

HOUSTON COUNTY

During the course of the last 18 months, our new County Assessor discovered multiple past procedural problems where valuations were not updated the way they should have been. Upon discovering these errors, the Assessor sought guidance from the Mn. Department of Revenue and has since worked closely with the DOR to address the problems. A number of county properties are in need of having their values adjusted to properly reflect such things as new construction, homestead credit adjustments, clerical corrections and increased property values. Properties across the county were under-valued for several years. There is no intent, or provision in the tax code, for raising those values retroactively, but we must address the problems and make changes going forward.

There is not an easy or quick solution to this, but our current staff has instituted measures to ensure fair and equitable assessment valuations for all property owners going forward. There are very specific rules for how and when changes can be applied to the property assessments. Any valuation changes made now will not go into effect until the 2020 taxation cycle, which begins in early 2019 with valuation statements published in April 2019. We strongly encourage everyone to look carefully at their assessment notifications when they arrive in April 2019. That statement will also include the procedures and deadlines for addressing concerns with your current assessed values.

Property owners have a limited number of actions they can take now to address their 2019 proposed tax amounts. On page two of the Tax statements sent in Nov 2018, there are details of two potential property tax refund programs. Additionally, some taxpayers may qualify for the Senior Citizen Property Tax Deferral program. We encourage you to read the details and apply through your tax preparer in 2019, if qualified.

The Truth In Taxation form included preliminary tax figures based on the preliminary levy decisions of the County Board, School Boards, Townships and Municipalities. These boards may not go higher than the preliminary levy, but may lower the actual levy as the 2019 budgets are finalized in the next two weeks.

If you have any questions, please contact the County Assessor at 725-5801 or the County Administrator at 725-5827.

Dated: December 14, 2018

Fred Arnold

Chairman

Houston County Board of Commissioners

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