

The Lima Assessor's Office enjoyed a busy year during 2014 since it was an assessment update year. Assessments are updated every four years in Livingston County. It is the responsibility of the Assessor's Office to maintain property values at a uniform percentage of value. The uniform percentage of value that is preferred in Livingston County is 100%. This means that the assessed value on a given property should be about the same as a potential selling price. Assessed Values are updated periodically in order to account for increases or decreases in property values. If all property is assessed at the same percentage of value, then taxes are considered to be fair. According to the most recent sales study completed by the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services, the Town and Village of Lima are valued at an average of 98%.

In addition to maintaining uniform property assessed values, it is the Assessor's responsibility to administer all tax exemptions. There are many different types of exemptions. They all start with the New York State Legislature where they all become law after they are signed by the Governor. There are different rules and requirements for the various exemptions. It is the Assessor's responsibility to make sure that when applying for an exemption, the taxpayer complies with all of the various rules.

One of the most common exemptions is the Basic Star exemption. During 2014 all taxpayers with the Basic Star were asked to register with the New York State Department of Tax and Finance. This was necessary to eliminate fraud in the system such as “double dipping” or having more than one Star exemption in different parts of the State. When you paid your School taxes you may have noticed that your Star exemption had been removed. If this happened you should contact me immediately.

My assistant, Marilyn Zaludny, mails out the renewal applications for the enhanced Star exemption in October. You must return your renewal before March first along with the first page of your 2013 Federal tax return. We like to receive them as soon as possible. It would be appreciated if you would include your phone number in the event we need to contact you. Remember, the enhanced Star exemption is different than the Senior Citizens Exemption which is for people earning under \$32,400 per year and includes the Enhanced Star Exemption. If you have any questions about this, please call me.

All across Livingston County farmland values were increased substantially during the 2014 Assessment update. This was a result of the increased prices being paid for agricultural land. Residential values appeared to be relatively stable during the preceding four year period. The total taxable assessed value of the Town and Village was \$252,067,350. Including exempt property, special franchise and utilities the total value was \$301,246,954.

During 2014 the New York State Legislature passed a new law allowing School Districts to provide exemptions for School taxes for veterans with the alternative veteran's exemption. This exemption was approved by the Livonia School District however was not enacted by the Honeoye Falls Lima District. At the present time a decision for 2015 has not been made by the HFL District.

Please remember that you are entitled to an assessed value that fairly reflects the market value of your property. We are always glad to discuss property values with you. If you have any questions about your property or about exemptions, Marilyn and I are available Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings. We can be reached at 624-6120.

Robert E. Morgan, Assessor

Town of Lima