

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION
CITY OF DICKINSON, NORTH DAKOTA

April 9, 2025

Pursuant to due call and notice, with notice of publication in the Dickinson Press, the Board of Equalization met in compliance with North Dakota State Law. The meeting was held on April 9, 2025 commencing at 5:00 pm, in City Hall located at 38 1st Street West.

NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS

Stark County, North Dakota

Notice is hereby given that proceedings for the Board of Equalization on assessments will be taken by the local Equalization Boards in April as follows:

Gladstone	7 th at 5:45 pm
South Heart	7 th at 7:00 pm
Belfield	8 th at 4:45 pm
Dickinson	9 th at 5:00 pm
Taylor	14 th at 5:30 pm
Richardton	14 th at 6:00 pm

Stark County meets June 3rd at 10:00 am

Each taxpayer has the right to appear before the appropriate board of review or equalization and petition for correction of the taxpayer's assessment.

Submitted by Karen Richard, Stark County Auditor
(Pub. March 12th & 19th, 2025)

CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Dr. Robert Baer called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Present: Vice President Dr. Robert Baer, Commissioners: Jason Fridrich, John Odermann, Joe Ridl

Absent: President Scott Decker

Also Present: City Assessor Joe Hirschfeld, City Administrator Dustin Dassinger, Deputy City Administrator Linda Carlson and Dickinson City Attorney Christina Wenko

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1. OTHER BUSINESS

Vice President Baer brought forth the first item of business, the Abatement Hearing, and called on Mr. Hirschfeld, who stated that HND Properties, LLC, with parcel 2990-0100-0110, owns the building and The Amazing Grace Church occupies the building. Amazing Grace Church submitted a tax exemption for their parsonage. HND Properties, LLC completed a property tax exemption for the year 2025 and then completed an abatement for the year 2024. However, after visiting with state staff and receiving the Attorney General's opinion that the church must own the property itself and be used as a church, they are not considered eligible for a property tax exemption. Attorney Wenko verified the information and confirmed it is our recommendation that they not be considered an exempt property.

MOTION BY: Jason Fridrich

SECONDED BY: John Odermann

Move to deny the application as they do not qualify, per the state law.

Disposition: Roll call vote... Aye 4, Nay 0, Absent 1

Motion declared duly passed

2. REGULAR AGENDA

A.

B. Assessor's Report:

City Assessor, Mr. Hirschfeld, played a video on Assessing and the role Assessors make.

Mr. Hirschfeld proceeded to give an update on House Bill 1176 – Governor's Tax Bill. It increases the Primary Residence Credit to \$1250 from \$500, caps taxing entities budget increases to 3%, and requires residents to pay at least 25% of the Property Tax Bill making them have some skin in the game. Bonded debt, special assessments and voter approved levies are unaffected, which would include items such as the school, which was voted on, and would not be included in the Primary Residence Credit. There will be no change to the Property Valuation procedure. This has passed the Senate and was returned to the House for consideration. The Governor still needs to sign the bill.

Mr. Hirschfeld stated values have to be accurate per Century Code. He then continued explaining the primary elements of assessing, defining property, determining property values, and equalization. The equalization grading system is based on a scale of 1-6. The State Board of Equalization requires the use of sales ratio as an indicator of assessment value compared to market value. The taxable valuation was explained and example given, including how the mill levy comes into play along with the budget of the individual entities. For the year 2024, the City of Dickinson only controlled 16% of the mills. The rest of the mills included 20% County Mills, 8% Park District and 57% School District.

The median sales price of homes, as supplied by the Badlands Board of Realtors, has increased from \$145,000 in March 2010 to \$300,000 in March 2025, which is a 207% increase or an annualized amount of 13.8%.

Common Property Tax Exemptions include the Homestead Credit, Disabled Veterans Credit, Improvements to Commercial and Residential Buildings, New Construction of Residential Properties and New or Expanding Business.

There are 1059 residential properties that have not been visited by the Assessing Department, in the length of time Mr. Hirschfeld has been here, this will be the goal for the year 2025. He also displayed a map of the City of Dickinson, broken into 6 separate zones of approximately 1200-1300 homes each. This is considered the Revaluation Map and described the plan for a 6-year rotation schedule.

Continuing with the discussion, market also indicated that commercial property sales were up as well. Hotels and Apartments showed the greatest increase and so these two classes of properties were increased along with the vacant lots. All other commercial properties received a reprieve for this year.

Mr. Odermann thanked Mr. Hirschfeld for the presentation and acknowledged the Assessing Department is doing their best and wants to be honest with valuations. He asked what the highest revaluation increase received this year was. Mr. Hirschfeld replied it was the low 70's. Mr. Odermann would like to have a conversation, like last year, to try and cap valuation increases at 15% over 6 years. Discussion continued and Mr. Fridrich wondered if 20% would be more realistic.

Mr. Hirschfeld was called upon to comment. He mentioned this was tried last year and then the County removed those values. This amounted to about 5 weeks' worth of work that didn't go anywhere. As a reminder, with the House Bill 1176 and an increase in the Primary Residence Credit, this may help cover some of the increase in taxes. Having taken an oath of office, Mr. Hirschfeld expressed his concern about being equitable. Mr. Odermann is worried about people leaving the Dickinson community. He feels the County will not overturn it this year like they did last year in light of everything that is happening at the State level.

Vice President Baer questioned Mr. Hirschfeld if there is a way to make the process work so it is easier on the people. Mr. Hirschfeld further clarified that the 70% that was mentioned earlier as being the highest revaluation, or any of the new valuations, also included the 7%-8% that everyone received. Attorney Wenko asked Mr. Odermann for clarification as to what exactly the Board would be asking for. Mr. Odermann clarified this would be for the revaluation property only, not new construction or current sales. Discussion continued about having a city-wide revaluation that would cost close to 2 million dollars, however, in the past, the commissioners did not want to spend that amount of money.

In order to move ahead, it was decided to continue on with the agenda and circle back to this.

Mr. Hirschfeld summarized the following Tax Roll information:

With the addition of \$377,800 to the Commercial, which we did not give the abatement to, the total would be \$1,307,198,088. That would bring the total True and Full Value then from \$3,343,676,288 to \$3,344,054,088. We will also need to add the \$18,890 to the Taxable Valuation from the abatement property.

TO: Dickinson City Commission
 FROM: Joe J. Hirschfeld, City Assessor
 DATE: 04/09/2025
 RE: Tax roll Information

The following is a summary of sales ratio statistics and tax roll information for the year ending 2024.

1. True and Full Valuation*	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Commercial	\$1,306,820,288	\$ 1,131,906,868
Residential	<u>2,036,856,000</u>	<u>1,857,863,000</u>
	<u>\$3,343,676,288</u>	<u>\$ 2,989,769,868</u>
2. New Construction	<u>2025</u>	
Commercial (Inc/Dec)	\$ 67,166,818	\$ 1,337,800
Residential (Inc/Dec)	<u>17,632,000</u>	<u>2,054,500</u>
	\$ 84,798,818	\$ 3,392,300
3. Taxable Valuation	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
	\$156,999,534	\$140,461,879
From New Construction		\$ 3,992,438
4. Median Ratio*	<u>2024</u>	
Commercial	85.7 %	
Residential	84.8 %	
*Based on market sales only (true & full value vs. actual sales)		
5. Adjusted Ratio Supplemental**	<u>2025</u>	
Commercial	94.0 %	
Residential	91.9 %	

**This is the ratio reported to the State Board of Equalization. Based on value and includes other categories such as taxable to exempt status or exempt status to taxable; changes in classification and new construction.

Recommendation:

Median Ratios are within tolerance. It is the recommendation that the Dickinson BOE accept the tax roll as presented.

C. The Board of Equalization shall proceed to equalize and correct the assessment roll (NDCC 57-11-03)

Vice President Baer stated the Board may change the valuation and assessment of any real property upon the roll by increasing or diminishing the assessed valuation thereof as shall be reasonable and just to render taxation uniform (NDCC 57-11-03). ***Except that the valuation of any property returned by the Assessor shall not be increased more than twenty-five percent without first giving the owner or his agent notice of the intention of the Board to increase it (NDCC 57-11-03).

Mr. Hirschfeld indicated he does not have any other changes to be made until we get to the end of the agenda with the Real Estate Exemptions that we remove the property of HND Properties, LLC and add it back on to the True and Full Value.

D. During the Session:

Vice President Baer continued with the Board, any person, his attorney or his agent, feeling aggrieved by anything in the assessment roll, may apply to the Board for the correction of alleged errors in the listing or valuation of his real property, and the Board may correct the errors as it may deem just. (NDCC 57-11-04)

Vice President Baer opened the meeting up to the public, if they would like to come forward and speak.

Mason Simons approached the Board and asked if we ever go off the sales price of a property. Mr. Hirschfeld explained that all sales are used in the sales ratio. He also acknowledged that if our Property Record Card is incorrect, contact our office and we can visit the property. Mr. Simons commented the 4 properties he purchased were all valued higher than what he paid. Mr. Hirschfeld made it clear we could still present this to the County and ask for an adjustment. He can also go through the abatement process. The reason Assessing doesn't take the sales price is because it can be manipulated, there are non-arms-length transactions vs. arms-length transactions. The law does not allow us to use the sale price. A computer aided mass appraisal (CAMA) system is used which is cost based to value homes. The information is entered into the database and this generates the value of what it would cost to replace the home today.

Joshua Braddock, Gladstone, stepped to the podium to make a couple of comments. The median price of homes from 2003 to 2025 is a 286% increase. Cost of goods for this same time frame have increased 74%.

Diane Duchscher, with Home and Land Company, would like to dispute the valuation for 886 14th Street East, Dickinson, ND. Market data packets were provided as a handout. She provided data of sales within different price ranges. She also provided some comparable houses that were valued less than her property.

Gary Ramsey provided handouts and explained his issue is with the assessed value of the vacant lots behind his house. These lots are landlocked and he would like to appeal. Mr. Hirschfeld replied that we had removed the vacancy factor on all residential vacant lots as the demand for lots is increasing.

David Steinbach, 1192 11th Avenue East, said his property was valued 45% above what it was last year. He had the appraiser come out for a revaluation and it was lowered but it is now still 33% higher than last year.

Talon Danforth, 514 1st Street West, spoke that his property went up 30% and feels it is disproportionate to the houses around him. He also spoke about parcel 0010-4000-0700 that receives a Disabled Veteran credit but he reported that no one lives in the house. Mr. Hirschfeld responded that Disabled Veterans do need to apply annually and this goes to the County then to the State. Mr. Danforth also specified the fence line was moved on him. The response was that he needs to talk to the Building and Codes Department, Leonard Schwindt, about this issue.

Kenny Kostelecky, 1169 11th Ave E, stated it is hard to understand why the City taxes homes on property value and not on the space occupied. He has lived in his home for 23 years and has seen the value increase annually but never this dramatically. He is retired and he cannot afford this type of increase.

Philip Wallace, 1284 11th Street West, said he built his house in 2000 and has lived there ever since and the assessment value went up 70% this year. He is retired and feels the increase is excessive. The City has not been in to value the home since it was built. He had an appraisal and it is lower than what the City has it appraised at. Mr. Hirschfeld assured Mr. Wallace that we would be happy to go through the property with him and make sure we have an accurate Property Record Card and possibly review the appraisal to check for discrepancies. Mr. Wallace indicated he would come to the office.

Rozell & Randy Unruh, 1266 Empire Road, specified their value went up \$121,100. The house was built in 1979. She compared her house to President Decker's, Mr. Odermann's and Mr. Fridrich's houses, whose values went up less than hers. They did have the appraisers come out to their house and after the appraisal their valuation went down, but it is still larger than the homes just mentioned. Mr. Hirschfeld invited them to contact him and they can visit about the property.

Edward Dick, 1237 14th Avenue West, asked about the cost of Legacy Square and if that went into the budget and that is why the property tax increased? Mr. Fridrich responded that the budget has not changed in 7 years.

John Schmidt grew up in North Dakota but left 36 years ago with his job. He retired and came back "home" to North Dakota two years ago to 2034 Wahl St. His property value increased by 29% in just two years. He also reminded everyone that 57% of the tax budget goes to the schools, since the bond was voted on.

Brad Coleman, 1180 11th Avenue West, said his home was built in 1975 with brick. When he called the office, he was told we added veneer and assumed he had a heated garage and we needed to correct the Property Record Card. Since the home was built with brick, how could it have been missed this long? Mr. Coleman will be in touch with Mr. Hirschfeld.

Jessie Keidel, 673 22nd Avenue East, stepped forward explaining he had a call from the assessing office informing him that the adjusted value of his house was going down. He was told that a letter would be forthcoming and he has not received his letter. Did it go down? Mr. Hirschfeld verified the valuation did in fact get reduced.

Prairie Hills Mall, represented by Aranda LaFortune, General Manager, and Ram Sathyamoorthy, who joined via phone, affirmed they want to appeal the 2025 property tax valuation. Mr. Sathyamoorthy said they purchased the property in April 2024, and did not have the opportunity to appeal last year since it was after the February 1st assessment date. The value is much higher than the purchase price. Since then, they have sold a separate parcel. Mr. Hirschfeld acknowledged he doesn't have any comparisons to this in the Dickinson area, it is a unique property and is regional. He relied on Vanguard Appraisals, who conducted an appraisal for commercial last year, and they did their comparisons and research to other regions. Mr. Hirschfeld also pointed out that the outlot sold for 3 times more than the value their appraiser had it valued. His recommendation is to stick to the value that Vanguard did. Mr. Fridrich recommended that Mr. Sathyamoorthy get together with Mr. Hirschfeld one more time. Mr. Hirschfeld asked that Ms. LaFortune meet with him locally and in person as well.

Bob Schrum, 1162 Gum Avenue, expressed that his appraisal is out of line with 40% in one year. Bob would like to receive a call from Joe.

Via phone, Kyle Kennett, from Walmart Supercenter, just wanted to reserve the right to get an appeal to the County. They are currently waiting for a 3rd party appraisal. Mr. Hirschfeld asked that there be a comparison of sales in Dickinson compared to other stores included as well.

David Steinbach approached the podium again to ask how come Mr. Hirschfeld's value went up less than 7%? Mr. Hirschfeld responded that his house was not part of the revaluation area like Mr. Steinbach's was.

Vice President Baer asked if there were any other individuals wanting to speak? Hearing none, he then closed this portion of the meeting.

E. Adding Property to the Assessment List:

Vice President Baer stated, The Board of Equalization shall place upon and add to the assessment roll any real property subject to taxation which has been omitted by the owner or the Assessor, and shall enter the property at a valuation which will bear an equal and just proportion of the taxation (NDCC 57-11-05).

Mr. Hirschfeld reiterated there would be one change with the removal of the one property from the exemption list with a valuation of \$377,800.

F. No reduction after session of Board:

Vice President Baer stated, after the adjournment of the Board each year, neither the governing body of the City nor the City Board of Equalization shall change or alter any assessment. Neither shall the governing body or the Board of Equalization reduce or abate, or authorize the reduction, abatement or return, of any taxes levied upon such assessments for any cause except that the property assessed was not subject to taxation at the time the assessment was made (NDCC 57-11-06)

G. Exemption Applications:

Mr. Hirschfeld confirmed the list of 2025 Real Estate Property Exemptions with the exception that HND Properties, LLC needs to be removed, as it is not eligible.

MOTION BY: John Odermann

SECONDED BY: Joe Ridl

To accept the 2025 Real Estate Property Tax Exemptions minus the one property noted.

Disposition: Roll call vote...Aye 4, Nay 0, Absent 1

Motion declared duly passed

Attorney Wenko asked that we go back to the top of the agenda, items A and B, and get a decision on what was previously tabled.

MOTION BY: Jason Fridrich

SECONDED BY:

Proposes a 20% cap on residential properties, with an assumption of 7 1/2% yearly increase, over 6 years, for the revaluation properties only for the year 2024. This is for residential only, excluding new construction and sales. The standard increase plus 12 ½ % over 6 years to the revaluation properties only.

Motion failed.

MOTION BY: John Odermann

SECONDED BY: Joe Ridl

To proceed with the same motion only with a 15% cap on residential properties, with an assumption of 7 ½ % yearly increase, over 6 years for the revaluation properties only for the year 2024. This is for residential only, excluding new construction and sales.

Disposition: Roll call vote... Aye 4, Nay 0, Absent 1

Motion declared duly passed

MOTION BY: John Odermann

SECONDED BY: Jason Fridrich

To accept the entire residential value, with adjustments to be made to the previous motion of a 15% cap.

Disposition: Roll call vote... Aye 4, Nay 0, Absent 1

Motion declared duly passed

MOTION BY: Jason Fridrich

SECONDED BY: Joe Ridl

To accept the entire commercial value, with the addition of the one commercial property. If changes need to be made, it can be presented to the County. They can also protest through the formal abatement process.

Disposition: Roll call vote... Aye 4, Nay 0, Absent 1

Motion declared duly passed

Attorney Wenko assured everyone this does go in front of the County who still has the ability to affirm or reject any decision that has been made here. If the City adjusts any position on valuation, a letter from Mr. Hirschfeld should be provided for record.

Vice President Baer commended Mr. Hirschfeld and his staff for their work.

3. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY: John Odermann

SECONDED BY: Joe Ridl

Motion to adjourn

Adjournment of the meeting having completed equalization at 8:43 p.m.

OFFICIAL MINUTES PREPARED BY:

Denise Barth, Property Appraiser Tech.

Dustin Dassinger, City Administrator

Dr. Robert Baer, Vice President

Board of City Commissioners

Date: _____