Property Tax Valuation Process / Issues

Hancock County 2009

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Outline

- Tom Landrus
  - Summary / Overview
  - Revaluation Process
  - Sales Ratio Use / Issues
  - View Factor – Subjective / Non-Uniform
- Damon Miller
  - Assessment Increases – up to 500%
  - Lake Sinclair Valuation Issues
- Tom Landrus
  - Other Assessment Concerns
  - Selected Analysis of Land Sales The Appeal Process
  - Wrap-Up / Recommendations

Summary

- Hancock County revaluation had not been done since 2003 – assessed value estimated by the DOR at 24.53% of FMV - well below the expected 36-44%
- DOR assessed the county \$35,643 for the additional ¼% state tax that would have been collected had the 2008 digest had been at the proper assessment ratio
- State does not require the revaluation, but only assesses the additional tax due
- Sales Ratio Issues - Assessor's office has not or cannot provide details behind the \$100,000 base land value used in the reassessment process. Base value of \$100,000 - No relevance to land size, water frontage, etc.
- Independent sales analysis shows that land values are much less than \$100,000 FMV for a ½ acre lot on lake properties
- View Factor utilized - non-uniform and capricious
- Property increases - not uniform across different parts of the county
  - Lake property increases average more than 100%, while off-lake averages 30% or less
- The appeal process - More than 2,200 appeals of 10,000 parcels

Revaluation – Process

- Real Property Appraisal Manual (guideline for all county appraisers/assessors) is too open for interpretation.
  - Manual states "Should Consider" on almost every factor, which gives the county appraiser an excuse to say he did or did not HAVE TO consider.
  - Land and Location Characteristics – maintain record of real property land and location characteristics to include view, topography, corner influence, neighborhood etc. Manual states they can classify your property in a neighborhood and then consider typography, view, etc. In Hancock they classified each subdivision and also tacked on a view factor
    - When another county assessor's office was asked about how they would use the view factor, they stated that any value related to the view they would consider already in the Sales price of the property, so they did not believe they would assess any additional amount for the view.
  - Land Valuation – shall estimate land values by use of the cost, sales or income approach (Hancock used sales approach).
  - Land Analysis and Stratification – states the appraiser shall appraise land separately from the improvements (Hancock has not). They used vacant land sales with mobile homes (permitted) on the property and sales that had multiple parcels and did not separate the parcels within the sale.
  - Site Analysis – Manual states appraisal staff shall use factors affecting the value such as accessibility (ROADS) and drainage, width, depth, shape, size, economic, governmental and social factors etc. The Hancock reappraisal process does not consider these factors.

Revaluation – Process (con’t)

- In the Hancock County assessment process
  - the Assessor’s office and the outside contractor only used the manual when it was in their best interest
- The major issue here appears to be that the Assessor’s Manual is
  - Guidance only (no real requirements)
  - Subject to wide interpretation
  - Resulting in wide assessment variances

Sales Ratio – Use and Issues

- Sales Ratio Analysis is a statistical analysis which can be computed by the local assessor's office to determine the ratio between the sale price and the assessed value (state requirement 36-44% of FMV)
- The Sales Ratio analysis should measure Uniformity (Coefficient of Dispersion - COD) and Bias (Price Related Differential - PRD). The sales ratio analysis is a report that the chief appraiser can use to compute sales based on specific timeframes, BUT it is up to the assessor to research each sale to determine if the sale is qualified (i.e. vacant land sale).
- Sales Ratio Analysis given to the taxpayers did not measure uniformity and when asked for clarification, the Assessor's office could not (or would not) provide.
- The Sales Ratio Analysis used in Hancock for Vacant Land contained improved properties (many have a mobile home permit or accessories or other parcels of land within the sale).
- First analysis the Assessor provided included 2009 sales (Real Property Appraisal Manual states cannot use).
- Second analysis provided included vacant land sales in addition to improved sales. The second analysis was outside of the acceptable range of .15 for the COD, which means the analysis was not uniform. When this was brought up during the appeal process the Assessor stated he provided the analysis as a courtesy. He could not defend the analysis not measuring uniformity.

View Factor

- View factor used in Hancock County lake property is a mark-up on a base property value of $100,000 (As disclosed previously, the county has not been able to provide backup for this $100,000 base)
- View factor is subjective based on the individual performing the assessment
- The Assessor even admitted if different individuals assigned a View Factor to the same property, that they would more than likely all be a different value
- Difficult to understand how this subjective assessment can be used to determine a FMV for a property?
- Also, if Property Sales are used to determine FMV:
  - Wouldn't this FMV determined from sales already include any additional valuation for View?
  - Why would there be an additional markup for the subjective View Factor?

Example of View Factor Subjectivity/ Non-uniformity – Scenic Shores Area

(½ acre land value $165,000)

Example of View Factor Subjectivity/ Non-uniformity – Scenic Shores Area

(1/2 acre land value $100,000)

Example of View Factor Subjectivity/ Non-uniformity – Scenic Shores Area

(1/2 acre land value $140,000)

Example of View Factor Subjectivity/ Non-uniformity – Scenic Shores Area

(.9 acre – assessed view 1.75 – land value $175,000 – Point Lot)

Example of View Factor Subjectivity/ Non-uniformity – Island Creek Area

(.5 acre – assessed view 1.10 - land value $110,000)

Example of View Factor Subjectivity/ Non-uniformity – Island Creek Area

(.5 acre – assessed view 1.0 – typography .75 - land value $75,000)

Assessment Changes
Waterfront Properties

Assessment Changes – Scenic Shores

Assessed Values		**2008**	**2009**	**Difference**	**Increase %**
SS LT 480	002C-173	$ 26,000	$ 135,000	$ 109,000	**419%**
SS LT 270	002B-250	28,000	85,000	57,000	**204%**
SS LT 668	002D-044	56,354	159,100	102,746	**182%**
SS LT 477	002C-170	60,933	166,090	105,157	**173%**
SS LT 670	002D-042	109,705	236,577	126,872	**116%**
SS LT 676	002D-036	197,601	400,454	202,853	**103%**
SS LT 675	002D-037	109,885	221,162	111,277	**101%**
SSLT 239		76,469	149,538	73,069	**96%**
SS LT 577	002D-035	152,093	275,805	123,712	**81%**
SS LT 673	002D-039	226,502	357,467	130,965	**58%**
SS LT 175		152,791	229,013	76,222	**50%**
SS LT 289	002B-269	5,000	7,500	2,500	**50%**
SS LT 683	002D- 029	49,888	63,357	13,469	**27%**

Assessment Changes – Island Creek

Assessed Values	2008	2009	Difference	Increase %
IC LT 557	$ 51,965	$ 315,407	$ 263,442	507%
44 Jasmine Ct	26,145	121,886	95,741	366%
IC LT 596	26,145	121,866	95,721	366%
IC LT 711	39,669	163,888	124,219	313%
IC LT 697	29,796	114,451	84,655	284%
IC LT 552	49,179	176,268	127,089	258%
IC LT 514	40,295	140,582	100,287	249%
46 Jasmine Ct	40,466	139,685	99,219	245%
IC LT 708	44,100	150,000	105,900	240%
IC LT 707	111,219	375,861	264,642	238%
IC LT 713	47,028	156,896	109,868	234%
IC LT 529	45,850	150,500	104,650	228%
IC LT 699	42,620	136,743	94,123	221%
IC LT 518	29,024	89,324	60,300	208%
45Rambling Rose	19,950	60,000	40,050	201%
84Rosebud Ct	46,511	139,740	93,229	200%
IC LT 554	61,987	182,598	120,611	195%
IC LT 592	12,980	38,132	25,152	194%
IC LT 533	44,486	128,015	83,529	188%
IC LT 519	48,878	138,842	89,964	184%
IC LT 545	44,100	125,000	80,900	183%
	36,440	102,400	65,960	181%
IC LT540-541	50,187	139,004	88,817	177%
IC LT 558	62,703	173,554	110,851	177%
IC LT 542	47,168	129,860	82,692	175%
IC LT 548	47,545	129,332	81,787	172%
IC LT 562	59,588	162,175	102,816	173%
187 Rambling Rose	55,799	148,185	92,386	166%
IC LT 712	68,145	174,648	106,503	156%

Assessment Changes – Island Creek

Assessed Values	2008	2009	Difference	Increase %
IC LT 695	35,495	90,063	54,568	154%
IC LT 594	80,865	199,840	118,975	147%
IC LT 560	69,227	164,212	94,985	137%
273Rambling Rose	110,000	258,799	148,799	135%
IC LT 561	59,359	139,283	79,924	135%
80Rosebud Ct	37,665	88,054	50,389	134%
82Rosebud Ct.	66,537	149,913	83,376	125%
83Rosebud Ct.	64,225	138,357	74,132	115%
345RamblingRose	114,376	239,492	125,116	109%
IC LT 546	83,467	172,661	89,194	107%
151 Rambling Rose	86,754	178,369	91,615	106%
IC LT 559	87,268	179,219	91,951	105%
IC LT 706B	22,050	45,000	22,950	104%
IC LT 555	114,165	233,256	119,091	104%
IC LT 532	91,749	184,508	92,759	101%
IC LT 702	49,904	100,000	50,096	100%
IC LT 534	92,199	182,176	89,977	98%
IC LT 556	118,318	229,190	110,872	94%
LC LT 692	4,000	7,500	3,500	88%
IC LT 691	4,000	7,500	3,500	88%
IC LT 705&706A	163,185	294,577	131,392	81%
IC LT 710	139,578	250,752	111,174	80%
85Rosebud Ct.	131,564	233,610	102,046	78%
36 Pothole Ct	151,863	266,326	114,463	75%
IC LT 550	132,088	230,041	97,953	74%
IC LT 696	139,078	236,031	96,953	70%

Assessment Changes – Island Creek

Assessed Values	2008	2009	Difference	Increase %
IC LT 700	143,082	237,670	94,588	66%
iC LT 553	167,482	274,757	107,093	64%
IC LT 694	99,795	158,832	59,037	59%
IC LT 535	175,619	276,389	100,770	57%
IC LT 538	166,287	259,113	92,826	56%
IC LT 537	181,031	275,588	94,557	52%
IC LT 536	186,923	282,067	95,144	51%
IC LT 530	281,052	419,662	138,610	49%
IC LT 593	166,654	238,636	71,771	43%
HS/SR Lt88	231,597	312,632	81,035	35%

Assessment Changes – Woodland Valley

Assessed Values		2008	2009	Difference	Increase%
WV LT 260		33,186	155,928	122,742	**370%**
WV LT 556		36,521	155,576	119,055	**326%**
WV LT 263		43,075	165,711	122,636	**285%**
WV LT 81		42,308	155,160	112,852	**267%**
WV LT 555		42,780	154,800	112,020	**262%**
WV LT 222		45,788	163,810	118,022	**258%**
WV LT 262		47,588	167,655	120,067	**252%**
WV LT 223		48,038	162,972	114,934	**239%**
WV LT 553		60,391	191,816	131,425	**218%**
WV LT 547		47,901	121,299	73,398	**153%**
WV LT 78		95,575	230,536	134,961	**141%**
WV LT 554		110,260	259,825	149,565	**136%**
WV LT 261		118,027	260,550	142,523	**121%**
WV LT 221		93,392	204,807	111,415	**119%**
WV LT 272		124,096	265,210	141,114	**114%**
WV LT 84		119,676	244,836	125,160	**104%**
WV LT 212		158,896	314,467	155,571	**98%**

Assessment Changes – Possum Trot Shores

Assessed Values		2008	2009	Difference	Increase%
P T LT 29	002F-54	$ 35,000	$ 150,000	$115,000	**328%**
P T LT 30	002F-053	68,595	208,607	140,012	**204%**
P T LT 33	002F-050	56,539	172,102	115,563	**204%**
P T LT 27	002F-056	67,219	175,428	108,209	**161%**
P T LT 31	002F-052	75,000	175,000	100,000	**133%**
P T LT 32	002F-051	130,686	281,274	150,588	**115%**

Assessment Changes – Off-lake Properties

ASSESSED VALUES		2,008	2,009	Difference	Increase%
Lot 4		16,250	31,228	14,978	92%
		3,000	5,565	2,565	86%
111 GMD		58,083	106,199	48,116	83%
112 GMD		55,514	100,364	44,850	81%
Lot #4		11,500	20,320	8,820	77%
BehindHillFarm		3,840	6,134	2,294	60%
WV LT 230		5,000	8,000	3,000	60%
Carrs Station		5,744	8,477	2,733	48%
2391CarrsSt		86,187	125,299	39,112	45%
113 GMD		5,200	7,500	2,300	44%
765MiltonReid		41,495	59,908	18,413	44%
67 ClaytonBlv		53,500	75,050	21,550	40%
191twoSonsRd		132,028	181,626	49,598	38%
1111CoveyRise		127,950	174,775	46,825	36%
8304EBroadSt		81,000	108,083	27,083	33%
45PleasantLn		56,143	70,811	12,668	26%
65 PleasantLn		67,196	84,290	17,094	25%
139ChruchSt		38,556	48,315	9,759	25%
18766Hwy22		63,136	76,744	13,608	22%
Hwy 16		307,325	352,890	45,565	15%

Summary of Assessment Changes Includes Improvements (2009 v 2008)

- On-Lake
  - 107 Properties
    - Average increase of 120%
    - Average increase per parcel $120,028
- Off-Lake
  - 20 Properties
    - Average increase of 35%
    - Average increase per parcel $21,547
- Tax Digest Advertised
  - 2008 - $314,175,483
  - 2009 - $413,107,139
  - Increase in Gross Value - $98,932,000 or 31.5%

Lake Property Valuation Issues

- Assessments do not take into consideration
  - Few paved roads
  - Most properties are accessed through miles of poorly maintained gravel roads
  - No street lighting
  - No fire hydrants – results in the highest of insurance rates
- Lake assessments are non-uniform
  - No consideration to accessibility
  - No consideration to lighting and fire protection
- Lake values increased 120% when the average increase for the entire county per the advertised digest is 31.5%

Lake Property Valuation Issues

- Next 2 slides are examples of valuation inconsistencies in 2 properties on the lake
  - The first parcel is #002F-053
    - 1.3 acres of land
    - 325 feet of water frontage
    - point lot on big water
    - accessed by 4 miles of timber/dirt road and has no street lighting. Access road is through timber company land and hunting clubs.
  - The second parcel is 002D-037
    - approx 1 acre of land
    - 556 feet of water frontage
    - point lot on big water
    - good paved road access
    - paid $295,000 in 2003 with approximately 20 year old doublewide trailer, added double boathouse $22,000 in 2006
    - 2009 appraisal without new boathouse is less than $200,000
    - Significant drop in total value considering that trailer would be estimated at less than $15,000
  - Both 2009 assessments begin with a base land value of $100,000 and both were assessed the exact same value of $175,000

Possum Trot – Parcel 002F-053

Possum Trot – Parcel 002F-053

Possum Trot – Parcel 002F-053

Possum Trot – Parcel 002F-053

Possum Trot – Parcel 002F-053

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002F- -053 - **2009 Hancock County Property Record Card** laquidra 09/28/2009 11:17:13 Acct # 1543 Page: 1 of 1

Owner Information
MILLER DAMON J
597 CHANTERELLA RD
LILBURN, GA 30247

General Property Information

Physical Address	350 WOOD LN				
Legal Description	P T LT 30				
Tax District				Homestead	S0
Total Acres	0.50	LL	GMD		0
Zoning		LD	101	Acc / Des	0.0000

Values

Improvements		0
Accessories		33,607
Land		175,000
Total		206,607
Previous		68,595
	2007	68,595
	2006	68,595
	2005	68,595

Topography	1.00	Water	1.00	Other	1.00
Corner	1.00	Transitional	1.00		
View	1.75	Neighborhood	1.00		1.00

Comments MH/PP

Sales Information

Grantee	Date	Deed Book	Plat Book	Saleprice	CS	Mkt Value	Reason
MILLER DAMON J	05/12/1995	91 342		69,000	0	27763	NV

Land Information

C/S	Subrecord	Code / Description	Method	Units	Depth	From Front	Depth	Depth Factor	Unit Value	Adj Unit	Adjustment	Value
R3	1	124 POSSUM TROT SHORES	Lot	1.00	0	0	0	1.0000	100000.00	100000.00	1.00	100000

Accessory Improvements (Override Value denoted by Italics)

CS	Description	Size	Units	Year	Gra	Depr	OvrD	PCom	Func	Neigh	ID Units	Calc/Ovr Val	Pic
R1	Boat Dock-D	0 x 0	407	1988	1.00	0.98	0.70	1.00	1.00	0.00	1	4274	
R1	Boat Dock-D	0 x 0	240	1994	1.00	0.98	0.65	1.00	1.00	0.00	1	2340	
R1	Boat House-D	32 x 32	1024	1996	1.00	0.98	0.70	1.00	1.00	0.00	1	15770	
R1	Canopy W/Out Slab Low Cost	12 x 12	144	1995	0.80	0.98	0.80	1.00	1.00	0.00	1	*276*	
R1	Pavilion	12 x 16	0	2008	1.00	0.98	0.70	1.00	1.00	0.00	0	2150	
R1	Sea Walls-D	1 x 375	375	1996	1.00	0.98	0.70	1.00	1.00	0.00	1	7875	
R1	Utility Bldg	12 x 12	144	1988	1.00	0.98	0.80	1.00	1.00	0.00	1	*922*	

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Possum Trot – Parcel 002F-053

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2008 Hancock County Property Record Card arthur 10/19/2009 08:37:16

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Owner Information
MILLER DAMON J
597 CHANTERELLA RD
LILBURN, GA 30247

General Property Information

Physical Address	350 WOOD LN
Legal Description	P T LT 30
Tax District	
Total Acres	0.50
Zoning	
LL	
LD	
GMD	101
Homestead	S0
	0
Acc / Des	0.0000

Values

Improvements	0
Accessories	23,445
Land	45,150
Total	**68,595**
Previous	68,595
2006	68,595
2005	68,595
2004	68,595

Topography	1.00	Water	1.00	Other	1.00
Corner	1.00	Transitional	1.00		
View	1.00	Neighborhood	1.00		1.00

Comments MH/PP

Sales Information

Grantee	Date	Deed Book	Plat Book	Saleprice	CS	Mkt Value	Reason
MILLER DAMON J	05/12/1995	91 342		69,000	0	27763	NV

Land Information

C/S	Subrecord	Code / Description	Method	Units	Depth	From Front	Depth	Depth Factor	Unit Value	Adj Unit	Adjustment	Value
R3	1	124 POSSUM TROT SHORES	Lot	1.00	0	0	0	1.0000	35000.00	45150.00	1.29	45150

Accessory Improvements (Override Value denoted by Italics)

CS	Description	Size	Units	Year	Gra	Depr	OvrD	PCom	Func	Neigh	ID Units	Calc/Ovr Val	Pic
R1	*Boat Dock on Piers	0 x 0	407	1988	1.00	0.00	0.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	1	*2564*	
R1	*Boat Dock on Piers	0 x 0	240	1994	1.00	0.00	0.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	1	*1176*	
R1	*Boat House w/ Walls	32 x 32	1024	1996	1.00	0.00	0.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	1	*13107*	
R1	*Lean-To	12 x 12	144	1996	0.80	0.00	0.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	1	*276*	
R1	*Sea Wall Wood	1 x 375	375	1996	1.00	0.00	0.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	1	*5400*	
R1	*Utility Bldg Wd/CB	12 x 12	144	1988	0.80	0.00	0.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	1	*922*	

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Scenic Shores – Parcel 002D-037

Scenic Shores – Parcel 002D-037

Scenic Shores – Parcel 002D-037

002D- -037 - **2009 Hancock County Property Record Card** robert 10/07/2009 09:10:32
Acct # 1205 Page: 1 of 1

Owner Information
SPAETH EDWARD W II
2170 OLD ATLANTA ROAD
CUMMING, GA 300410691

General Property Information					
Physical Address	2385 OCONEE DR				
Legal Description	SS LT 675				
Tax District				Homestead	S0
Total Acres	0.92	LL	GMD		0
Zoning		LD	104	Acc / Des	0.0000

Values	
Improvements	0
Accessories	46,162
Land	175,000
Total	221,162
Previous	109,885
2007	109,885
2006	86,513
2005	86,513

Topography	1.00	Water	1.00	Other	1.00
Corner	1.00	Transitional	1.00		
View	1.75	Neighborhood	1.00		1.00

Comments MH/PP

Sales Information

Grantee	Date	Deed Book	Plat Book	Saleprice	CS	Mkt Value	Reason
SPAETH EDWARD II	11/14/2003	232 197	7 088	295,000	R3	86513	FM
MELVIN VERA H	10/05/2001	185 233		0	R3	46007	KN
MELVIN ROBERT F & VE	10/12/1981	4-X 20		0	R3	46007	NV

Land Information

C/S	Subrecord	Code / Description	Method	Units	Depth	From Front	Depth	Depth Factor	Unit Value	Adj Unit	Adjustment	Value
R3	0	550 SINCLAIR BLUFF 100K	Lot	1.00	0	0	0	1.0000	100000.00	100000.00	1.00	100000

Accessory Improvements (Override Value denoted by Italics)

CS	Description	Size	Units	Year	Gra	Depr	OvrD	PCom	Func	Neigh	ID Units	Calc/Ovr Val	Pic
R1	Boat Dock-D	1 x 521	521	0000	1.00	0.98	0.90	1.00	1.00	0.00	1	7034	
R1	Boat House with Sun Deck	28 x 32	0	2006	1.05	0.98	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	1	22062	
R1	Paving (Concrete)	11 x 30	330	0000	1.00	0.98	0.60	1.00	1.00	0.00	1	594	
R1	Sea Walls-D	1 x 556	556	1999	1.00	0.98	0.80	1.00	1.00	0.00	1	13344	
R1	Utility Bldg	12 x 28	192	0000	0.80	0.98	0.70	1.00	1.00	0.00	1	860	
R1	Utility Bldg	12 x 20	240	0000	1.00	0.98	0.80	1.00	1.00	0.00	1	1536	
R1	Wood Deck	5 x 40	0	2008	1.00	0.98	0.95	1.00	1.00	0.00	0	732	

002D- -037 -

Other Assessment Issues

- **48-5-42.1 Personal Property Tax Exemption for Property Valued at $7500.00 or Less**
  It is the intent of this Code section to exempt from the payment of ad valorem taxation certain tangible personal property in which the tax due not to exceed the reasonable cost of administering and collecting the tax. All tangible personal property of a taxpayer, except motor vehicles, trailers, and mobile homes, shall be exempt from all ad valorem taxation if the actual fair market value of the total amount of taxable tangible personal property owned by the taxpayer within the county, as determined by the board of tax assessors, does not exceed $7500.00
- Hancock County is taxing all portable buildings. When the Assessor was confronted on this he stated it was not applicable for Hancock County.

Land Sales – 2007/2008

- Analysis of waterfront Land sales in Island Creek
  - 8 parcels – average selling price $40,165 (ranging from $9,820 to $150,000
  - Island Creek parcels are being assessed at base land value of $100,000 for 2009 (again with no respect to land size, waterfront, access, etc.)
- Analysis of waterfront Land sales in Scenic Shores
  - 4 parcels sold in 2008
  - 2 of these were off lake and sold for average of $7,000
  - one of the waterfront properties sold for $80,000 (.5 acres)
  - the other sold for $108,000, however, this property was .9 acres
    - This property is directly across from my property. It has same view and water as mine that is assessed at $165,000 for ½ acre.
  - Scenic Shores parcels are being assessed at base land value of $100,000 for 2009 (again with no respect to land size, waterfront, access, etc.)

Appeal Process

- The Real Property Appraisal manual was used as a reference. The chief appraiser and outside contractor said many times that it was not relevant.
- The Sales Ratio Analysis used for my appeal hearing contained Land Sales that were not vacant, and when I questioned this, it was ignored.
- State law “recommends” a county reassess property every 3 years to stay in line with FMV and within the 36-44% of FMV. The law should “require” this - not recommend.
- I asked the two Board of Assessor members if they had ever seen a sales ratio analysis and the answer was “NO”.
- I was told by the chief appraiser and outside contractor (once I showed them the ratio and all of the incorrect sales on the ratio), that they did not have to prove how they came up with the value of my land.
- The Appeal process in Hancock County has led to changes in FMV based on arguments presented. The new issue is that these adjusted values are not being applied uniformly to all properties, thus creating even less uniformity.

Wrap-Up / Recommendations

- In today's process there is too much subjectivity and interpretation possibility
- Laws should be written to require all property appraisals in the state be
  - done uniformly,
  - determined by specific methods and calculations, and
  - should not be subjective in nature.
- Propose actual property sales should be used to determine the FMV that a buyer was willing to pay for unimproved and improved properties.
- The oversight and monitoring of the property appraisal process going forward should be at a State level to achieve the uniformity and non-subjectivity across all counties.
- The Tax Digest for counties should not be approved at the State level if the county has not followed the required procedures.
- The county official(s) should be held responsible for these requirements, and if found in violation, should be subject to fines including personal. It is time that the State holds county officials accountable for their jobs and penalizes them when they do not comply with the law. Currently everyone at a State level seems to think the issues are all a local issue and that nothing can be done.

Wrap-Up / Recommendations

- Millage Rate Issues
  - The Hancock County Board of Commissioners has indicated that they intend to roll back the millage rate to be revenue neutral for 2009
    - That being said the inequities in the property assessments must be resolved, otherwise the lake properties will end up with an unfair tax increase due to the non-uniform methodologies applied.
  - On the other hand the Hancock Board of Education has indicated in their advertising that they do no intend to roll back their millage rate
    - This will result in a **$1.7 million dollar tax windfal**l due to the reassessment of properties (more than a 30% increase in tax revenue)
    - The Board contends these monies are necessary to fund prior year's deficits
    - We have expressed our disapproval with the Board of Education through the various public hearings that have been held
    - As of January 1, 2010 the Board of Education has not set a millage rate for the school year that began on July 1, 2009
    - Nor have they adopted a budget for the school year that is now in its 7th month of the fiscal year.