



Meets & Bounds

August 2020

Maine Association of Assessing Officers

President's Message

Prior to starting this article, I came across the following quote:

“All progress takes place *outside* of ones comfort zone”

As I look back over the months that have passed during 2020, I believe this quote speaks loudly to how the Covid-19 pandemic has made many of us feel. We, as assessors continued in our daily jobs during these uncertain times and have had to redesign how we went about our usual everyday task, from meeting with our taxpayers, doing site inspections and to meeting our own educational needs. Over these past few months, I have heard amazing stories how local assessors have adapted their offices with new innovated ways to continue to do their jobs to the best of their abilities. I hope we all get a chance in the near future to have a round table discussion and share some of these ideas and stories.

Speaking on innovated ways to continue on, by now I hope you have all received the MAAO Fall Conference Attendee Packet. We too, here at MAAO have had to be creative in how to best ensure our membership is able to gain continuing education hours. What we came up with is a multi-week Fall Conference. We believe that shorter educational days would be beneficial to our attendees and running it over several week gives us the opportunity to be able to offer the same amount of continuing educational hours that you have come accustomed to receiving at the MAAO Fall Conference. We hope you like this new format. Bill Healey, Jr. has done a wonderful job working with our speakers. We are extremely thankful to Bill and all of our speakers for being willing to transform our conference into this virtual model. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find the conference speaker bios and the full agenda. Believe it or not, Bill has already begun lining up speakers for our 2021 MAAO Fall Conference, that is dedication. If there

are any topic you feel would be helpful for us to cover, please reach out to any MAAO Board Member.

MAAO has met virtually over the course of this pandemic. Working hard to continue our efforts on the many things our committee chairs have on their plates. We hope to have some more information on these new initiatives in the new future.

I look forward to seeing many of you during our MAAO Fall Conference.

Stay healthy and safe.

Tammy L. Brown
MAAO President

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Maine Association of Assessing Officers
2020 Virtual Fall Conference

September 10, 11, 14, 15, 23 & 25, 2020

Featured Speakers: Lisa Hobart, IAAO Instructor & Joel Moser, Bernstein Shur

ADVANCED CREDITS AVAILABLE

Be sure to check the MAAO website: www.maineassessors.org

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Member Profile: Penny Thompson



Yes, that is me training for office duty and I've been at it ever since! I have always found satisfaction in work. I met my husband Dana at work and our daughter Idella, now a licensed funeral practitioner, began working at Mockler Funeral Home in Caribou before she even started high school. Idella met her husband Aaron on the job where he is employed as a patrolman with the Caribou Police Department. When not working our family likes to travel, and we make it a priority to enjoy the magnificent Maine outdoors.

I worked as a shipping clerk in the potato industry and as a real estate broker prior to being hired by Caribou Assessor Elizabeth O'Bar as her secretary in May 2010. After taking classes from Steve Lemay, I took and passed the CMA exam on April 1, 2011.

After Beth resigned her position, I was later hired as the assessor in December 2013. I am certified in ten code enforcement disciplines, appointed as the city building official, a member of the safety committee, and serve as staff support to the City Council ad hoc committee on blight. Additionally, as a Notary Public I solemnize marriages at the Caribou City Office.

I look for opportunities to acquire new skills and gain knowledge about mass appraisal and I've been blessed to have had brilliant, generous mentors these past (almost) ten years. In 2019, I met the requirements for the CMA-4 advanced assessor certification as well as the IAAO Residential Evaluation Specialist (RES) designation. For 2020, I have been appointed to the IAAO "Body of Knowledge Textbook Integration Taskforce" so in my spare time I read the books from the IAAO Apendium.

Respectfully Submitted,
Penny Thompson



Best Day Ever! 09-22-2018
St. Agatha, Maine

Dana L. Thompson, Penny Thompson, Idella Thompson Marquis, Aaron Marquis



MAAO Education

Here's the understatement of the year; things have changed a little since March! We've all had to be flexible, change the way we do business, and sometimes make things up along the way. There was no playbook for this!

So it should come as no surprise that we had to cancel in-person training for our Annual Fall Conference and go virtual. I have to thank all of our presenters who were more than willing to shift and provide training virtually.

As you can see on the Agenda included in this newsletter, we have a great lineup of speakers and topics. Because it is virtual, we decided to spread the Fall Conference out over a few weeks. I don't know about you, but 3 hours of virtual training is about all I can stand in one day. I've sat in on a couple of 8 hour Zoom meeting and it was brutal!

I hope you all take part in our Virtual Fall Conference. Let's hope things get better soon so we can start meeting in person again. We've already started planning for our 2021 Fall Conference at Sebasco and have a couple of top notch speakers lined up already!

Stay safe and healthy!

Bill Healey
MAAO Education Chair



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BANKER & TRADESMAN www.thewarrengroup.com THE COMMERCIAL RECORD

Secretaries Report

This is the first report for the newsletter since COVID-19. With the State and many Municipal offices on shutdown all of us have had to learn to do things differently. As we try to go back to our new normal, this is a summary of activities thus far in 2020.

The board met and set the budget for the upcoming year in January. Dates were set for the Northern Maine Spring Workshop and the Board of Assessment Review Workshop. Work began on setting the educational offerings for Sebasco. In March Covid-19 became our new normal. The Northern Maine Spring Workshop was canceled as was the Board of Assessment Review Workshop. We are in hope to have both of these offering in 2021. No meetings were held during this time, a consensus of board members was gathered via email.

In June we resumed our normal meetings via zoom. We knew a decision had to be made on the upcoming Fall conference. The Fall conference will now consist of a series of virtual offerings over several days starting on September 10th and running through September 25th, 2020. Members are still encouraged to apply for scholarships for the fall conference. We will still be conducting our MAAO Annual Meeting. It will also be virtual. During that meeting the Assessor of the Year Award will be announced.

The board is still working hard to provide educational opportunities to our members. I know we all feel it will be nice when we are able to meet in person again.

Until then, Stay Safe!

Respectfully submitted by
Ruth Birtz, MAAO Secretary



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Professional Development

Cheer up! There is a bright side to all this pandemic madness!

There is Always a Silver Lining.....Right?

Even the Novel Corona Virus worldwide pandemic of 2020 has a silver lining for Assessors in rural states across the Nation.

Many organizations have worked for many years to expand educational opportunities for assessors in rural areas. The fact that remains true is that many of these assessors work in one person offices or even part time for small communities that have little to no appetite for the budget increases necessary to support professional training and career development.

When the Novel Corona Virus upset the world in Winter 2020 no one really knew what would change and what would stay the same. There have been many serious health concerns and too many tragic outcomes to cases of COVID-19.

Ok, so back to the silver lining I was referring to....

When Maine Revenue Services approved the licensing levels for assessors in the State of Maine, they incorporated several requirements to meet each level of the advanced licensing, one of these requirements was completion of International Association of Assessing Officers courses. These courses are great training; however, they are not offered very often in Maine.

So, a Maine assessor has had to travel out of state to attend these trainings. This can cost \$1500 to \$1800 with tuition, airfare and hotel costs.

Maine Association of Assessing Officers has expressed concerns about the availability of in state courses to both Maine Revenue Services and International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO).

Now enter the Novel Corona Virus and IAAO started

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offering live online courses in Spring of 2020, with very good reviews.

Penny Thompson and I have completed both IAAO 400 Assessment Administration and IAAO 402 Tax Policy through this new IAAO platform. I found both courses to be excellent and both instructors adapted very well to the live online platform. The best part is that the total cost was \$499, and I completed the courses from the comfort of my home office.

I have been communicating with the IAAO Professional Development Office and I learned that they plan to continue to offer the live online format for courses in 4th quarter 2020 and into 2021, with no immediate plans to stop offering courses via this platform.

The availability of these courses has also provided opportunity for Maine assessors to pursue IAAO designations. Penny Thompson, of Caribou, and I are both part of a 9-person work group that are seeking the Assessment Administration Specialist Designation.

This is a huge step in the right direction for the assessors of rural America. If you are hesitant about taking the online version of the course email Penny or I and we can walk you through it. It was simple to logon after some very simple set up the first time. We would both be glad to help in any way.

I am the current Vice President and chair of the Distance Learning committee of the MAAO, and I will continue to communication with the IAAO professional development office to keep on top of the plans to continue this expanded professional development offering.

If your budget does not allow for the cost, you could always submit a scholarship application to MAAO or the Maine Chapter of the IAAO requesting assistance with the tuition.

Also, please take the opportunity to email IAAO or your IAAO regional representative Bill Healey, Lewiston's Chief Assessor and let them know how important it is that these live online offerings continue.

So, when you get a chance check out the IAAO website and look for the Live Online courses under the Education section.

Take a class! Invest in you!

“The best way to predict the future is to create it.” – Abraham Lincoln

Be Well!

Travis Roy, Assessor
City of Old Town
troy@old-town.org

MAAO Virtual 2020 Fall Conference Agenda

Thursday, September 10 th through Friday, September 25th

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH

9:00 am – 12:00 pm
3 Advanced CEUs

“Conducting a Reappraisal”
Lisa Hobart, ASA, CAE, PPS – IAAO Approved Instructor

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH

9:00 am – 12:00 pm
3 Advanced CEUs

“Evaluation of a Real Property Appraisal”
Lisa Hobart, ASA, CAE, PPS – IAAO Approved Instructor

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH

9:00 am – 12:00 pm
3 Advanced CEUs

“Commercial Land Valuation”
Lisa Hobart, ASA, CAE, PPS – IAAO Approved Instructor

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15TH

9:00 am – 12:00 pm
3 Advanced CEUs

“The Assessment Process – Fairness & Equity”
Lisa Hobart, ASA, CAE, PPS – IAAO Approved Instructor

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23RD

9:00 am – 12:00 pm
3 CEUs

“What is Benevolent & Charitable? “Updates from the Field”
N. Joel Moser, Attorney Bernstein Shur

12:00 pm to End
1 CEUs

Annual Business Meeting

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH

9:00 am – 10:00 am
1 CEU

“The Clean Energy Corridor”
Thorn Dickinson, Vice President Business Development -
Avangrid, President & CEO – NECEC

10:00 am – 11:00 am
1 CEU

“Legislative Update”
Kate Dufour, Director of State & Federal Relations, MMA

11:00 am– 12:00 pm
1 CEU

“Municipal Drone Use for Property Inspections”
Dan Whittier, Senior Loss Control Consultant, MMA

Maine Association of Assessing Officers

2020 Virtual Fall Conference

FEATURED SPEAKERS



Lisa Hobart

Lisa Hobart, IAAO Instructor

Lisa Hobart, CAE, PPS, ASA is the retired Assessor of West Bloomfield Township Michigan. Ms. Hobart formerly served as the Chief Assessor for the City of Detroit. She currently works as a Consultant.

Ms. Hobart has a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and a Master's Degree in Administration. She was appointed to a second 3-year term to the Board of Trustees of the Appraisal Foundation.

Ms. Hobart is a Senior Instructor with the International Association of Assessing Officers, and is a Michigan Certified General Appraiser. She has authored numerous course work materials and was co-author of IAAO's Property Assessment Valuation, 3rd Edition.

Ms. Hobart was 2018 Recipient of the IAAO Fellow Award. She was also awarded the 2017 IAAO Most Valuable Member Award and 2014 IAAO Instructor of the Year Award.



N. Joel Moser

N. Joel Moser, Attorney at Bernstein Shur

N. Joel Moser, Esq., M.P.A., is a shareholder in Bernstein Shur's Municipal and Governmental Services Practice Group and the Energy Practice Group, and chairs the firm's Property Tax & Valuation Team, where he assists public and private clients with assessment appeals, tax collection, and current land use programs, as well as analysis and modeling of local property tax obligations.

An affiliated member of the International Association of Assessing Officers, Joel has experience in advising clients on over a billion dollars in property tax assessed values, and has litigated on behalf of municipalities some of Maine's largest property abatement requests and most pressing issues facing Maine assessors, including so-called "dark stores," renewable energy projects and power plants, and large commercial taxpayers. Mr. Moser also represents municipalities, renewable energy companies, and utilities in regulatory compliance matters across New England.

Mr. Moser resides in Lewiston, Maine, with his wife, two young sons, and calculator.

Maine Association of Assessing Officers

2020 Virtual Fall Conference

FEATURED SPEAKERS cont.



Thorn Dickinson

Thorn Dickinson, CEO and President, NECEC Transmission, LLC and Vice President of Business Development, Avangrid Networks

Thorn Dickinson is responsible for creating and supporting growth initiatives in sustainable energy. Thorn has worked in the energy industry for 30 years. Prior to his current position, he worked in transmission and distribution operations, resource planning, rates and regulatory, strategic planning, investor relations and risk management. In these roles, Thorn worked on integrated resource plans, clean-air compliance, industry restructuring, the Maine Power Reliability Project, the sale and acquisition of numerous businesses and most

recently the development of renewable energy projects. Thorn earned an MBA from Syracuse University and a B.S. in electrical engineering from Union College.

Kate Dufour, Director of State and Federal Regulations, Maine Municipal Association

Kate Dufour has worked for MMA since 1995 and has served as the Director of the State and Federal Relations Department since 2017. She received her BA degree in Political Science from the University of Southern Maine and a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Maine. Kate serves her home town on both the City Council and the Ordinance Rewrite Committee. Ms. Dufour's advocacy is focused on the areas of taxation, education, labor and State appropriations.

Dan Whittier, Senator Loss Control Consultant, Maine Municipal Association

Dan Whittier joined the Risk Management Services Department of MMA in April of 2013 as a Loss Control Consultant. Dan's primary duties are to provide loss control services to members located in Eastern and Mid Coast Maine. In the past six years Dan has worked with Loss Control and Risk Management Services to integrate technology into Loss Control Services offered. Dan is one of two MMA Loss Control Consultants who became licensed aerial drone pilots through the FAA in 2018, allowing them to operate small unmanned aerial systems. Together they are working to develop and implement an aerial drone inspection program for Risk Management Services. Dan was promoted to Senior Loss Control Consultant in October 2018.

After graduating from Mattanawcook Academy in 2004 Dan attended the University of Maine at Fort Kent for Business Administration. After 2 years he transferred to Eastern Maine Community College, graduating in 2008 with an Associates of Applied Science in Building Construction and NCCER Level 3 Carpenter designation. During and after college Dan worked on various construction projects in Bar Harbor, Blue Hill, Mount Desert, and Brooklin Maine as a Lead Carpenter. In late 2008 he obtained his Maine Energy Auditor certification and was hired by Penquis CAP Housing Department. During his three years at Penquis CAP, Dan completed property inspections, developed estimates, and oversaw the completion of the work on behalf of the homeowner. Dan also furthered his knowledge obtaining his Building Performance Institute- Building Analyst and HUD-Housing Quality Standards Certifications. In 2011 Dan transitioned into local government becoming the Code Enforcement Officer and Licensed Plumbing Inspector for both The Town of Lincoln and the Town of Enfield. On top of typical code duties, Dan also helped transition Lincoln from no building codes to adopting the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code. Dan still stays active with the Maine Building Officials and Inspectors Association, attending the annual conference.

In 2018, Dan became a FAA certificated sUAS pilot holding a Part 107 permit to fly small unmanned aerial systems weighing less than 55 pounds. Dan is one of two certificated drone pilots employed by MMA operating a DJI Phantom 4 Pro Plus drone for aerial surveys of insured properties.



MAAO Scholarship Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must:

1. Be a current member of MAAO and in good standing.
2. Demonstrate a need for academic and financial assistance.
3. Submit the required application form to be received by the Scholarship Education Committee Chair 60 days prior to the event you plan on using the scholarship for. Applications will not be accepted if not received by the deadline.

Scholarship Conditions:

1. Scholarship recipients are ineligible to apply for another award for three (3) years. Unless no other applications have been received and/or monies are available. This decision will be left to the discretion of the Board.
2. Must apply timely and on appropriate form to be considered for the present year.
3. Use the scholarship by 12/31 of each year.
4. Shall write a summary stating length of time in assessing field.
5. Qualifying educational course work is defined as granting a minimum of 16 hours assessment by which a letter or certificate of completion can demonstrate examination success and the assignment of full credit. Continuing Education Units for licensure renewal other than Certified Maine Assessor and Certified Assessing Technician do not meet the scholarship conditions.
6. Successful applicants who subsequently decline the scholarship must reapply for future consideration.
7. Applicants must certify that no other tuition or course materials reimbursements has been awarded, nor will be sought, from any other source (e.g., county, state, local jurisdiction, or other educational or professional body), unless the scholarship does not fully cover the entire amount of the course and will receive the balance.
8. An application must be submitted with an original signature.
9. The name of the school or sponsoring organization must be submitted with the scholarship application.
10. Applicants are limited to one application per calendar year.
11. Only one (1) scholarship to be given to an Individual every three (3) years. Unless no other applications have been received and/or monies are available. This decision will be left to the discretion of the Board.
12. The MAAO Board reserves the right to reject or accept courses that are acceptable for the scholarship.

Reimbursement will cover only up to the amount of the registration fee(s).

IAAO courses, State related courses, and other related subjects pertaining to the assessment field in general including State, MAAO, NRAAO and IAAO conferences are accepted courses.



Maine Association of Assessing Officers Application for Scholarship

The decision of awarding the amount and the number of scholarships is made by the MAAO Board of Directors.

Please print clearly. Application must be submitted 60 days prior to the event you plan on attending.

Name: _____

Municipality: _____ **Title:** _____

Address: _____

City, State and Zip Code: _____

E-Mail: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Location & Course Date: _____

I certify that the information furnished by me in this application is complete and accurate.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

On a separate sheet of paper, please state in your own words the reasons you believe you qualify to receive a scholarship:

Please return completed application to:

Maine Association of Assessing Officers
C/O Maine Municipal Association
60 Community Drive
Augusta, ME 04330

If you have any questions regarding the application process contact Melissa White at 1-800-452-8786.

Note: Selections will be made based on the application information received, funds available and eligibility. The Chair of the Scholarship Committee will notify all recipients and announce their names in the MAAO newsletter.



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MAAO AUGUST 2020 NEWSLETTER

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