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August 12, 2019

Dear Fairfield County Resident,

Several weeks ago, County Auditor Jon Slater Jr. sent a letter to all residential property owners in our county. The subject of the letter was the state-mandated property reappraisal. Almost immediately, we began receiving calls, texts, and emails from constituents with concerns about their property taxes being increased. As Commissioners, we wanted to provide communication to all our constituents to perhaps clear up some of the misperceptions about this issue and to communicate the things you can do to talk with someone about your specific situation.

We've heard from several people that their initial response when opening the letter was concern that their taxes were going up. It is important to note that **just because the value of your property has gone up, this does not necessarily mean that your taxes will be going up.** Most of the property taxes in Fairfield County are on voted levies that "lock in the value" of the levy at the time it is passed. What that means is that the size of the pie (if you will) stays the same. What changes over time – based on property value – is each property owner's slice of that pie. The reappraisal process makes sure that everyone is paying a fair share of the overall tax. How much the value of your property increased as compared to all the other properties in the area determines if and how much your taxes will change.

Some people have expressed concerns about how much their taxes will be going up, figuring that if their home value increased by 20%, then their taxes will go up by 20% as well. The increase of the value of your home is one of many factors that will determine your tax assessment, and as a percentage, it has no direct correlation to what you will pay in taxes. The pie stays the same; the size of your slice is what the reappraisal is all about, and that is determined by the size of everyone else's slice as well.

We've also heard some displeasure aimed at the County Commissioners: "How could you allow this to happen?" **State law dictates the reappraisal process – Commissioners have nothing to do with it.** State law requires the State Tax Commissioner to order a full reappraisal every six years – and that the reappraisal is to be carried out by the County Auditor. The auditor uses data from home and property sales around your home to determine your property's value. It's not just someone's opinion: it's all about the market and math.

Finally, we've heard "who can I talk to about this – I think the valuation is way off." **There are plenty of opportunities for you to meet with appraisers** to better understand their appraisal and to present your opinion and facts about that assessment. The website where you can learn more is **fairfieldcounty.propertyvaluations.com**. There are open meetings that are being held this week and next, or you can call **740-652-7030** to arrange for a personal meeting.

Property taxes are critical to county government, your local schools, and many other governmental entities in Fairfield County. We understand how no one likes the idea of paying more taxes. This process *does not* raise one more dollar in voted-on property taxes in the county. The reappraisal process does make sure all are paying their fair share. County Auditor Slater and his team work hard to make this a fair process for all. We encourage you to reach out to them if you have any questions. Thank you for your time.

SINCERELY,

Dave Levacy

Steve Davis

Jeffrey Fix

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