

ZION-BENTON

Incorporating the LAKE COUNTY BARGAINEER for Pleasant Prairie, Winthrop Harbor, Zion, Beach Park, Gurnee

Township approves 2013 budget

*Board of Review
appeals affects taxes*

By MONA SHANNON
ZION-BENTON NEWS

The Zion Township Board of Trustees held a public hearing for its upcoming budget Tuesday night in a special meeting before the regular board meeting. The budget was approved by the board during the regular meeting.

Township Supervisor Cheri Ditzig was absent. Trustee Jim Taylor said the total budget is \$1,900,305 which includes \$1,184,055 for the Town Fund and \$286,350 for the Assessor's office.

Township Assessor Larry Wicketts said his office had set its budget at \$288,550 but said the difference of a couple thousand in the presented budget was not a problem. "We generally give some back anyway," he said.

State multiplier

During the Town Board meeting, Wicketts said that the Illinois Department of Revenue has assigned a multiplier of 2.81 percent to Lake County. He said it affects all property, commercial and private, in the county.

Wicketts explained that after the assessors turn in their books, the state looks to see if the EAV meets the required 33 1/3 percent. If it does not it will add a multiplier to bring it up to 33 1/3.

Wicketts said this year's multiplier was driven by the record number of appeals before the Board of Review—25,000 in Lake County. He said as property owners appeal, the EAV is reduced resulting in not only the state adding a multiplier but local taxing bodies increasing tax rates to recover lost revenue.

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"Our job is to put a value on property. The taxing bodies are responsible for the taxes." He said people should talk to the taxing bodies and added the largest amount, 65 cents from every \$1 of taxes, goes to the school districts.

EAV down

Jim Taylor commented that the EAV has dropped significantly again this year. Wicketts said it has dropped nearly 15 percent and he expects to see Zion lose that amount again next year. "Houses are selling in Zion, nice houses, for \$50,000 to \$60,000 and these are good sales not foreclosures. I'm seeing a drop of 1 1/2 percent per month," he said.