

The **Annual Cormorant Township Board of Appeals and Equalization** meeting was held on Wednesday, **April 26th, 2023**, at 10:30 a.m. at the Cormorant Community Center. Board members present were Chairman Steve Sorenson, Supervisors John Buhaug and Tony Hubbard, Clerk Claudia Hanson, Deputy Clerk Penny Wickenheiser and Treasurer Susie Braseth. Additionally, Lisa Wills, Becker County Assessor and Lisa Marschall, Cormorant Township Assessor were also present.

A. **Call to Order** by Chairman Steve Sorenson – Introductions were made, and Steve turned meeting over to Lisa Will.

Ms. Will indicated that Cormorant Township market sales were remarkably high again last year, causing property values increases of 10% countywide. Additional increases were 15% for tillable land; lakeshore properties increased by 20% this past year. Pasture/ meadow land increased 10%. She noted woods/hunting land sale values increased again. The entire state of Minnesota had similar increases for all types of properties, as well as all counties. She stated there were a surprisingly considerable number of cash sales for large dollar amounts involving property sales. People in general purchase land and property for much more than the historic value of the property. Steve further clarified that the market value increases are not relatively the same or as much as the actual increase in taxes. The township has kept the operating levy the same for several years also, so increases in taxes are not because of township levy increases.

B. Cormorant Township residents who made appointments:

1) **Greg Johnson 06.0193.000**= He questioned why his property value was so high, and had questions regarding lake values. Lisa Will explained majority of Cormorant township sales are in lake property, which is desirable and being sold at soaring prices, driving up property values. This Fall, everyone will receive their proposed tax statement for next year. After closer review by both Lisa Marschall and Lisa Will of his lot depth, an adjustment was warranted from \$630,100 to new value of \$627,900. Tony motioned to accept this change, seconded by John. Carried 3-0.

2) **Paul Douglas 06.0235.000** = The Douglas' have seen a substantial tax increase per year since 2019 for their residence on Upper Cormorant. They question if they would be able to sell their property for their tax assessed value. Their property information was reviewed, and a lakeshore adjustment was considered. After Board review, John motioned to include a lake shore change, so value was reduced from \$1,117,200 to new value of \$1,100,800, seconded by Tony. Carried 3-0.

3) **Thomas & Trudy Eide 06.1110.000** = They were present to primarily ask how values are determined. They own a seasonal cabin on Tosten-Erickson Circle, and they have never had an assessor inside their cabin. Lisa Will offered that an appointment could be made for an inspection to go over their property. The Eide's appreciated that and will contact the Assessor's office to make appointment.

4) **David Pederson 06.0500.807** = He owns a storage shed amongst 9 other sheds and his shed is valued at a much higher amount than the other sheds. After further discussion and research, Lisa Will explained that since he has a homestead classification versus seasonal, his value is higher. No change was warranted but it was recommended he file for a property tax refund.

C. Calls or correspondence received: Lisa Marschall (Lisa M.) informed additional email questions and calls were received. Each question/concern was addressed individually and voted upon in totality by the Board.

1). **Braseth Family Trust 06.0245.000**= Susie called Lisa M. as had a question about the condition of her garage. After discussion, a change was warranted from \$1,048,000 to new value of \$1,046,700.

2). **Diane Rustad 06.0910.000** – Lisa M. advised Diane contacted her that her 8' x 26' porch is no longer heated. A reduction was then recommended from old value of \$311,000 to new value of \$299,200.

- 3). **Chad (Patty) Sapa 06.938.101** – He contacted Lisa M. regarding value being too high. There was a change where the patio is now just a deck. House needs a lot of work. After review, a change was recommended from \$1,062,700 to \$938,700.
- 4). **Kelly Linster 06.0980.000** – They inquired that value is too high, as this 34' x 26' cabin is not heated, not insulated, and located on Redman Beach. After reviewing their parcel, Lisa M. noted the grade of the dwelling should be changed. A reduction from \$525,900 to \$509,900 is warranted.
- 5). **Scott Anderson 06.0240.000** = Mr. Anderson contacted Lisa M. as value too high. He lives on Fearing Drive and assessors reviewed their information on the parcel. It was suggested that an adjustment to lakeshore condition should be applied. Value was lowered from \$656,600 to \$650,700.
- 6) **Paula's Rentals 06.0154.000** = She inquired with the assessor's on value of the old farmhouse located on Klondike Road. She informed it will be salvaged and burned down by the local fire department. A reduction is warranted and value lowered from \$459,000 to \$408,600.
- 7) **Gary Parsons 06.0927.000** = His travel trailer had expired tabs for 2021, but now are current so value was reduced from \$270,100 to \$231,000.
- 8) **Adam Shea 06.0960.000** = He inquired about his 1940 cabin on Bishop Road, Upper Cormorant Lake, as he will be tearing it down, due to poor condition. Assessors reviewed and advised reduction from \$330,900 to \$317,200.
- 9) **Alar Hakk 06.1059.000** = He contacted Lisa M. that the house has been gutted down to the studs, no water and the sauna has been removed. He is unsure if he will continue to totally tear down the house or if remodel with what is left of structure. Lisa Will and Lisa M. reviewed his parcel situation and adjusted value from \$574,500 to \$455,200.

10) **John Nelson 06.0413.000** = He lives in the gravel pit area of the township and notified the assessor's that he has removed several sheds on the property. A reduction is advised and recommended to reduce value from \$447,700 to \$446,900.

11) **Ila Mae Lindstrom 06.0756.000** = She had called Lisa M. to explain how property values are determined and advised of the condition of the garage. Lisa M. noted an adjustment for garage condition is warranted so value was reduced from \$714,100 to \$712,800.

John made a motion to accept all the changes as mentioned, seconded by Tony, No further discussion so motion carried 3-0.

D. **Adjournment** – This meeting was adjourned at 11:31 a.m. by Steve, seconded by John, as there were no other inquiries, or concerns brought forward to the Board. Carried 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia M. Hanson, Clerk