on all improved residential property (land and buildings) in the City of Sandstone was increased 4.93%, bringing the ratio up to 93.03%.

For commercial property, Houtsma stated that there were 3 qualifying sales. The sales to EMV ratio was 89.39%. Therefore, the Estimated Market Value on all commercial properties (land and buildings) in the City of Sandstone was increased 3.88%, bringing the ratio up to 93.27%.

For residential property owners, Houtsma stated that there are several programs in place to help with property taxes. Some that she mentioned include a Disabled Homestead Credit, the 12% tax increase refund, the Veterans exclusion, and the regular Property Tax Refund. Houtsma stated that her office can help property owners with these programs if they call or stop in.

No property owners attended the meeting. However, two property owners have talked to Houtsma and she was prepared to make recommendations to the Board.

The first property discussed was parcel 45.5637.000 owned by Verne & Cathleen Jensen. The Estimated Market Value is \$21,700. Houtsma stated that the parcel is an outlot and, therefore, in her opinion it is not buildable. She further noted that there are no City services to the property. She recommended reducing the EMV to \$12,800. **Motion by Franklin, second by Spartz, to reduce the Estimated Market Value of parcel 45.5637.000 from \$21,700 to \$12,800. Motion passed 4-0.**

The second property discussed was parcel 45.0140.000 owned by Daryle Moseng. The Estimated Market Value is \$4,200. Houtsma is under the impression that the lot is not buildable and she recommended reducing the EMV to \$600. However, during discussion, it was pointed out that the lot is buildable. Currently, the property is zoned High-Density Residential. The City is in the process of updating the Zoning Code and this property is proposed to be zoned Traditional Residential. Houtsma noted, too, that

Moseng owns the surrounding property and could combine this lot with his other lot. With that in mind, Houtsma withdrew her recommendation to adjust the EMV.

ADJOURN

Motion Franklin, second Palmer to adjourn at 6:50 p.m. Motion carried 4-0.

Peter Spartz, Mayor

Kathy George, Administrator