

# Dickinson County Newsletter # 35

May 30, 2007



**Construction Update:** The last construction meeting with McHann was on May 17, 2007. A new schedule was passed out with the following dates of interest:

June 29 <sup>th</sup> of tower foundation completed.	July 9 <sup>th</sup> of Terrazzo flooring completed.
Aug 13 <sup>th</sup> of Doors and locks installed	Aug 27 <sup>th</sup> of Painting completed
Sept. 9 <sup>th</sup> of Carpet installed	Sept. 21 <sup>st</sup> of Electrical completed &
Sept 21 <sup>st</sup> - Substantial Completion Phase 2	
Sept 24 <sup>th</sup> thru Oct. 5 <sup>th</sup> - Owner Move-in Phase 2	Nov. 30 <sup>th</sup> of Tower completed

Change orders have continued to increase throughout the project. Current change orders add up to \$713,222 and the outstanding known price requests (PRs) are \$126,255 making the current estimate at \$839,777. It looks like the estimated total change order \$ amount will be closer to \$877,000 to \$900,000. \$300,000+ more than the original 5% recommended by RDG of \$577,000.

**Phase 2 New Furniture & Move Schedule:** The **tentative** move plans are starting to come together. The new furniture set up will begin the week of September 10, 2007 with the owner to begin moving in September 24, 2007. This is a **tentative** schedule as of today. Beth and Sue will begin the moving schedule process along with the labeling process to get ready for the movers in July. Please begin thinking of packing and preparing for the move. Boxes are available in the basement. Ask Clark for assistance for the boxes.

**Board of Review update from the Assessor:** The Board of Review starts its sessions May 1st and continues throughout the month of May. The Dickinson County Board of Review has been in session Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays each week from 8:30 A.M. until noon. It has been a busy year and the sessions will not be over before the end of May so Pat has filed for an extension until June 15<sup>th</sup>.

Thus far, besides making decisions on individual appeals, the Board of Review has lowered all residential dwellings off lake by 10%, dropped land & dwellings in Lake Park, Terril & Superior an additional 5%, dropped all commercial land on the lake by 40%, given an across the board reduction of 10% on all commercial land and buildings, & reduced all golf course land & buildings by 40%. Pat says she is not sure how the tax burden will shift until the process is completed and the State has its say.

What does this mean? The Assessor says she knows one thing for sure; the state will look at last year's value and at the new value and will equalize based on the State formula. Dickinson County will not lose value over the last assessment. The Board can lower every property as much as they want and the State will come back and raise it up based on the median sales from last year's value to what is needed this year. The State will have the last say as to the total amount of value Dickinson County will have in all classes of property. With that in mind, Pat is predicting possible State orders on residential and commercial properties and she knows there will be a State order of approximately 18% on Ag land in Dickinson County.

The Board of review plans to fight any commercial State order based on the new administrative rule concerning use and not highest and best use. If the State orders an equalization on residential, that equalization will go on all residential property even though only off lake residential was lowered by the Board. This means lakeshore residential will not only get their regular assessment but will get the equalization % ordered by the State. The Assessor says if there is a State equalization order on residential, she will work with the State to put that value back on the dwellings off lake so that lakeshore isn't overvalued by the order.

What is the cost of all this process to the Assessor's office? The Assessor's office is required by law to send notices to each property owner with changes made by the Board of Review. With the across the board reductions done by the Board of Review, the Assessor will be sending out all residential and commercial notices again. Postage will be approximately \$4,000. In addition, each board member receives \$150 dollars per session (5 members x \$150 = \$750 per session) plus mileage. This year the Board will be in session 21 days (21 x \$750 = \$15,750). The Assessor notes that these expenses are above normal because of the extended session days and the across the board reductions in both residential and commercial properties. There will be another follow up with the Assessor in the next newsletter to complete the story of assessments in Dickinson County.

**IT Update:** Windows Vista, the new operating system released from Microsoft, is now being sold. It is getting more difficult to buy computers without XP which is a problem for the county. Currently, Alissa is testing Vista and has found it is not compatible with a lot of programs. Eden, the county financial software is not currently compatible with Windows Vista. Other programs that are not compatible include Capital Assets, Anti-Virus and anti-spyware software. Alissa will also begin putting Office 2007 on new computers. Office 2007 has a very different look but is very functional. Like any new program both take time for users to get familiar.

The county is currently in the process of working on getting new audio visual equipment in the community room. Current plans include flat panel tv's in each partition, the ability to record meetings, a sound system and projector with the ability to play videos and dvd's. The room will be equipped with access to the county's computer network, phones, and cable tv. The community room will also serve as an emergency room for 911 in case of a disaster in the county.

**Safety Training:** The annual safety training will be in the month of June. Sessions will be June 15, 2007 9:00-10:30 AM, June 22, 2007 10:00-11:30 or June 22, 2007 1:30-3:00. This is a mandatory training for all county employees. Please attend one of the scheduled sessions. The sessions will be held in the conference room at the engineer's/P&Z building.

