



MEETS & BOUNDS

May 2022

Maine Association of Assessing Officers

President's Message

Hello all,

I am honored to write my first President's message for the MAAO newsletter and share some things that are going on and some other visions for 2022 and beyond.

We have been working behind the scenes to address some of the most pressing current issues facing Maine Assessors. We are collaborating with the Maine Chapter of the IAAO, and Maine Revenue Services.

We plan to carry forward all of the good work that we can that has been going on. We also plan to stay true to some ideals that I have been talking about for a handful of years and the centerpiece of that is that as an organization we MUST do whatever we can to ensure that professional assessor education is available to all corners of Maine, regardless of budget and ability to travel. Before the pandemic, I learned about a software called Zoom, perhaps you have heard of it? It was so new that I tried to explain it to our Board in a meeting and I couldn't remember the name of it. I also met with the IT Director for the Maine Community College system to see if we could capitalize their in place statewide broadcast system to no avail. It was frustrating that we knew the need, there were systems in place, but we seemingly couldn't get cooperation. Frustration was a thing! No, wasn't going to be the final answer.

Fast forward 24 months and we are in a very different place. Wish I had bought stock in Zoom.....

This is one shining star that has come out of this pandemic. I also can't wait to get back to in person training, meetings, and networking!

We will move forward, both in person and virtually whenever possible.

By the time you read this the joint training effort between MAAO and the Maine Chapter of the IAAO will likely have already happened. The goal of this training was to address a real issue that is facing, or likely will soon be present and that is the development of commercial scale solar.

The charge for all involved in presenting this training is that we, being a joint committee of MAAO and ME Chapter of the IAAO leadership, wanted the training to be user based, and we wanted assessors in Maine to be able to have real workable tools as takeaways from this training.

I truly hope those that attended the virtual training were pleased!

We have also been collaborating with the Maine Chapter to set up a training for assessors that may not have had to make major adjustments in assessments in the past to hear from those that have and how to actually accomplish this in practical format.

As I write this, I keep coming back to one question.

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2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Member Profile - Brent Martin

I was born in Portland, spending my early years chewing window sills on High Street waiting for fire trucks. My youth was split between Maine, New Jersey (where I met my wonderful future wife at age 11), and New Hampshire. I enjoyed video games, BMX, sports, music, cars, and even motorcycles in college, until an accident nearly left me paralyzed.

I limped through senior year at Plymouth State, majored in English Writing, and went on to DePaul Law School in Chicago. I was assigned as a first-year student to the prosecution at Night Court, the inspiration behind the TV comedy. I found it more unsettling than funny and left second semester after meeting a commodities trader on a late-night bus. I left Chicago to do stock market transaction data-entry for a small brokerage firm in Florida. After hours, I learned to interpret technical charts in Bloomberg for the traders and became a licensed securities principal, editing compliance and technical documents. I was relocated to NYC for a year where my wife and I were re-introduced, we were married in Eleuthera, and our daughter, a UMO ChemE student (proud dad here), came along in 2000.

I struggled starting a brokerage firm amidst the internet bubble, September 11th, regulatory hurdles, and the anthrax scare (where a hospital quarantined my daughter, thinking a case of croup was anthrax), so I handed off the keys to a larger company and we moved to Maine. I took a job as a Credit Analyst II with MBNA in Belfast. My career in appraising and assessing started when my sister had her house appraised and asked if I'd ever considered being an appraiser. *"You mean I can value something in the present instead of the future?"* In the next two months, I attended the prerequisite appraiser and CMA courses at UMO.

On Call Appraisal Company was born a year later. I became certified, taking on IRS, Estate, Divorce, Abatement, Partial Interest, and other complex assignments. I attended hearings, monthly state appraisal board meetings (where they asked why I was there) and began appraisal review work. On an assignment in 2013 in Belfast, City Assessor Bob Whiteley convinced me to list



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the Eco-Village with the Lister, Avis Winchester. With Bob's health declining, the City Manager offered me the position 18 months later.

45 days after starting, the owner of those same MBNA buildings, where I worked 14 years earlier, requested the largest abatement ever seen by Belfast; fortunately, a technicality resulted in a denial. Amber Poulin helped assist with personal property, Annie McGowan learned the day-to-day and Avis and I began a multi-year equalization, in part, to situate the City to handle the tax shift. We thought we were getting caught up this year as the market has gone "to a new normal" or "parabolic" or "on a right-angle curve" – all of which tend to be said just before the bottom drops out. But we'll see...

What do I like about being an assessor? Unlike a sometimes-unfair legal system, unforgiving stock or real estate market, or distressed borrower pressuring an appraiser to target a value, assessors tend to be quite fair, have teachers' hearts, and willingly share their experiences with refreshing self-deprecation. The work is tough because the balancing act is tough: we answer to councils, the tax payers, the State, and, frankly, ourselves. The assessing community encourages support and communication between peers. The greater the communication effort, the more reliable the empirical data, making our



jobs better. We saw it in the implementation of the solar exemption, the changes made to Title 36 MRS §706-A, and how continuing education courses are selected. Even fair-minded taxpayers tend to thank us for trying to get it right.

Assessing relies on the classroom adage "If you have a question, ask it because others probably have the same question." I'll be forever indebted to the questions asked and answered from Avis and Annie, Bill Van Tuinen (as well as his wife, Lynda, for her time), Phil Drew, Jim Murphy, Jr., Kerry Leichtman, Judy Mathiau, Jim Thomas, Travis Roy, The Saywers, and numerous other assessors (old and new), appraisers, and some State employees. There are others but I've met my word limit...and there goes a fire truck.

President's Message continued

What do Maine Assessor's need from the Maine Association of Assessing Officers?

The foundation of the very existence of the MAAO is to provide opportunities for professional development and networking for assessors in Maine.

So, in conclusion, what do you need from the MAAO?

I am proud to serve with our past leaders and current officers as we move forward. I thank them for their guidance and mentorship over the years.

I would like to thank Tammy Brown for believing in me to take the role of VP during her term as Presi-

dent, and I would like to thank Lewis Cousins for taking on the role of VP with me during my term.

There are many more to thank, but I will just say this; It takes us all to move through the changing markets, statues, case law, and every day challenges, and I couldn't be happier being a part of this journey with all of you!

We will all do whatever it takes to make sure the assessors in Maine get what they need.

Travis Roy
troy@old-town.org



Windham Assessing Gets A New Ride

The Town of Windham recently upcycled two police cruisers for use by the Assessing Office. These Ford explorers each have about 115,000 miles on them but with all-wheel drive, are a big step up from the two-wheel drive Impalas usually handed down from the PD. Having all-wheel drive really helps with access to properties on private roads, especially in the winter months.

The Town also had the vehicles wrapped with the town seal for identification purposes. Staff feel much more comfortable driving vehicles that clearly identify who they are and why they may be taking a picture of a property and driving slowly through a neighborhood. Assessing previously drove unmarked police cars. The vehicles were wrapped by Blue Planet Graphics of Windham, Maine at a cost of \$1,500 each.



MAAO Secretaries Report

By Tammy Brown

Spring is upon us and summer is just around the corner. MAAO Board has had the opportunity to meet several times already in 2022 via Zoom.

Tammy shared the news of Roger Hoys resignation. Tammy explained Roger's past as a Board Member of MAAO. The Board accepted Roger's resignation with their deepest appreciation of all the work Roger has done for MAAO. Roger began serving on the MAAO Board in 2006.

Travis explained the joint educational offering with Maine Chapter of IAAO on Commercial Solar Installations. MAAO looks forward to working with MCIAAO on other educational projects in the future.

The Board reviewed and approved the 2022 budget. They also discussed many items, most of which revolved around how we could offer the most timely and best education offerings to our membership.

We hope you will be able to take advantage of the educational offerings that our Education Committee has put together for 2022. Watch for the upcoming registrations materials for our MAAO Fall Conference and our Excel Course.

The following is a list of Committees, Chairs and Co-Chairs.

President: Travis Roy

Vice President: Lewis Cousins

Secretary: Tammy Brown

Treasurer: Martine Painchaud

Co-Treasurer: Lewis Cousins

Audit/Finance: Ruth Birtz

Co-Audit/Finance: Darryl McKenney

Calendar/Advertising Chair: Lewis Cousins

Co-Calendar/Advertising: Theresa Duff

Newsletter Chair: Lewis Cousins

Co-Newsletter: Tammy Brown

Ethics Committee Chair: Travis

Legislative Committee Chair: Darryl McKenney

Membership Committee Chair: Theresa Duff Awards/

Scholarship Committee Chair: Elisa Trepianer

Co- Awards/Scholarship Committee: Tammy Brown

Technology Chair: Dan Robinson

Education Committee Chair: Bill Healey

Conference Committee Chair: Tammy Brown

Co-Conference Committee: Travis Roy

Historian: Darryl McKenney

Executive Committee: Ruth Birtz

Co-Executive Committee: Travis Roy, Tammy Brown and Bill Healey

Distance Learning Chair: Travis Roy

Co-Distance Learning: Lewis Cousins

If you would like to assist with a committee and the chair has not contacted you please feel free to contact them.

The board would like to remind our membership that MAAO has scholarships available for upcoming educational offerings. It is a simple application that must be filed 60 days before the educational offering you would like to attend. The application is enclosed with this issue of Meets & Bounds.

It is also time to once again be thinking of whom you would like to see this year's Assessor of the Year Award be awarded to. There are many Assessors among us who would make a perfect nominee. Please take the time to make that nomination. You will find the criteria and application is also enclosed in this issue of Meets & Bounds.

The next scheduled board meeting is August 12th with the time and place TBD due to the current Covid-19 situation. If you have anything you would like to share or have the board discuss, please contact any board member and they will be happy to assist you.

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MAINE ASSOCIATION OF ASSESSING OFFICERS

ASSESSOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Award

The Assessor of the Year Award is sponsored annually by the Maine Association of Assessing Officers Association (MAAO) to recognize professional and dedicated service by an Assessor to his/her profession and community.

Nominating Process/Presentation of Award:

- 1) The selection committee shall be appointed by the MAAO Board of Directors. It may consist of the following:
 - The Chair of the Awards and Scholarship Committee, the Awards and Scholarship Committee members and the MAAO Executive Board members.
 - Immediate past recipient of the Assessor of the Year award.
- 2) The Committee shall solicit nominations from MMA members and affiliates. **Deadline for nominations to be submitted will be August 7, 2022.** Nominations will be submitted on the official MAAO Assessor of the Year Nomination Form.
- 3) The Committee shall not disclose the name of the recipient before the Awards Ceremony.
- 4) The Award will be given during the MAAO Fall Conference Annual meeting in September.

Criteria:

Nominees for this award shall meet the following criteria:

- 1) Nominee must hold the title of Assessor for his/her municipality and be a current CMA.
- 2) Nominee provides service and contribution beyond just that of the municipality in which he/she serves by active participation in various Assessing organizations.
- 3) Quality and consistency of work product
- 4) Nominee is recognized as an Assessor who displays characteristics of integrity and leadership.
- 5) Nominee shall have at least three years experience as an Assessor.
- 6) Nominee is not eligible if they have been a previous recipient of the Assessor of the Year Award.

Additional Information

For additional information, please contact Melissa White at MMA at 1-800-452-8786 or 623-8428.



**MAINE ASSOCIATION OF ASSESSING OFFICERS
2022 ASSESSOR OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINATION**

Nominee's Name: _____

Municipality: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Telephone: _____

Nominee's Position: _____

Date of Original Certification as an Assessor: _____

Date or Year Nominee began work as an Assessor _____ (Must have served as an Assessor for at least 3 years)

Please answer questions below and attach additional sheets if necessary.

1. Please provide examples of the Nominee's leadership, service, and contribution to the Assessor's profession. List any participation in or awards given that were associated with any State, New England, or International organizations.

2. Please provide examples of the Nominee's dedication toward the community they serve and describe their efforts to promote the cause of good local government.

3. Please give a brief synopsis on the quality and consistency of work product.

Please attach all supporting documentation (newspaper articles, letters, letters of recommendation, resume, etc.) with this nomination form and submit to:

MAAO - Assessor of the Year Award
C/O MMA, 60 Community Drive
Augusta, ME 04330.
Deadline is August 7, 2022

Nomination submitted by: _____

Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____



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.



MEETS & BOUNDS

MAAO MAY 2022 NEWSLETTER

www.maineassessors.org

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