

Cambria County Tax Collector Newsletter



NOVEMBER 2016

A MESSAGE FROM THE CONTROLLER

It's hard to believe we are looking to the end of another year. As always, I have enjoyed working with each and every one of you over this past year.

With the changeover in the Commissioners and a more cooperative working atmosphere we are encouraged for the County. Our challenges are certainly not over, however with the outstanding effort you gave us early this year in getting the tax notices out in such a small amount of time our Office owes you a debt of gratitude and we will continue to work together in achieving our goals. Thank You!

As we are in the Holiday Season now I want to take this opportunity on behalf of myself and our Staff in the Controller's Office to wish you and your family a Healthy and Happy New Year, and a Very Merry Christmas.

Best Wishes Always,
Ed Cernic, Jr. & Staff



CONTACTS

Controllers Office: 472-1620

Ed Cernic, Jr. – Controller: 472-1630

Emily Krug – Auditor: 472-1627 or ekrug@co.cambria.pa.us

Pam Paronish – TC Assistant: 472-1620 or
pparonish@co.cambria.pa.us

Assessment Office: 472-1453

Tax Claim: 472-1445

CLOSEOUT SCHEDULING

The 2016 tax year closeouts will occur Tuesday, January 3, 2017 thru Friday, January 13, 2017.

Appointments are available between 9:00 AM and 3:30 PM, in half hour intervals. Appointments are required; if you do not make an appointment we cannot guarantee we will be able to accommodate you. **All tax collectors are also required to verify their ending balance to collect with Pam prior to their appointment. You may either call or email her.**

To schedule please call or email Pam at 472-1620 or pparonish@co.cambria.pa.us

As a reminder, payments should be accepted up until you closeout. If you have completed your paperwork simply bring the taxpayers check with you and turn it over to Tax Claim.

Please keep in mind others have appointment scheduled the same day. Therefore, if you have a problem it is best to try and have it fixed before your appointment. If you are unable to determine your problem please call and we can try and work through it before your scheduled appointment.

SPECIAL NOTICES

Just a reminder, if you have not already sent out your special notices to taxpayers you should do so now, if your school taxes are in penalty. If your school taxes do not go into penalty until December 1st then you should wait until then. Please keep in mind according the *Act 80 of 2006*; special notices are to be sent to all taxpayers who have not paid their taxes within four months of original notices.



CONTINUING EDUCATION REMINDER

All tax collectors in office on January 1, 2017 will be considered qualified tax collectors. As such, in order to maintain your qualification status you are required to obtain 2 continuing education credits before the end of your term.



A PICTURE SAYS A THOUSAND WORDS

Tamra Forgan

Years ago, (why does it seem like I say that more often now?) I worked for a County where the Planning Commission along with Historical organizations, created a Historic Resource Survey of a selection of significant structures within the county.



Stories were told of whom the stone masons and builders were clear back in the early 1700's. There were purchases and rents for Spanish milled dollar amounts. Some included special features about woodwork, basements with stone troughs, and fireplaces. Some also had some very interesting statements from deeds and documents and what the use was at the time.

We have been creating a photo file for years and have over 10,000 photos on our system. While most of them are primarily new homes or ones with improvements, it is nice to have these available. I especially like to see ones that have been restored and are historically attractive. I just went on the Somerset Christmas Home Tour and viewed one older home so beautifully decorated. It so warmed my heart.

May each of you enjoy the comfort of your homes and loved ones this holiday season for a picture perfect time.

QUALIFIED TAX COLLECTOR VS PQMC

Tax collectors have the option to earn the Pennsylvania Qualified Municipal Collector (PQMC) title by completing the Pennsylvania State Tax Collector Association (PSTCA) course. This title is separate from the Qualified Tax Collector title.



The Qualified Tax Collector title is a designation given to all tax collectors by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). This is the title that any tax collector in office as of January 1, 2017 will be given, any individual appointed and/or elected after January 1st will be required to sit for and pass the DCEDs Qualified Tax Collector exam prior to taking office.

The PQMC title, as stated above, must be earned by completing the PSTCA course but is not a mandatory qualification. The guidelines of the PQMC title are separate from those of the Qualified tax collector title. We encourage tax collectors to look into and consider obtaining the separate PQMC title as an added qualification and designation.

ELECTION YEAR!

As many of you know 2017 marks the end of your current term as tax collector regardless if you were elected or appointed. Therefore, if you are planning on seeking reelection you will need to run during the 2017 Municipal Election. The 2017 Primary is May 16th.



The following is important information to know; please note there are changes as a result of Act 164 of 2014 and Act 48 of 2015.

- A Criminal History Record is to be filed with your nomination petition. The report should be obtained within one year prior to filing. The report can be obtained by going to <https://epatch.state.pa.us/>.
 - For tax collectors who were required to run in the 2015 Municipal Election or were appointed after 2015 and have already provided the Criminal History Record to your municipality, you are not required to file the Record with your nomination petition.
- Petitions will be available for pick-up on February 7, 2017 (*this date was incorrect it should have been the 10th, Shirley said always the Friday before 1st day*)
- The first day to circulate petitions is February 14, 2017.
 - If any signatures are obtained prior to 2/14/17, they will be deemed invalid. The petition requires at least ten "duly qualified registered electors." but at least 15 is recommended in case any signature is disqualified. When obtaining signatures, you should ensure the person is a registered voter. One way to determine this is to ask the person if they voted in the November election.
- The last day to circulate petitions is March 7, 2017.
- Petitions must be returned to the election office no later than 4:00 p.m. on March 7, 2017
 - When you return the petition, the yellow copy of the ethics affidavit must accompany the petition. The white copy of the affidavit should have been given to the secretary for your municipality or school district prior to filing your petition.
- Your name can be withdrawn from the election ballot no later than March 22, 2017.

If you have any questions, please contact the County Election Office at 472-1460.



MANUFACTURED HOME COMMUNITY RIGHTS

JoAnne Ranck

The Manufactured Home Community Rights Act 156 of 2012, provides trailer court owners a way to handle abandoned trailers. There are two ways a park owner can take possession of an abandoned trailer:

1. Obtain an "Order of Abandonment" through the District Magistrate.
2. The trailer owner indicates in writing that the premises are permanently vacated and he/she have given up all rights of ownership interest.

Once the park owner takes possession, the manufactured home can be sold or disposed of.

If the manufactured home is sold, the following must occur before you, the Tax Collector, can issue a lien certification:

1. Tax Claim Bureau is given a sale cost sheet by the park owner.
2. Any surplus funds must be applied to unpaid taxes.
3. If taxes are not paid in full, Act 156 directs all unpaid taxes be exonerated. (unpaid taxes cannot be charged against a new owner but a judgment can be filed against the abandonee)

Problems arise when the trailer park owner, anxious to move forward, requests a lien certification without providing the Tax Claim the needed "sale cost sheet" or "the time" to exonerate the taxes.

Only on occasion and if the situation is warranted, Tax Claim will request Tax Collectors to issue removal permits or lien certificates prior to a "strike off" from the Tax Assessment (citing Act 261, Amended in Act 156 as the reason).

If you ever have a park owner in your office requesting these lien free certifications or permits due to the Manufactured Home Community Act, please call our office immediately and we will advise you how to proceed. Tax Claim will issue you instructions in writing to authorize your actions.

Currently, we have had only GSP Management Company (Stonehedge in Richland Township and C&B Estates in Adams Township) and UMH (Laurel Wood in Cresson Township) take advantage of the Act 156. **Please call with any inquiries at any time.**

As always, it is a pleasure to be a part of your group and I look forward to seeing each of you between January 3, 2017 and January 13, 2017.

Wishing you a Wonderful Holiday Season and a Blessed New Year.

RECOGNIZING MILESTONES!

First, please help us welcome Gail Fletcher, White Township and Lora Jones, Wilmore Borough as new tax collectors for 2016. Gail started in March after Carol Sickles resigned and Lora started in May after Maureen Brence resigned.

The following tax collectors have reached significant milestones this year.

10 years: Mary Jean Amadei, Barr Twp; Mary Vibostok, East Taylor Twp; Susan Balzano, Gallitzin Twp and Phyllis Resch, Tunnelhill Boro.

20 years: Anita Smith, Ferndale Boro and Joanne Redfern, Portage Boro.

30 Years: Linda Poole, Chest Springs Boro; Charles Davis, Clearfield Twp; Paulette Baker, Jackson Twp and Nancy Repine, Vintondale Boro.



CAMBRIA COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR ASSOCIATION

The Cambria County Tax Collector Association is made up of tax collectors within our County only. They meet on an annual basis, typically in October. This past October new board members were appointed, they are as follows: President, Charles Davis; Vice-President, Katie Lechene; Secretary, Patty Bernard; and Treasurer, Judith Sherwood. We would encourage tax collectors to join this association as this is an excellent resource to share valuable information with your fellow tax collectors.

CANCELLED CHECK IMAGINING

As a reminder, if your tax collector checking account is not already receiving cancelled check imagining and if possible deposit imagining, please speak with your banks branch manager. Typically banks should provide this information at no fee because of the nature of the account. If your bank says there will be a fee please contact Emily for assistance.

