

River Forest Township Assessor's Annual Report Fiscal Year 2016-2017

April 13, 2017

River Forest Township in 2016 was in the last year of the 2014 re-assessment and it continued to be a very busy year. My office has noticed a significant increase in phone calls over the last 3 years. Additionally, the calls have been increasingly complex. With the decreasing assessments some exemptions have been impacted negatively and this has increased our need to educate our constituents. Senior Freeze, Senior and Homeowners Exemptions, have been filed and continue to be filed. A mailing continues to go out to new homeowners, inviting them to contact either my office or the River Forest Township Clerk, Abbey Schmelling, with any questions.

The Deputy Assessor, Debbie DeChinistso, has continued to be very helpful in the smooth operation of this office during a time when educating residents regarding assessment, exemptions and tax bills is a priority.

The first installment of the property tax bill was received on-time in early spring. The second installment of the property tax bill was mailed in July. We assisted many of our residents in filing property assessment appeals both on-line and paper appeals with documentation. Board of Review also opened earlier than expected, early August. Throughout the year press releases were sent to the local papers and distributed to local meeting places. We held 2 community outreaches with the Cook County Board of Review staff during their appeal period. Updates were sent to be posted on the Township website.

February 2017 was our triennial reassessment. The median increase of property values was 24.04%. With all residents receiving a re-assessment notice we were inundated with phone calls, e-mails and office visits. These notices of increases in values led many of our residents to think their property tax bill would be increased by the same percentage. Education was key.

At this time the Cook County Recorder of Deeds office is no longer sending us complete sales records so I am unable to provide reliable sales data this year.

The statistics for 2016

Phone calls: approx. 1600

Office visitors: approx. 400.

The statistics for 1st quarter 2017

Resident contact: 1858

Appeals: 503

Exemptions

Homeowner: 97

Senior: 237

Other: 53

The statistics for 2015

Permits: 183 building permits were filed in River Forest.

6 commercial and exempt properties for a total of \$3,066,828

177 were residential, for a total of \$ 12,236,769

Total in permits - \$15,303,597

The statistics for 2016

Permits: 198 building permits were filed in River Forest.

13 commercial and exempt properties for a total of \$ 7,150,017

185 were residential, for a total of \$ 17,597,490

Total in permits - \$ 24,747,507