

# Minutes of the Meeting of the Avon Township Local Board of Appeals & Equalization

*Monday, April 15, 2024*

**Call to Order:** Acting-Chair Chad Klocker called to order the meeting of the Avon Township Local Board of Appeals and Equalization at 6:00 P.M. in the main chamber of the Avon Township Hall (16881 Queens Road Avon, MN). The meeting was also available virtually via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8325486945>, Passcode: AvonTown.

**Pedge of Allegiance:** The pledge was recited.

**Roll Call:** Present – LeRoy Gondringer (Supervisor), Chad Klocker (Supervisor), Stephen Saupe (Clerk). Absent: Bryan Rassier. Also present: Stearns County Assessors Kathy Korte and Debbie Haus.

**Approval of Agenda:** Gondringer moved to approve the agenda as presented. Klocker second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Introduction / Procedures:** The purpose of this meeting is to provide residents the opportunity to review their assessment that was mailed about a month ago. The Town Board makes the final decision on adjustments while the assessors serve in an advisory capacity. Residents can appeal the Local Board of Appeals decision to the County Board of Appeal if they are not satisfied with the outcome from appealing to the Local Board of Appeals. Typically, two assessors are present at each meeting. Gondringer holds a current Certification for the Board of Appeals. Klocker was recently certified but his term doesn't begin until after this meeting. The Supervisors signed the LBAE Certification form.

**Sales Summary:** Ms. Korte provided a summary of sales in the Township. There were 13 qualified sales for Avon Township with a ratio of 92%. Of those, 8 sales were residential (off-water) properties with a ratio of 94% and 5 were lakeshore (on-water) sales with an 89% ratio. The average typical adjustment for residential property was 3%, water/lakeshore – 5%, storage units/apartments – 10%, agricultural – 8%, Green Acres & Rural Preserve – 12%, and Commercial/Industrial – 6%. New construction totaled \$1,946,427. Ms. Korte also stated that, overall, appeals were down this year.

The meeting was then opened to the public.

## **Requests & Actions:**

- **Appointments:** Ms. Korte reported that she had spoken to a few individuals regarding their assessment, but no appointments for tonight's meeting had been scheduled. There was one walk-in and one letter.
- **McGuinnes (PID 03.00840.0002).** Mr. Denis McGuinnes, 36065 160<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Avon, MN, appeared to discuss tax assessments in general. He had previously spoken with Ms. Korte about his specific situation and did not question the current valuation of his property. However, he expressed concerns about the affordability of the tax assessment system and how a community can keep people living in their homes as their tax assessments increase due to property improvements, overpriced sales, and decreased income during retirement. Mr. McGuinnes cited California Proposition 13 as a good model. Ms. Korte and the Supervisors understood his concerns and indicated that the property

tax refund and homestead exclusions were designed to help ease financial burdens, but in general, the issues he raised were beyond the scope the Board of Appeals and better addressed by legislators.

- **Fisher (PID 03.01019.0000).** Ms. Liz Fisher, 33258 Poverty Point, Avon, sent a letter questioning her evaluation. Ms. Fisher was not in attendance at tonight’s meeting. Ms. Korte said she had spoken to Ms. Fisher who said her assessment was too high. The property is 1.38 acres on Middle Spunk Lake with about 800 feet of shoreline and an estimated market value of \$515,000 (\$334,900 – land; \$180,100 – buildings). Ms. Fisher said the interior has paneling, not sheetrock, which would lower the valuation. Though she has not done a formal analysis nor seen the interior of the home, Ms. Korte thinks the property value is in line with neighboring properties and that, if anything, it is undervalued. Lacking additional evidence and to avoid the expense of continuing the current meeting to wait for more evidence, Gondringer moved to make no change to the assessed value of the property of Ms. Liz Fisher, 33258 Poverty Point Drive (PID 03.01019.000). Klocker second. All in favor. Motion carried. Ms. Korte said that if Ms. Fisher wants to appeal the decision to the County Commissioners, she will work with Ms. Fisher.

**Other Business/Announcements**

- Knife River Retainage – Klocker announced Engineer Jeremy Mathiassen will attend the May meeting to discuss the retainage from the Parkwood Court project. Saupe will inform the Treasurer to cut the check for consideration for approval at the May meeting.
- Roger Nelson property – it was noted that the previously-existing residence on the property had been removed, though it was not known when it occurred.

**Upcoming Meetings**

- Planning Commission – April 24, 2024 at 7:00 PM.
- Town Supervisors – May 1, 2024 at 7:00 PM.

**Adjournment:** Gondringer moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:53 PM. Klocker second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

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Stephen Saupe, *Clerk*

date: April 16, 2024

**Supervisor Approval:**

date \_\_\_\_\_

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LeRoy Gondringer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chad Klocker

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bryan Rassier