

**Fremont County
Board of Equalization
July 5, 2023**

Commissioner Scott Kamachi called the meeting to order for the Board of Equalization appeal hearings. Those present were Commissioner Scott Kamachi, Commissioner Blair Dance, and Commissioner Rick Hill. Also in attendance were Clerk Abbie Mace, Assessor Carol Blanchard, Chief Deputy Assessor Cari Angell, Appraiser Jeremy Dixon, Appraiser Troy Hess, Appraiser Joy Angell, Appraiser Tyler Fowler, and Deputy Clerk Kim Fletcher.

Commissioner Hill offered the prayer.
Commissioner Kamachi led the pledge.

Commissioner Kamachi gave instructions for today's hearings and swore everyone in. Commissioner Kamachi asked that each individual state their name for the record when speaking.

Clerk Mace swore everyone in.

<u>Appellant</u>	<u>RP</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Decision</u>
Michael & Jennifer Tall	RP0056102633A0	\$714,075	

Mr. Tall stated he had concerns that the value of his property has gone up 60% this year on his assessment. He asked Appraiser Joy Angell why, she explained it was because his property is river front, and because the split in the property changed directions, both parcels are now considered river front property, which makes the value go up. He compared all of the properties along the river in the Island Park Subdivision, he feels his property has gone up so much higher than the rest. He asked Assessor Carol Blanchard why this would be, and was told the Assessors Office has found inconsistencies in the valuations of the properties, but also told him the valuation of his property is correct. Mr. Tall is not really concerned about the value of his property. He would like each property along the river to be fair, either by bringing his value down, or the rest to increase, so everything really is comparable.

Appraiser Jeremy Dixon asked Mr. Tall to remind him of when his property was split.

Mr. Tall stated it was July of last year.

Mr. Dixon stated Mr. Tall's research is well done and they were able to find inconsistencies using it. He believes some of the inconsistencies are from the way waterfront properties were assessed in previous years. There were some sales reported and values changed, property owners moved in and started impacting our values. Adjustments were being made for marshland, or availability or frontage to the water. He doesn't remember if assessments were being made for acreage or square footage, but he does recall it to be so far off the water, the most value was there and the value decreased the farther away from the river the property was. This likely accounts for the inconsistencies. These do need to be reevaluated. Now they do mass appraisal, and evaluate the properties every 5 years and adjust according to market trends. He feels the increase in value for Mr. Tall's property is because of the directional change of the split of the property and any structural improvement would have contributed to the increase as well. Mr. Dixon provided a list of sales to support the Assessors valuations, but he feels Mr. Tall's complaint is more about the inconsistencies in the property valuations. The

Assessors Office will look more into these inconsistencies, but they feel Mr. Tall's property is valued properly.

Mr. Dixon discussed one sale of a river front property in the Island Park Subdivision from 2020 in the amount of \$955,000.

Mr. Tall stated he has asked for information through this process but was told they were busy and would get to it, so this is all new information to him. He feels he's been over evaluated since he moved into Island Park 26 years ago. He doesn't understand why his value is so high when his neighbors with larger, river front properties, are valued so much lower than he is. He wants to be treated fairly by either having his property valued down to compare with the rest of these river front properties, or have the rest of them brought up to his level.

Mr. Dixon asked what Mr. Tall would like to have his property valued at.

Mr. Tall stated he would like to have it equal with lots 19 or 20, which are valued at \$106,492 and \$109,300 respectively, because they are the properties most like his.

Mr. Dixon stated they will look into these inconsistencies, but he can't guarantee anything will change because they may still be ok with their assessments. However, Mr. Tall's property specifically is properly valued according to the sales in the area.

Mr. Tall asked how the Assessors came up with the criteria for valuing his property. His frontage to the river is 2 times less than his neighbor but he is being valued much higher than they are. The properties farther down with marshland are being appraised similarly to him, but the way he understands it, the marshland should bring the value down. He feels we can't have it both ways, all the criteria needs to apply to everyone.

Commissioner Kamachi closed the hearing.

Commissioner Dance feels there are inconsistencies with the properties in the area and he isn't sure how we handle it going forward.

Commissioner Kamachi feels the inconsistencies need to be addressed before a decision can be made.

Commissioner Dance feels he has seen enough information presented by both Mr. Tall and the Assessors office, and they both agree there are inconsistencies. He would like to allow time for the Assessors office time to review these properties and make adjustments if necessary. He feels there was an intent to do this before, but it wasn't able to be done. He would move to wait on a decision for this property until our July 10th meeting.

Commissioner Hill stated this gentleman is only contesting the value of the land, not any of the improvements. There is quite a bit of difference between the land values. He can agree the Assessor's office needs more time to review but wonders if they have enough time to review those inconsistencies by Monday.

Commissioner Kamachi agreed more time should be given to the Assessors to review the inconsistency so we've at least made sure the value is good. He has confidence this can be resolved.

Commissioner Dance made a motion to table a decision on this issue until July 10th, to allow for further review by the Assessors office.

Commissioner Hill seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

<u>Appellant</u>	<u>RP</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Decision</u>
Bruno & Colleen Kossin	RP003200030100	\$204,352	Upheld

Mr. Kossin presented his case via phone. He bought the property for \$60,000 a few years ago. He was offered \$90,000 for the property only a month ago. The surrounding properties have been sold at \$107,000 and \$120,000. He wants to know why his value is at \$204,000.

Appraiser Jeremy Dixon provided a list of sales information for the area. These sales are consistent with the sales information Mr. Kossin provided. He discussed comparable sales from 2022 sold for \$300,000 and is an interior lot. It was sold for \$4.62 per square foot, versus previous sales that were sold at about \$1.96 per square foot. In 2020 there was another sale of a bare waterfront property in that subdivision, for \$450,000. The assessed value of Mr. Kossin's property is \$204,352 and doesn't come close to either of these sales. We don't get a lot of sales information from the Silverhawk Subdivision because Idaho is a nondisclosure state. We only receive sales information if it is given to us. We are required to be within 90% to 100% of the market, so this property was valued conservatively, at a cost of \$3.21 per square foot for interior lots in Silverhawk. Mr. Dixon stated Mr. Kossin purchased his property for that \$60,000 back in 2014 so he has had it for 9 years. We can't use sale values from that far back in time and are limited to within the last couple of years.

Mr. Kossin stated he doesn't understand how this one lot is being valued and feels it is overvalued. Comparing his property to the one that sold for over \$400,000 isn't really a fair comparison because it was so overpriced. He doesn't feel like any of the interior lots in Silverhawk could be sold for more than \$200,000. His is a good property and he can only get \$90,000 out of it, so everything feels very out of line.

Commissioner Hill asked Mr. Dixon if the property sales he presented are in Silverhawk.

Mr. Dixon said yes.

Commissioner Hill asked if the parcel that sold for \$300,000 was waterfront property.

Mr. Dixon stated it is an interior lot.

Commissioner Dance asked about the per square foot valuation for Mr. Kossin's property and how they came to this valuation.

Mr. Dixon stated it was \$3.21 per square foot and they felt it was appropriate given the most recent sales in the area.

Commissioner Kamachi asked to verify if Mr. Kossin's lot is not a waterfront lot.

Mr. Dixon said this was correct.

Commissioner Kamachi asked about the square footage valuations and if the values are from the 3 most recent sales in the subdivision. The older sales range from \$1.72 to \$1.96 per square foot but we have Mr. Kossin's property valued at \$3.21 per square foot.

Mr. Dixon said yes, but we would also have to include the most recent sale as well, which was sold at a value of \$4.62 per square foot. We really don't get a lot of sales information from Silverhawk. We only have sales data if it is provided to us by the home owner or the realtor after the sale.

Mr. Kossin asked how the value of his property can be judged base on one sale when every lot in the area has been sold for less. He would understand if the process was done as more of an average.

Mr. Dixon stated if we were to value properties on averages, the value of his property would still be accurate, however this isn't how they valued his property. They have to view the most recent property sale because it is the most indicative of what property values are doing in the area. Our sales information is limited because Silverhawk is a gated community so we only really get information if they offer it.

Mr. Kossin talked to a realtor in the area and was told his property would only sell for \$90,000. He doesn't feel the market is there for his property to be valued at \$200,000.

Mr. Dixon stated they also reach out to realtors but they are limited in the amount of information they can offer because of privacy and confidentiality rules with their clients.

Commissioner Kamachi asked to confirm the most recent sale was from 2022.

Mr. Dixon said yes.

Commissioner Kamachi stated because it is so recent, it is the most current data we have. He feels its also very solid because it is an actual sale.

Mr. Kossin stated this is only one sale and there needs to be more comparisons. In the last 2 years there are others that were half as much.

Commissioner Kamachi closed the hearing.

Commissioner Dance stated the offer Mr. Kossin was given of \$90,000 was given over the phone and there isn't any documentation to prove the offer, so he feels it would have to be considered invalid evidence. Our Appraisers have used a comparable sale that is quite strong, but haven't used it as their sole source for valuation of this property. They have also used adjustments according to trending sales in the area. He feels the homeowner's valuation is understated and we should stand with the comparables and valuation done by Assessors even though it is somewhat high.

Commissioner Kamachi feels one slight error our Assessors could have made is only due to the limited data we have. If this was a normal situation he would be more critical but it seems to be in the median of the norm, so he has to agree with our Assessors.

Commissioner Dance, sitting as a member of the Fremont County Board of Equalization, move to find the market value for assessment purposes of real property parcel number

RP003200030100 valued at \$204,352 for tax year 2023 and therefore affirm the assessment accordingly.

Commissioner Hill seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

<u>Appellant</u>	<u>RP</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Decision</u>
Bret Payne	RP15N44E314805	\$82,600	Lowered to \$80,729

Mr. Payne presented his case via phone. The property was appraised as rural farm land until last year when it was changed to rural residential. He understands but disagrees with the change. Rural Residential property is defined as having access all year round. This property is closed and inaccessible for half the year and is used as a snowmobile trail during the winter. He feels this valuation was based on a neighboring property north of him. That property was plotted and accessible, and had utilities, services, and other amenities. Another issue is the county built up the road grade and added a culvert that floods out the front access to his property. The only comparable property he could find was 4 down from his. He feels the value of the property should be lowered to about \$30,000.

Appraiser Jeremy Dixon stated one of the questions Mr. Payne had for their office was about the acreage of the property. The legal description in his original deed was incorrect, but has since been corrected to reflect the acreage of 3.28 acres. He explained that Idaho is a nondisclosure state, so we only have access to sales information that is given to the Assessor's office. He discussed a comparable property that is 3.24 acres, and is less quality because of the terrain but it was sold for \$74,000. Mr. Payne's comparison property is 18 acres, so it doesn't compare or break down very well, however the Assessors office did make an adjustment to his property and recommends lowering the value to \$80,729 which is consistent with the current market.

Mr. Payne stated the comparable the Assessor's office provided is just outside a subdivision and isn't really comparable with his property because of the access issues.

Mr. Dixon discussed the access issue. There are significant differences between the comparable properties, but he is aware the roads in the area aren't great, but access to both parcels would be similar.

Commissioner Kamachi closed the hearing.

Commissioner Dance, sitting as a member of the Fremont County Board of Equalization, move to find the market value for assessment purposes of real property parcel number RP15N44E314805 to be valued at \$80,729 for tax year 2023, and therefore affirm the assessment accordingly.

Commissioner Hill seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

<u>Appellant</u>	<u>RP</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Decision</u>
Ryan & Lesa Jackson	RP000680110790	\$175,433	Upheld
	RP000680110800	\$477,054	Upheld

Ms. Jackson presented her case via phone. She stated the value on her land between the years of 2022 to 2023 jumped 370% on the land and 129% on the building. They purchased the property of May 2021 for \$260,000 and feels the increase in her property is out of line compared

to other sales in the area that are similar to her property. She understands there probably is an increase in the value of her property, but feels it shouldn't have increased so much.

Commissioner Dance asked if the house was on 2 lots with the residence on one and the garage on the other.

Appraiser Jeremy Dixon stated this was correct.

Mr. Dixon asked if the \$260,000 they spent on the property included both properties.

Ms. Jackson stated it was both lots and the furnishings.

Mr. Dixon asked for clarification on the information she provided.

Ms. Jackson stated the comparison lots are the MLS listings of lot sales comparable in size and the inclusion of buildings.

Mr. Dixon discussed the property ending in 800. He reviewed the comparables Ms. Jackson supplied but these properties aren't in the same subdivision as her property. If you look at comparable properties in the Island Park Village subdivision, where her property is located, the lowest sale prices were on bare lots. If you compare her 2 properties with a house and a garage on them, both properties are valued considerably less than the most recent comparable sales. He does agree the property value and improvement value has increased considerably in Island Park, but it is reflective of sales in the area, which range from \$620,000 to \$895,000. Island Park Village is a popular area and property changes hands frequently.

Mrs. Jackson doesn't feel she would get \$652,000 for her property if she was to sell it, so she disagrees with the assessment. She also doesn't understand why the property values are so high for Island Park Village, and hopes the whole county is being assessed fairly.

Mr. Dixon pointed out January 1, 2023 is their end date for the assessment year, so any comparable sales came before that date. Their approach is the value of each individual parcel and whether or not they can be sold separately. In this case, they could be sold separately so they have to take into account the value of each parcel.

Mrs. Jackson disagreed. She stated even though it is 2 lots, it should be considered a whole property. She wouldn't sell just the garage, they would be sold together as one property.

Assessor Carol Blanchard explained the way the lots are platted, as lots 79 and 80, they are viewed as 2 lots in a subdivision that could be sold separately. There would need to be an amendment made to the plat to combine the lots in order for the property to be considered 1 lot.

Mr. Dixon stated any home that was in a similar classification to this property were all adjusted accordingly. The only difference would have been in the condition of the home, which would have brought more adjustments. But everything was assessed fairly.

Commissioner Kamachi closed the hearing.

Commissioner Dance commented it is an unfortunate situation that property values have gone up so significantly. He feels the sales comparables provided by the appellant were good but they weren't in the same subdivision as her property, so ultimately he feels the comparables

provided by the Assessors office are more accurate because they are in the immediate community, even if they are not agreeable to the homeowners. The assessment is appropriate.

Commissioner Kamachi stated his agreement with Commissioner Dance. He feels this case is unique considering it is 2 lots with the house on one and the garage on the other. It may appear as one lot, but it is 2, and the Assessor's appraisal of both properties is well in line.

Commissioner Hill agreed with a statement the property owner made about how property values have jumped so much. He can understand how she feels the way she does. Our hands are tied because the state dictates how market values move, and we do need to be in line with the state. He feels the assessment seems fair.

Commissioner Hill, sitting as a member of the Fremont County Board of Equalization, move to find the market value for assessment purposes of real property parcel numbers RP000680110790 and RP000680110800 valued at \$175,433 and \$477,054 for the tax year 2023, and therefore affirm the assessment accordingly.

Commissioner Kamachi seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

<u>Appellant</u>	<u>RP</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Decision</u>
Craig Brewerton	RPI0150000008A	\$1,818,852	
	RPI0150000009A	\$160,908	

Mr. Brewerton stated the information on his assessment is incorrect. The assessment shows the house having 4 bedrooms and 5 bathrooms, but it really has only 3 bedrooms and 3.5 bathrooms. He provided a photo of his home with a letter from his architect showing that the basement isn't included in the square footage of the home because it is considered recreational space that is used but isn't necessarily a living area. The assessment also shows about 500 extra square feet in the basement that is actually a crawl space. The value of the land has stayed consistent since 2008, but the house continues to go up. Mr. Brewerton showed comparison properties in the area, and doesn't feel his house is valued correctly compared to other properties and homes in several different subdivisions in the area. He would like to know if the disparities in the assessment could be corrected and if it would change the value.

Appraiser Jeremy Dixon asked for clarification about some of Mr. Brewerton's comparisons.

Commissioner Hill asked about the disparity in the square footage of the home. His understanding is square footage is square footage.

Mr. Brewerton stated the lower level of the home is a mechanical room, a recreation space, and a garage. None of these are livable spaces. Stairwells are included in this, as its not a livable space. His understanding is that non-livable spaces aren't counted in the square footage cost.

Mr. Dixon explained there is a new measuring standard that has started to include stairwells in the square footage count. He agrees with Commissioner Hill that square footage is square footage, whether it is finished or not. The unfinished areas are unfinished basement and the finished areas are finished basement, however the cost per square foot in basements is less. This does include the garage and the mechanical room.

Mr. Brewerton stated he was under the impression that unused living space wasn't included and had misunderstood, so Commissioner Hill is correct.

Mr. Dixon stated a sketch of Mr. Brewerton's home was provided in his documentation, but his sketch is different than ours. Ours sketch is based on a prior appraisal and is larger than the sketch he provided and he would like to correct this.

Mr. Brewerton explained the additional area in the Assessor's sketch is actually a basement crawl space.

Mr. Dixon thanked Mr. Brewerton for the clarification and stated the crawl space shouldn't be included in the square footage.

Assessor Carol Blanchard stated Mr. Brewerton didn't come to the office to discuss these issues during the appraisal season, and explained some of the discrepancies could have been resolved previous to this hearing. Because it has now been brought to our attention, these changes can be made and assessment values can be adjusted.

Mr. Brewerton explained he believed these conversations had to be done in front of the Board of Equalization or he would have visited with the Assessors beforehand.

Mr. Dixon discussed parcel number 8A. There has been a change in valuation to \$1,399,705 due to the quality of the home and the classification. Since we have more information about the home, further adjustments will likely be made. The comparable sales in the area are difficult to find and are old, because we only receive sale information from those that offer it to the Assessors office because Idaho is a nondisclosure state. He stated the value of the land hasn't changed because we only have the 1 sale to compare it to. They are happy to adjust and present new values to the Board in our next meeting, because of the basement square footage and the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, which will change the value. He asked how the Board would like them to handle this.

Commissioner Kamachi feels the Assessors office should be in contact with both the Board and that Mr. Brewerton and we can re-present this next Monday.

Commissioner Dance wonders if an agreement can be made, if this would need to come back to the Board.

Mr. Dixon stated because it is already in the appeal process, it would need to come back to the Board in session.

Commissioner Hill agreed with giving the Assessors more time to reevaluate and come back to us again on the 10th.

Commissioner Kamachi made a motion to table the hearing for Craig Brewerton until next Monday to allow the Assessor's office and Mr. Brewerton to compare notes and make adjustments accordingly.

Commissioner Dance seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

<u>Appellant</u>	<u>RP</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Decision</u>
Ron Bird	RP001300040030	\$230,153	Upheld

Mr. Bird presented his case via phone. He stated he's had the property since 2007, it's a manufactured home put on a permanent foundation. Since he bought the property, people have

moved into neighboring properties and built cabins except for 1 neighbor who also brought in a manufactured home. Moose Lane isn't maintained by the county, so he takes care of the winter maintenance of the road to his property in the winter. There also isn't a fire station in this area, but there is a volunteer fire department. This makes it difficult to insure his home. He feels the value shouldn't have gone up as much as it has because of the road maintenance and fire district issues. He feels the property values in Island Park specifically are overvalued compared to the rest of the county.

Appraiser Jeremy Dixon stated the concerns on Mr. Bird's document appear to be more about the services provided to his property rather than the actual value of the property. He didn't provide any evidence to support his appeal. Because Mr. Bird added well and septic, the value assessed includes the standard \$6000 increase. He also addressed that the increase in value for property improvements was county wide, not just in Robinson Creek.

Mr. Bird stated this is his home, he's working part time and is hoping to retire in the next couple of years. He asks that the property valuation county wide be compared to the valuation in the Robinson Creek area and make sure it has been done fairly.

Mr. Dixon stated Idaho is a market value state and is required to be assessed between 90% and 110% of value. These values are evaluated annually by the Idaho Property Tax Commission. We were out of compliance but have been working to correct discrepancies. Adjustments are made based on area, as well as manufactured versus stick-built homes and are consistently valued by similar criteria. January 1st is our end date for assessments, so any sales information we do and have to consider comes from before that date.

Mr. Bird stated the county hasn't been able to cite with any comparables in the area, very few people are putting their homes up for sale, but in 3 subdivisions only 1 other property has a manufactured home on a permanent foundation. He doesn't feel he should be held up to a standard of comparables when there isn't really anything to compare his property to.

Commissioner Hill asked to clarify the property is 2 acres with the home and detached garage.

Mr. Bird said this was correct, all of the lots in the Robinson Creek subdivision are 2 acres.

Commissioner Hill asked about comparable sales.

Mr. Dixon stated the criteria they used for this sales information was for manufactured houses. We do recognize this home is in Island Park and there is a difference in their market, but because the sales are so limited, they considered sales data from all over the county.

Commissioner Kamachi stated the Assessors office has compared this property with no less than 15 areas that have manufactured homes in them, so there are comparables, even though there may not be many in the Island Park area. They looked county wide to be able to determine the value of Mr. Bird's property.

Commissioner Kamachi closed the hearing.

Commissioner Dance stated there wasn't evidence of comparable sales provided by the property owner that was clear enough to warrant a change.

Commissioner Hill agreed and feels the most value is in the acreage rather than the house.

Commissioner Kamachi understands Mr. Bird's concerns. They aren't unlike every other property owners in the county. Values have gone up across the country. He didn't present any comparables, but our Assessor's office offered no less than 15 county-wide because there aren't many comparable properties in Island Park. He feels Mr. Bird's property may already be valued slightly lower than the median of several of the comparables.

Commissioner Hill, sitting as a member of the Fremont County Board of Equalization, move to find the market value for assessment purposes of real property parcel number RP001300040030 to be valued at \$230,153 for tax year 2023 and therefore affirm the assessment accordingly.

Commissioner Kamachi seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

Assessor Carol Blanchard presented a list of all of the property owners that came in to talk with the Assessors after they quit sending out corrected notices. It has the property owner, their address and parcel numbers, and their 2023 assessment values. The last column is the Assessors recommendations for the value to be changed to, and the reasons why they should be modified.

Commissioner Dance asked why most of these were deductions.

Ms. Blanchard stated explained that as the property owners approached her office, different criteria was reevaluated to warrant the corrections. Criteria included sales data reviews, incorrect square footage, bedroom counts, reclassification of the property, or buildings that have been added or removed from the property.

Commissioner Kamachi asked if the Assessors and Homeowners agreed with these adjustments.

Ms. Blanchard said yes.

Commissioner Kamachi entered the list into the record as Exhibit 1.

Commissioner Dance made a motion to accept the listing of Assessed Valuation adjustments made by the Assessors Office as presented under Exhibit 1.

Commissioner Kamachi seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

Commissioner Kamachi continued Board of Equalization until July 10, 2023 when we reconvene.

L. Scott Kamachi, Chairman
Fremont County Commission

Attest: _____
Abbie Mace, Clerk