

Royalton Township Local Board of Appeal and Equalization Minutes
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006
Email: royalton@royaltontownship.com -- Website: www.royaltontownship.com
28 April 2025
Approved

9:00 a.m., 28 April 2025, Board Chair Jeff Schlaeger called the Royalton Township Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting to order with Supervisor John Graham, Supervisor Pete Belland, Clerk Duane Swanson, Pine County Deputy Assessor Troy Stewart and County Appraiser Karen Stumne present. Two property owners were present. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

County Deputy Assessor Stewart noted that a quorum of the board was present, and that Chair Schlaeger, Vice-Chair Graham, and Supervisor Belland had valid certifications to be a member of the board (at least one member of the board must be certified). Assessor Stewart declared that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the 2025 assessed valuation only and would not include taxes or previous years' assessments.

Clerk Swanson noted that no written questions or complaints had been received at the township office.

Sheldon and Tamara Ammerman were present to seek information about PID 290171000 (7211 Hazelnut Road). They noted that the new dwelling was still under construction, that it was not livable yet, and that the taxes had increased substantially. He also added that they were having trouble with the building official and Rum River Construction Consultants, who had repeatedly delayed inspections. Appraiser Stumne and Assessor Stewart noted that the property included a mobile home that had not yet been removed and that for pay 2025 the assessment did include the value of the new construction as of 2 January. Assessor Stewart quoted the state statute requiring that a partial value be assigned to an under-construction structure. He noted that the pay 2026 assessment for the incomplete building was \$144,700, with the structure approximately 50% completed. The Ammermans noted that the mobile home will go away and were encouraged to let Appraiser Stumne know when that happened so that the valuation could be reduced. Appraiser Stumne also noted that the parcel contained about seven acres of lowlands. The Ammermans left the meeting. Appraiser Stumne noted that she had been denied access to the interior of the new structure. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, that the parcel's valuation remain at \$252,000. The motion carried unanimously.

Appraiser Stumne reported that she had two additional recommendations:

Leslie and Roxanne Orvis had requested a review of their \$318,200 valuation for PID 290234000. The review increased the amount of lowlands, adjusting the valuation down to \$313,400. Chair Schlaeger moved, Vice-Chair Graham seconded, to approve the reduction. The motion carried unanimously.

Steve and Laura Saumer requested a review of their \$251,400 valuation for PID 290242000. After being granted an internal review of the dwelling, Appraiser Stumne recommended a reduction to \$237,800. Vice-Chair Graham moved, Chair Schlaeger seconded, to approve the reduction. The motion carried unanimously.

PB _____ JG _____ JS _____ DS _____

Appraiser Stumne asked if the town had received communications with Jesse Chapman regarding the property at 5489 Royal River Road. Clerk Swanson noted that no communications had been received. Appraiser Stumne noted that the land valuation had increased, and since there had been no official appeal, the recommended valuation of \$147,000 would stand.

Supervisor Graham noted that Appraiser Stumne and Assessor Stewart had recommended at last year's local board that he should consider combining two of his three lots. He reported that it had been done very efficiently. He inquired about his vacant parcel, PID 295136000 at 5290 Royal Woods Road, noting that the lot had no structure, no power, and no water, although it formerly had been a building site. Appraiser Stumne recommended that she and Assessor Stewart investigate the site; Vice-Chair Graham assented. Appraiser Stumne recommended no change at this time but that any changes would be recommended to the county board at its review hearing. Supervisor Belland moved, Chair Schlaeger seconded, to approve the recommendation. The motion carried, with Chair Schlaeger and Supervisor Belland voting "Aye" and Vice-Chair Graham abstaining due to his ownership of the parcel.

Assessor Stewart then proceeded to share general details about changes in valuations as they related to Royalton Township parcels. Valuations are based on similar sales from October 2023 to September 2024. These sales are compared to the appraised valuation to determine a ratio of valuation to sales. He noted that residential sales seem to be slowing. During the period, Royalton had eight relevant sales for a ratio of 90.49%. Valuations were adjusted to just under 93%. These sales include one on-water sale (9879 Bears Ear Road) that was sold for 79% of valuation and seven off-water sales, whose ratios were just under 93%. Assessor Stewart noted that the valuation percentage increase does not necessarily equate to a similar percentage increase in taxes. Taxes depend on the levy certified by the county, school district, and municipality, and are usually lower than the percentage increase in valuation. Assessor Stewart noted that forest land and woods were valued at \$3,300 per acre (down from \$3,700) and that farmland was valued at \$3,200 per acre (down from \$3,700).

The board discussed the building and septic situations at 5214 Royal Woods Road, which is currently the subject of a court hearing in Pine County.

At 9:55 a.m., hearing no further comments, Chair Schlaeger moved, Vice-Chair Graham seconded, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Duane P. Swanson, Clerk

Jeff Schlaeger, Chair/Supervisor

John Graham, Vice-Chair/Supervisor

Pete Belland, Supervisor