

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
December 14, 2023, 10:00 AM
State Capitol Building, Room 100
Oklahoma City, OK

Auditor Cindy Byrd called the meeting to order.

Roll Call was taken, and a quorum was established.

Members present:

Blayne Arthur
Gary Snyder
Wade Patterson
Cindy Byrd, Chairman

Mr. Patterson made a motion to approve the November 15, 2023 minutes. Second by Mr. Snyder. Roll call was taken with 3 members voting “aye” and Ms. Arthur abstaining. Motion carried

Comments from Public:

Bruce Short, McCurtain County Assessor addressed the BOE subcommittee regarding his new position as McCurtain County Assessor. He reported that most of his parcel that have had improvements do not have pictures or drawings on file. He attended the new Assessor training. At this training the new Assessors were told they would not be held liable for previous Assessor’s documents/work. Mr. Short also mentioned that Gary Snyder and Kevin House along with the CLGT staff has been a huge help. They are the unsung heroes of the Assessor’s office throughout the state. In October when OTC went over the audit score that McCurtain County had failed, and it was going to be impossible for the office to pass in the next four years. McCurtain County Assessor’s office started the year with a completely new staff. Mr. Short asked that he not be tagged with what has happened in the past. that is out of his control. Our office is working diligently to get into compliance regarding the performance audit.

Ms. Byrd wanted everyone to understand the public comment section. She added this agenda item does not allow for any action to be taken but thanked Mr. Short for his comments.

Agenda Item #1 – Performance Audit

Ms. Byrd ran a random sample regarding the 10 pool questions for the 2024 performance audit. The pool questions will be 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17 and 19. Is there a motion to accept these random questions?

Mr. Snyder – I would like to see question 1, which is data collections, replace one of the 10 random questions. On the test audit, this was a very popular question that counties didn't earn or lose points. On the 2023 performance audit there were 47 counties that lost points on question 1. On the test audit there were 15 counties that lost points on that question. Data collection efforts have been a historical problem of the audit – collecting information accurately which really causes problems with the cost approach, but also the other approaches to value when you try to look for comparable properties that have sold. If data isn't comparable or accurate, because it's not comparable, then all the approaches really go awry. That's strictly my opinion. I'm just making an observation.

Mr. Patterson – A follow up with what Bruce just talked about, with his data not being complete. I do think that's the most important thing that we have to good data, because without good data, we can't go anywhere. And I think he just highlighted the fact, and I know McCurtain County is not the only one, but if we don't have that requirement then you have commissioners that are asking Assessors.....Can you cut your budget? Or can you reduce your VI budget or whatever. If we make data collection any less relevant than I fear that this will give the Commissioners, the ability to say someday that it's not that important because it's been taken out of the audit. I do think that needs to always be checked.

Ms. Arthur – My question is, are we going to randomly select the pool questions or not? And that to me is a decision we need to make. I certainly respect each person's perspective on the importance of the questions. I think we either say they're randomly generated or they're not. That's my concern with making a change, based off of the numbers that were randomly generated. But someone can direct me otherwise.

Mr. Snyder – It's stated in the audit scenario that...and I'll read from the 2024 performance audit. The question pool at a December meeting each year to go along with the annual ratio study after selection, subcommittee will choose randomly the 10 questions from a pre-defined list of the State Board of Equalization approved questions at the December meeting each year to go along with the annual sales ratio. After the selection, the subcommittee will inform OTC Ad Valorem division of the next year's performance audit before December 31, what those questions will be.

Ms. Byrd – I would also add that this issue of data collections has been brought to me regarding the audit. There are a lot of questions out there about that, too. I just want to make sure that's know to the other committee members.

Ms. Arthur - I don't think we can deviate from what your random numbers were. I understand the significance of what you all are sharing, but I think that's us deviation from the guidelines that exist currently.

Ms. Arthur – I would like to make a motion to utilize questions 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, and 19 that were randomly generated by Chairman, Auditor Byrd and direct OTC Ad Valorem to use these pool questions for the 2024 performance audit.

Mr. Snyder – Second

Ms. Byrd – Lori would you call the roll?

Mr. Snyder – aye

Mr. Patterson – aye

Ms. Arthur - aye

Ms. Byrd – aye

Ms. Byrd – Motion carried

Ms. Byrd – I think we can always discuss at a meeting starting in January to discuss question 1 to always be included in the performance audit since that's what most of the concerns were that were brought to my attention by County Assessors. Maybe that gives everyone a year to sharpen things up and allow everybody to get on the same page. We will work with Joe and include that next year.

Mr. Snyder – Since question 10 is regarding the most current forms prescribed by OTC for use by the Assessor's, it's our duty from the narrative of question 10 to select 7 form numbers for this question.

Mr. Patterson – I would say randomly would probably be best suited to select the 7 forms for the performance audit.

Mr. Snyder – I just want to make the subcommittee aware that some forms are not utilized by all counties. We need to have a plan on what happens if some of the forms are not utilized in all counties.

Mr. Haggood – Something that you might consider in the process is prevalence of use, or volume.

Ms. Arthur – Are the OTC forms something that needs to be decided at this meeting or is it something we could gather more information and decide in January, so we can do a better job selecting the forms?

Mr. Snyder – I'd move that the subcommittee study the forms and come back with a recommendation for the December 31 deadline.

Ms. Arthur – I will second that motion.

Ms. Byrd – Lori would you call the roll?

Mr. Snyder – aye

Mr. Patterson – aye

Ms. Arthur - aye

Ms. Byrd – aye

Ms. Byrd – Motion carried

Ms. Byrd – Last item on the agenda, new business. Do we have new business? If none, is there a motion to adjourn?

Ms. Arthur – I would like to thank McCurtain County for taking the time to make the long drive to Oklahoma City to participate in this meeting. I know a lot of you come a long way to be here and I think that helps us to do a better job on a tough subject. I just want to go on record to say I appreciate the County Assessor’s and their time very much.

Mr. Snyder made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Arthur seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Auditor Byrd, Chairman, declared the meeting adjourned.