

**MINUTES OF THE SARTELL CITY COUNCIL  
SARTELL (BENTON COUNTY) BOARD OF EQUALIZATION MEETING**

**MINUTES OF APRIL 8, 2008**

**ANNUAL MEETING**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the annual meeting of the City of Sartell Board of Equalization for Benton County was held on April 8, 2008 in the council chambers of the Sartell City Hall. Mayor O'Driscoll called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**COUNCIL PRESENT:** Mayor O'Driscoll, Members Perske, Lynch, Hennes and Peterson. **Note: Members O'Driscoll and Perske attended the appeals and equalization course approved by the Commissioner of Revenue.**

**COUNCIL ABSENT:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mary Degiovanni, Finance Director  
Brian Koester, Benton County Assessor  
Steve Behrenbrinker, City Assessor

**AGENDA**

A motion was made by Lynch and seconded by Perske to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**BOARD OF REVIEW**

Steve Behrenbrinker circulated a written summary of development activity and property valuation and commented on changes within the County. The percentage increase, not including new construction, was 0.5%. Ratios were at 92-95% in compliance with State law requiring increases in order to remain at a minimum of 90% ratio with a desired 100% ratio to sales values. Summer 2007 storm damage repairs had no valuation impacts unless property owners added additional amenities of value at the same time they re-sided or re-roofed for damage repair. The Assessors also responded to questions about phasing out of limited market value.

Audrey Pederson of 4 Willow Lane (Parcel 18.52004.00) asked for her value to be reviewed and the City Assessor agreed to review it for possible reduction.

Gary Studanski addressed the Board regarding the valuation increases on his parcel numbers 18.00006.00, 18.00007.00, 18.00003.15, 18.00003.16, 18.00014.00 and 18.00339.00. He believed one or more of the parcels had wetlands that may not be factored into the valuations, but had no delineation documentation. The Assessors confirmed that some parcels have lower values than others due to undevelopable land on some of the parcels and that if the property owner had evidence of additional wetlands, he could provide that for their consideration.

Chad Bloom of 809 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. NE (Parcel No. 18.00062.00) circulated photos of the property he bought for \$47,600 which is now valued at \$89,300. The property was in disrepair when he purchased it late last year and the Assessors agreed to review the property for potential reduction.

Mike Stoebe addressed the Board on behalf of his sons who own 501 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. NE (Parcel 18.00129.00) which they also bought late last year at a price lower than the current tax value. Mr. Stoebe acknowledged that he is a principal in the entity which sold the property to his sons, but that the house also has deferred maintenance issues. The Assessors agreed to review the property and asked to see the Bank appraisal used for financing the purchase.

One written objection was received from James & Cynthia Stang of 201- 3<sup>rd</sup> St. NE (Parcel 18.00178.00) objecting to their valuation based upon some sale listings in their neighborhood. The Assessors had photos of this property and indicated the value had not been increased this year from last year, but that they would take another look at it per the owner's request. Since valuations are based upon comparable sales, any value reduction due to proximity to the paper mill (as cited by the property owners) would already be realized through the comparable sales used.

The Assessors and City staff received no other contacts, calls, or letters in response to the property tax valuation notices received by residents. No other taxpayers appeared in person at the Board of Review.

The Assessors recommended no changes to their valuations and property owners can appeal to the County Board if they remain unsatisfied with final recommended valuations after the Assessors review.

A motion was made by Hennes and seconded by Peterson to accept the Assessor's recommended valuations as presented and to adjourn the Board of Review at 7:26 PM.

Upon vote being taken the following voted:

Aye: O'Driscoll, Peterson, Perske, Hennes, and Lynch

Nay: None

Motion Carried

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

The Council asked a number of valuation questions of the Assessors, including their thoughts as to the golf course valuation as a business compared to potential development value; what other cities have paid for property in recent years; and current inventories of residential lots. The City Assessor felt that Sartell's market and foreclosure rates were pretty even with neighboring communities and that we were well positioned to weather the market downtown.

**MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Peterson and seconded by Perske to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 PM. Upon vote being taken, the following voted:

Aye: O'Driscoll, Perske, Lynch, Peterson and Hennes

Nay: None

Motion carried

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**Mary Degiovanni**  
**Finance Director**

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**MAYOR**