

TOWN OF SILVER CREEK
BOARD OF EQUALIZATION
MAY 9, 2023

The Local Board of Appeal and Equalization for the Town of Silver Creek was held on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, in the Board Meeting Room. Present were Board Supervisors: Greg Hull, Chuck Voss, and Scott Krech; Clerk Alison Oftedahl and Deputy Clerk Katie Anderson.

Visitors Present: Lake County Assessor Gregg Swartwoudt, Appraiser Supervisor Noah Mittlefehldt, and Deputy Assessor Andrew Fellows.

Appearing before the Board: David Bergman, Steve Williams, Randy Bowe, Ryan Sjoberg, William Van Kessel with John Chalstrom; Scott Tompkins, Don Morsette, and Logan Fischer.

Chairman Hull called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. discussed ground rules and explained that questions and comments should be addressed to the Town Board. He explained that the only two things the Board could change are classification and value. Lake County Appraiser Supervisor Noah Mittlefehldt then presented introductory information. He said that real estate sales values have increased substantially, especially in northern Minnesota. Every year the state reviews the assessments based upon actual sales. The median sales price of properties sold in Silver Creek Township came in 23% higher than the assessed value. Lake sale prices came in 31% higher than assessed value and off lakes came in 21% higher than assessed value. This meant that assessments had to be increased. He also reported significant increases in the acreage rates of vacant land. The median sale of land over 34 acres was 74% higher than assessed value. On Lake Superior values increased 25% to 36%. Finally he reported that this year Appraiser Andy Fellows had traveled for a physical assessment to properties in the northern portion of Silver Creek from East Alger Grade north to the Stony River Township line. Some gross inaccuracies, such as missing buildings, were discovered on remote properties. When these were corrected, it resulted in large increases in values.

Chairman Hull explained that the valuations can only be changed based upon objective factual information. He also advised that decisions made today can be appealed to the Lake County Board of Appeal and Equalization scheduled for Monday June 19th, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

The following individuals appeared before the Board:

1. David Bergman - parcel 29-5509-20310. Bergman appealed his valuation and questioned why his depreciation was lowered. Based upon the fact that the Assessor had not been allowed in the building, an initial motion to reduce value by Hull was withdrawn. Hull then made a new motion to make no change and preserve the right of Bergman to appeal to the County Board. Voss seconded the motion. Carried unanimously.

David Bergman - parcel 29-5509-30190 (owned by David and Donald Bergman). Bergman appealed his value that he said almost doubled in one year. Based upon Assessor's data showing that the property was grossly undervalued in the past, motion Hull, second Krech to make no change to allow for a visit from the Assessor and to preserve the right to appeal to the County Board. Carried unanimously.

2. Steve Williams - parcel 29-5364-21260. Williams appealed the 56% rise in valuation in one year. After discussion, based upon the assessor not having inspected the inside, motion Krech, second Voss to make no change and preserve the right to appeal to the County Board. The motion carried unanimously.
3. Randy Bowe - parcel 29-5409-14680. Bowe had questions about how his valuation had gone up that much. No motion was made as Bowe did not appeal after his questions were answered.
4. Ryan Sjoberg - parcel 29-5409-02010. Sjoberg appealed his value based upon no road access to his property and a rate per square foot higher than any other houses. He felt his house was valued higher than other similar houses with more features. Based upon assessors having not been allowed to inspect the property, motion Hull, second Voss to make no change and preserve the right to appeal to the County Board. The motion carried unanimously.
5. William Van Kessel and John Chalstrom - parcel 29-5610-15370. Van Kessel appealed the value of his remote cabin. The Assessors stated that the previous assessments of the parcel did not

have the cabin on it and therefore it was undervalued for 30 years. Motion Hull, second Krech to make no change and preserve the right to appeal to the County Board. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Scott Tompkins – 29-5409-13280. Tompkins appealed his valuation, which he said has quadrupled. He argued that he does not have a buildable lot, and that his shoreline is not as many feet as documented. He also had concerns with his title and the Highway 61 right-of-way. Assessors said that the shoreline measurements were based upon GIS. His lot is 2.5 acres and no evidence was submitted regarding buildability. Motion Hull, second Krech to make no change and preserve the right to appeal to the County Board. The motion carried unanimously.
7. Don Morsette - parcel 29-5310-20145. Morsette questioned his value based upon the foundation sinking and other quality issues of the dwelling. Based upon not finding a fact to base a decision, motion Voss, second Krech to make no change and preserve the right to appeal to the County Board. The motion carried unanimously.
8. Logan Fischer- 29-5709-21430. Fischer appealed the value of his remote cabin based upon its condition of disrepair. The assessor had not made inspection this year based upon too much snow. Motion Hull, second Krech to make no change and preserve the right to appeal to the County Board. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting recessed at 4:07 p.m. The meeting resumed by Chairman Hull at 4:17 p.m.

The following appealed by mail:

1. Jeffrey Wiita and Richard Cross – parcel 29-5409-158504:07. Wiita's letter appealed the classification of seasonal/recreational. He requested it be changed to vacant land. Based upon there being a cabin on the property, motion Hull, second Voss to make no change in classification, and preserve the right to appeal to the County Board. The motion carried unanimously.

The following individuals appealed directly to the Lake County Assessor's office prior to the meeting.

1. Conrad and Sara Swanson - Parcels # 29-5410-02190, 29-5410-02130, 29-5410-01370, 29-5410-02790, 29-5410-02730 , 29-5410-02910. Motion Hull, second Krech to take the assessors' recommendation to change the classification on all six parcels to *2a Agricultural Land*. Motion carried unanimously.
2. John & Roberta Christiansen - Parcel # 29-5310-29140. Motion Hull, second Voss to take the assessors' recommendation to deny a request to change classification to Agricultural based upon there being no permit to for horse boarding and insufficient evidence of agricultural business. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Lee Olson - Parcel # 29-5610-29390. Motion Voss, second Krech to take the assessors' recommendation to lower the total assessed value from \$241,200 to \$198,676. The motion carried unanimously.
4. LaVonne Christensen Parcel # 29-5315-01010. Motion Krech, second Voss to take the assessors' recommendation to make no change to value and allow time for an Assessor inspection and preserve the right to appeal to the County Board. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m. upon motion Voss, second Krech.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Oftedahl, Clerk