

Memo

To: Assessments Staff/All Taxpayers
From: Maureen Berkowitz
CC: Board of Review
Date: 4/9/14
Re: Policy of reducing assessments to purchase price

Sales Chasing or welcome stranger assessing is the process of adjusting a specific property's value and assessment to reflect exactly 33.33% of the selling price, provided the transaction has met the criteria of an arm's length transaction as defined by the courts. Other similar property in an assessment neighborhood will generally have their assessments left unchanged or changed by different percentages using different appraisal systems.

The Chief County Assessment Officer is charged with using a mass appraisal method based on a three year average of assessment-sales ratio statistics compiled by the Dept. of Revenue.

Jackson County has in the past, reduced properties to purchase price, in effect sales chasing in one direction only. In the Supreme Court case of Walsh vs. Property Tax Appeal Board, the court found that the Illinois Constitution requires "not only uniformity in the level of taxation, but also in the basis for achieving the levels." In other words, the methodology in how assessments are arrived at must be the same.

The rules are different for the Board of Review. Statutes allow the Board of Review to reduce to sale price.

Therefore the assessments office will take taxpayers evidence of purchase throughout the year and forward to the Board of Review for consideration when they open their session. The board will then determine if an arms-length transaction occurred and whether a reduction is just to other taxpayers who have not appealed.