



# STATE TAX COMMISSION OF MISSOURI

RICHARD MCMAHON,	)	Appeal No. 23-10457
	)	Parcel No. 08H610225
Complainant(s),	)	
	)	
v.	)	
	)	
JAKE ZIMMERMAN, ASSESSOR,	)	
ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI,	)	
	)	
Respondent.	)	

## DECISION AND ORDER

Richard McMahon (Complainant) appeals the St. Louis County Board of Equalization's (BOE) decision finding the true value in money (TVM) of the subject property on January 1, 2023, was \$155,000. Complainant alleges overvaluation and claims that the TVM as of that date was \$106,400.<sup>1</sup> Complainant did not produce substantial and persuasive evidence of overvaluation. The BOE decision is affirmed. The TVM of the subject property on January 1, 2023, was \$155,000.

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<sup>1</sup> Complainant timely filed a complaint for review of assessment. The State Tax Commission (STC) has authority to hear and decide Complainant's appeal. Mo. Const. art. X, sec. 14; Section 138.430.1, RSMo 2000. All statutory citations are to RSMo 2000, as amended.

The evidentiary hearing was held on April 8, 2025, via Webex. Complainant appeared *pro se* via phone. Respondent Jake Zimmerman, Assessor, St. Louis County, Missouri, was represented by counsel, Kevin Wyatt who appeared via Webex. The appeal was heard and decided by Hearing Officer Samuel Knapper.

### **FINDINGS OF FACT**

**1. The Subject Property.** The subject residential real property is located at 32 Renee Drive, Florissant, Missouri with a Parcel ID of 08H610225.

**2. Assessment and Valuation.** Respondent classified the subject property as residential and determined the TVM on January 1, 2023, was \$186,600. The BOE independently determined the TVM of the subject property as of January 1, 2023, was \$155,000.

**3. Complainant's Evidence.** Complainant introduced one collective Exhibit which was admitted without objection. They are described as follows:

<b>Label</b>	<b>Description</b>
A	34 page Pdf containing Complainant's position statement, section of an article from the <i>St. Louis Post Dispatch</i> , 'Building Loss Worksheet' from Farmers Insurance Group, 'Repair Contract' from Ferguson Roofing, Estimate from 'John Beal Roofing', Business records relating to the subject property's furnace and HVAC systems, receipt for water heater, receipt for dishwasher, estimate for bathroom renovation, photos of bathroom, invoice from 'Mathias Precision Tree Service', receipt from 'Kay Bee Electric',

	estimate from ‘Floors Done Right’, photo of carpet, receipts for septic tank services, online listings from nearby properties that were flipped
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Complainant testified that his opinion of value as of January 1, 2023, for the subject property is \$106,400. Complainant’s primary argument relies upon an article from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* which stated the average increase in residential property assessments in north county (Complainant resides in north county) was twenty percent. Complainant argues that a twenty percent increase from his 2021 assessment is \$106,400. Complainant also testified that the comparable sales used by the Respondent are not valid because they are larger, newer and updated. Complainant also testified that there are conditions with his property that negatively impact its value, including but not limited to: (1) aging septic tank, (2) trees around the house that are considered a liability (removed after 1/1/23), (3) newly replaced roof (performed after 1/1/23), (4) original tile in bathroom (home built in 1956), (5) dated appliances, (6) dated HVAC system and (7) dated carpet and flooring. Complainant referred to *Exhibit A* as he testified to the condition issues and repairs of his property. The repairs include: (1) tree removal, (2) septic tank maintenance, (3) dishwasher, (4) water heater, and (5) roof repair (prior to new roof). Complainant also testified that there are many properties in his vicinity that are not maintained, causing his value to lessen. Complainant also testified that many properties are becoming difficult to attain homeowners’ insurance for in his neighborhood.

Upon cross examination Complainant testified that he does not have experience or training in valuing properties. Complainant also testified that he located the comparable

sales in *Exhibit A* using an online platform like *Zillow*. Complainant selected the properties based upon his personal knowledge of the neighborhood. Lastly, Complainant testified that he presented *Exhibit A* to the BOE.

**4. Respondent's Evidence.** Respondent introduced Exhibit 1, the BOE's October 17, 2023, Decision Letter. Complainant did not object. Respondent's Exhibit 1 was admitted into evidence.

**5. Value.** The TVM of the subject property as of January 1, 2023, was \$155,000.

## CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

**1. Assessment and Valuation.** Pursuant to Article X, Sections 4(a) and 4(b), Mo. Const. of 1945 real property and tangible personal property is assessed at its value or such percentage of its value as may be fixed by law for each class and for each subclass. Article X, Sections 4(a) and 4(b), Mo. Const. of 1945. Residential real property is assessed at 19% of its TVM as of January 1 of each odd-numbered year. Section 137.115.5(1)(a). The TVM is "the fair market value of the property on the valuation date[.]" *Snider v. Casino Aztar/Aztar Mo. Gaming Corp.*, 156 S.W.3d 341, 346 (Mo. banc 2005) (internal quotation omitted). The fair market value is "the price which the property would bring from a willing buyer when offered for sale by a willing seller." *Mo. Baptist Children's Home v. State Tax Comm'n*, 867 S.W.2d 510, 512 (Mo. banc 1993). "True value in money is defined in terms of value in exchange not value in use." *Tibbs v. Poplar Bluff Assocs. I, L.P.*, 599 S.W.3d 1, 7 (Mo. App. S.D. 2020) (internal quotation omitted). "Determining the true value in money is an issue of fact for the STC." *Cohen v. Bushmeyer*, 251 S.W.3d 345, 348 (Mo. App. E.D. 2008).

"For purposes of levying property taxes, the value of real property is typically determined using one or more of three generally accepted approaches." *Snider*, 156 S.W.3d at 346. The three generally accepted approaches are the cost approach, the income approach, and the comparable sales approach. *Id.* at 346-48. The STC has wide discretion in selecting the appropriate valuation method but "cannot base its decision on opinion evidence that fails to consider information that should have been considered under a particular valuation approach." *Id.*, at 348.

The comparable sales approach "is most appropriate when there is an active market for the type of property at issue such that sufficient data are available to make a comparative analysis." *Snider*, 156 S.W.3d at 348. For this reason, the comparable sales approach is typically used to value residential property. "The comparable sales approach uses prices paid for similar properties in arms-length transactions and adjusts those prices to account for differences between the properties." *Id.* at 347-48 (internal quotation omitted). "Comparable sales consist of evidence of sales reasonably related in time and distance and involve land comparable in character." *Id.* at 348.

**2. Evidence.** "Although technical rules of evidence are not controlling in administrative hearings, fundamental rules of evidence are applicable." *Mo. Church of Scientology v. State Tax Comm'n*, 560 S.W.2d 837, 839 (Mo. banc 1977). The hearing officer is the finder of fact and determines the credibility and weight of the evidence. *Kelly v. Mo. Dep't of Soc. Servs., Family Support Div.*, 456 S.W.3d 107, 111 (Mo. App. W.D. 2015). "It is within the purview of the hearing officer to determine the method of valuation to be adopted in a given case." *Tibbs v. Poplar Bluff Assocs. I, L.P.*, 599 S.W.3d 1, 9 (Mo.

App. S.D. 2020). The hearing officer “may inquire of the owner of the property or of any other party to the appeal regarding any matter or issue relevant to the valuation, subclassification or assessment of the property.” Section 138.430.2. The Hearing Officer’s decision regarding the assessment or valuation of the property may be based solely upon his inquiry and any evidence presented by the parties, or based solely upon evidence presented by the parties. *Id.*

**3. Complainant's Burden of Proof.** The taxpayer bears the burden of proof and must show by a preponderance of the evidence that the property was overvalued. *Westwood P'ship v. Gogarty*, 103 S.W.3d 152, 161 (Mo. App. E.D. 2003). The BOE's valuation is presumptively correct. *Tibbs*, 599 S.W.3d at 7. The "taxpayer may rebut this presumption by presenting substantial and persuasive evidence that the valuation is erroneous." *Id.* (internal quotation omitted). The taxpayer also must prove "the value that should have been placed on the property." *Id.*

"Substantial evidence is that evidence which, if true, has probative force upon the issues, and from which the trier of fact can reasonably decide the case on the fact issues." *Savage v. State Tax Comm'n*, 722 S.W.2d 72, 77 (Mo. banc 1986) (internal quotation omitted). Evidence is persuasive when it has "sufficient weight and probative value to convince the trier of fact." *Daly v. P.D. George Co.*, 77 S.W.3d 645, 651 (Mo. App. E.D. 2002); *see also White v. Dir. of Revenue*, 321 S.W.3d 298, 305 (Mo. banc 2010) (noting the burden of persuasion is the "party's duty to convince the fact-finder to view the facts in a way that favors that party").

#### **4. Complainant Did Not Produce Substantial and Persuasive Evidence of Overvaluation.**

Complainant did not produce substantial and persuasive evidence rebutting the presumptively correct BOE value. Complainant did not produce substantial and persuasive evidence to support his opinion of value of \$106,400 for the subject property as of January 1, 2023. Complainant did not produce evidence comprising of a comparable sales approach, income approach, or cost approach to value.

The comparable sales approach is typically used to value residential properties improved with a single-family home. "The comparable sales approach uses prices paid for similar properties in arms-length transactions and adjusts those prices to account for differences between the properties." *Snider*, 156 S.W.3d at 347-48 (internal quotation omitted).

Complainant relies upon an article from the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* to help establish his claim of overvaluation; however, this article is not persuasive evidence. The article does not contain any citation to the valuation methods utilized; consequently, the information cannot be considered. Additionally, the portion of the article provided in *Exhibit A* contains quotes that the valuations are correct and the increase in 2023 is due to prior undervaluation in 2021.

Complainant also testified about the several condition issues for the subject property. Complainant submitted pictures, copies of receipts for repairs, and estimates for improvements to establish the issues with the home. However, Complainant offered no professional analysis completed by someone trained to analyze such condition issues and

to show the specific impact they had on the property's TVM as of January 1, 2023. Complainant testified that he presented these issues to the BOE. The BOE reduced the TVM to \$155,000 from the Assessor's original \$186,600 which tends to show that the BOE did take the condition of the home into consideration when reaching its value.

The lack of evidence relating to a recognized valuation method renders Complainant's proposed value speculative and unpersuasive. *See Cohen*, 251 S.W.3d at 349 (holding an opinion of value loses probative value when based on an improper foundation). Complainant did not produce substantial and persuasive evidence showing the BOE overvalued the subject property and "the value that should have been placed on the property." *Tibbs*, 599 S.W.3d at 7.

### **CONCLUSION AND ORDER**

The BOE decision is affirmed. The TVM of the subject property as of January 1, 2023, was \$155,000.

### **Application for Review**

A party may file an application for review of this decision within 30 days of the mailing date set forth in the certificate of service for this decision. The application "shall contain specific detailed grounds upon which it is claimed the decision is erroneous." Section 138.432. The application must be in writing, and may be mailed to the State Tax Commission of Missouri, P.O. Box 146, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0146, or emailed to Legal@stc.mo.gov. A copy of the application must be sent to each person listed below in the certificate of service. ***Failure to state specific facts or law upon which the application for review is based will result in summary denial.*** Section 138.432.



### **Disputed Taxes**

The Collector of St. Louis County, and the collectors of all affected political subdivisions therein, shall continue to hold the disputed taxes pending the possible filing of an application for review, unless the disputed taxes have been disbursed pursuant to a court order under the provisions of section 139.031.

SO ORDERED January 8, 2026.

STATE TAX COMMISSION OF MISSOURI

Samuel Knapper  
Hearing Officer

### Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing has been electronically mailed and/or sent by U.S. Mail on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026, to: Complainant(s) and/or Counsel for Complainant(s), the County Assessor and/or Counsel for Respondent and County Collector.

Stacy M. Ingle  
Legal Assistant