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2019 Protest Fees & Services

Here's the timeframe and general info on a potential protest:

- 1) New property valuations will be mailed to all owners on May 1 (so you should receive by May 6 at the latest).
- 2) Increased valuation does not necessarily equate to higher taxes next year, but they usually do. The mill levies are the other part of the formula and they are not decided until after all the various budgets are final in December.
- 3) 2019 valuations are based ONLY on comparable sales that occurred during the 18 months between January 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018 (by State statute). The Assessor's office uses a broad stroke approach (again, by State statute), rather than considering each property individually.
- 4) If you are dissatisfied with your new valuation, in order to determine whether the new valuation is justified or can be reasonably contested, my company will be happy to provide **Comparable Sales report containing** comparable sales data that are as similar to the subject property as possible from that period. I will expect you to provide me with all pertinent information on your property.
- 5) The fee for a Comparable Sales report, with my brief opinion on the likelihood of grounds for a successful protest, costs \$250.
- 6) If you choose to proceed with a protest, I will do an in-depth analysis, complete with cover letter, which can be submitted to the Assessor, along with the comparable sales report. The cost for the analysis report is based on my standard fee of \$125/hour, and usually takes me about 2-3 hours to complete.
- 7) There are four steps available in the valuation protest process, 1-to the assessor, 2-to the board of adjustment (i.e. County Commissioners), 3-to the State board of assessment appeals and 4-district court. We will go through Steps 1 & 2 and if approved we will charge you 30% of the savings for the two years the valuation lasts in conjunction with \$250 for the Comparable Sales report. We can also perform Steps 3 & 4 at a charge of \$125 per hour.
- 8) All protests must be filed no later than June 1. The sooner you contact me, the higher up on my list you will be, the sooner you will get your comparables, and the more time you will have to decide whether to pursue a protest. Depending on my workload, I may have to cut off taking new clients at some point prior to May 28.

Hopefully this document answers most of your questions, if you have further questions then please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Scott Bengé