

MEMORANDUM
FROM THE OFFICE
OF COUNTY COUNSEL

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Anthony J. La Bouff, County Counsel *ALB*

DATE: November 4, 2008

SUBJECT: Consideration of Candidates for Appointment to the Office of Placer County Assessor for the unexpired term of that office.

Requested Action

That the Board consider the qualifications of thirteen (13) applicants for appointment to Office as the Placer County Assessor. The individual appointed will serve in that office until the next general election, when a successor is elected and qualified. The office became vacant on October 17, 2008, as a result of the resignation of Bruce Dear, the Assessor for the past 18 years. The Board is authorized to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term under Section 404 of the Placer County Charter.

Background

As your Board is aware, Placer County Assessor Bruce Dear submitted his letter of resignation from office effective October 17, 2008. The Assessor was elected to serve his current term of office in 2006, and that term has two years remaining. Section 404 of the Placer County Charter requires that the Board fill that vacancy in stating that:

"Whenever a vacancy occurs in any elective county office, other than a member of the Board of Supervisors, the Board shall fill such vacancy and the appointee shall hold office until the next general election and until his successor is elected and qualified."

Both state law and the Placer County Charter provide that the appointee shall hold office until the next general election at which the Assessor would be elected and qualified, which in this case is the General Election scheduled for 2010. On September 23, 2008, the Board directed staff to conduct a recruitment process and accept applications for review by the Board for this meeting. As a result of the recruitment and application process, the County has received thirteen (13) applications. Once the Board makes the appointment, the appointee would be required to stand for election during the 2010 general election to retain this office.

Qualifications to Serve As The County Assessor

The County Assessor provides a variety of services including completing all statutorily mandated property tax assessments as a means to fund government services and completing annual and supplemental assessment rolls for all property within the county subject to local assessment. The Assessor's office also performs business property audits to ensure compliance and equalization of business property assessments and provides information for local government, property owners and the business community. The 2008-2009 Placer County Property Assessment Roll consists of 174,881 assessments with a value of \$ 58 billion dollars. To carry out these duties, the Section 670 of the State Revenue and Taxation Code requires that a County Assessor hold a valid appraiser's or advanced appraiser's certificate issued by the State Board of Equalization (BOE). Only two of the candidates currently hold an active certificate, since one of the requirements for such a certificate is that the individual is currently working for the State Board of Equalization, County Assessor or Appraisers Commission. Section 673 of the Revenue and Taxation Code authorizes the State BOE to issue a temporary certificate to a new employee, appointee or elected Assessor. The temporary certificate expires after one (1) year and cannot be renewed. Therefore, consideration of the background and training of the various candidates to qualify for the certificate at the end of the temporary period would seem important.

State regulations describe the basic qualifications for successfully obtaining the appraiser's certificate. These requirements are set out in Property Tax Rule 283 and the relevant background and experience involves:

- Either a graduate of an accredited four-year institution of higher education, or
- High school graduate and four years of relevant experience. Relevant experience means employment within the last ten years in any of the following occupations:
 - o An accountant, auditor, real property appraiser, building cost estimator, engineer, real estate loan agent, real estate loan underwriter, right-of-way agent, licensed building contractor, or,
 - o A real estate licensee, licensed by the California Department of Real Estate, engage in buying, selling, leasing, or managing real estate, or
 - o An appraiser aide or appraiser trainee in an assessor's office or in the property taxes department of the Board (BOE), or,
 - o An employee or other appraiser, appraiser aide, or appraiser trainee of an assessor's office or of the property taxes department of the Board, except that such employment time shall be limited to qualifying for only 2/3 of the four-year experience requirement.

Along with these technical skills, this position also calls for strong management skills. The Placer County Assessor supervises and manages an office with a gross budget of \$9.5 Million which has 85 employees to accomplish the statutory duties of the office. The majority of these duties arise in the Property Assessment Program, which expects to complete over 37,000 appraisals due to property transfers or new construction, as well as 20,000 supplemental assessments and 45,000 non-Proposition 13 assessments, along with record numbers of assessment appeals that are expected in the coming budget year. In addition, the Audit Program expects to complete over 160 mandatory and non-mandatory audits and the Public Information and Geographic Information Systems Program will face unprecedented customer calls due to current market and financial conditions.

Applicants for Appointment

Of the thirteen applicants, all but one reported that they meet the basic requirement of a college degree. Six of the qualified applicants have more than five (5) years of direct experience in county real property appraisal. The basic experience, particularly in real property appraisal, of each of the applicants, as self-reported in their applications is set out below. The applicants are listed in the order that their applications were received. The candidates have described their management experience in their responses to the supplemental questions. Government Code Section 24001 provides that a person is not eligible for this office unless he or she is a registered voter of the county in which the duties are exercised at the time of appointment. The Board may waive this requirement for an appointed office if it finds that this is in the best interests of the County. However, this requirement cannot be waived and must be established at the time nomination papers are issued for the general election.

Wayne Nader

Wayne Nader is retired from the position of Regional Manager of U. S. Bank. He held that position from 1991 to 2006. Prior to that time, he was a Vice President for Wells Fargo from 1985 to 1990, and Regional Manager for American Savings Bank from 1978 to 1985.

Omer Stiff

Omer Stiff retired from the position of Managing Appraiser in the Placer County Assessor's Office. He held that position from Jun, 2002 to October, 2007. Prior to that position, he was employed as a District Supervising Appraiser with the San Bernardino County Assessor's Office. He worked in that officer from January, 1984 to June, 2002. Mr. Stiff was issued an Advanced Appraiser Certificate, in 1990 and an Appraiser Certificate, issued in 1984.

Kristen Spears

Kristen Spears is currently employed with the Placer County Assessor's Office as the Assistant Assessor and has held that position since July, 2004. Ms. Spears has worked in the Placer County Assessor's Office since July, 1997, as Managing Appraiser, Principle Auditor Appraiser, Chief Appraiser and Assistant Assessor. She holds a Certificate as a Property Tax Appraiser, issued in 1998, as well as Auditor-Appraiser Certification, issued in 1998 and Advanced Appraisal Certification, issued in 2006.

Edward Martini

Edward Martini has worked as a self-employed Insurance Broker/Agent since 1982. He has also worked as a Real Estate Salesperson/Lender for Empire Home Loan Corporation since 1997. Mr. Martini has been a licensed Real Estate Salesperson since 1997 and a licensed Insurance Broker since 1982.

Patricia Moore

Patricia Moore is the Owner and Chief Financial Officer of Moore's Engine Service, Inc. She has held that position since 1977. Prior to that time, she was a Note Department Supervisor for Bank of America from 1970 to 1977.

Christina Manley

Christina Manley is currently employed as a Appraiser with CB Richard Ellis, Inc. She has held that position since January, 2007. Prior to that, she had been employed by the Placer County Assessor's Office as a Supervising Appraiser from August 2003 to December 2006 and a Senior Appraiser from July 2000 to September 2003. Prior to that, she had been employed as an Associate Appraiser in the Sacramento County Assessor's Office from 1999 to 2000. Ms. Manley holds an OREA Certificate as a General Appraiser and was issued an Advanced Appraiser Certificate in 1996.

John Evpak

John Evpak has been Chief Executive Officer of Prophet Financial, Inc. and Spevpak Holding, Inc., since May, 2005. He is also currently employed as an Associate Finance Budget Analyst for the State Department of Finance. He has held that position since April 2007. Prior to that time he was an Associate Governmental Program Analyst with the State Employment Development Department from June 2006 to March 2007 and an Analyst, California Performance Review with the Office of the Governor from February 2004 to August 2005. He holds licenses as a Real Estate Broker, and a Real Estate Officer issued in 2005.

Jarrett Stedifor

Jarrett Stedifor is currently a Supervising Real Property Appraiser with the Sacramento County Assessor's Office and held that position since May, 2004. He has worked in that office since 1998, and has also held positions as Real Property Appraiser I and II, Associate Real Property Appraiser and Senior Real Property Appraiser. Mr. Stedifor has been a certified Real Property Appraiser since 1999 and was issued an Advanced Appraiser Certificate in 2006.

Thomas Hudson

Thomas Hudson is currently Tax Counsel III/Senior Tax Counsel for the State Board of Equalization. He has held that position since July 2004. Prior to that time, he was the Legislative Director and District Coordinator for State Senator Rico Oller from May 2001 to June 2004 and a Policy Consultant for State Senator Ray Haynes from March 1998 to March 2001. He has obtained a Temporary Appraiser's Certificate that expires in July, 2009.

Laurene Riley

Laurene Riley is a co-owner of Auburn Heritage Construction, a building contractor. She also worked as Accounts Receivable/H.R. for DFC Aircraft Repair from October 2006 to January 2007, Board Secretary for the Newcastle Fire District from April 2005 to April 2006, Bookkeeper for Aviation and Electronics from March 2004 to March 2005, Bookkeeper, Placer County Law Enforcement Chaplaincy from June 2003 to March 2004, Bookkeeper, Tom's Sierra Co., Inc from October 1999 to February 2002 and Administrative Secretary, Placer County Auditor-Controller from February 1988 to November 1995.

Steven Brown

Steven Brown is currently employed as a Redevelopment Program Coordinator for the Placer County Redevelopment Agency. He has held that position since 2006. Prior to that time, he was the owner of SAB Appraisal, a small business performing real estate appraisals on single family residences and small commercial and multiple units from 2004 to 2006 and Director of the Community Development Agency for the County of Nevada from 2000 to 2004. Mr. Brown holds a license as a Real Estate Appraiser issued in 2008 and a Real Estate Broker's license issued in 2004.

Warren Burns

Warren Burns is currently serves as a member of the Placer County Assessment Appeals Board. He was employed by the Placer County Assessor's Office from 1970 through 1996, retiring from the position of Chief Appraiser. From 1960 to 1970 he was employed by the Los Angeles County Assessor's Office, advancing to the position of Senior Appraiser. Mr. Burns was issued an Advanced Appraisal Certificate in 1975, an Appraisal Certificate in 1967.

Kevin Eckard

Kevin Eckard is currently the Chairman of the Placer County Assessment Appeals Board and an Inheritance Tax/Probate Referee. He has served as an Assessment Appeals Board Member for the past 15 years and has been a Probate Referee for the past 26 years. He holds licenses as a Certified General Real Estate Appraiser issued in 1994, and a Real Estate Broker issued in 1978.

Recommended Action

That your Board consider the qualifications of the candidates submitting applications and appoint one of the candidates to serve as the Placer County Assessor for the current unexpired term and until a successor is elected and qualified.

Letters Sent to Applicants



PLACER COUNTY

BOARD MEMBERS

F.C. "ROCKY" ROCKHOLM JIM HOLMES
District 1 District 3
ROBERT WEYGANDT KIRK UHLER
District 2 District 4
BRUCE KRANZ
District 5

Ann Holman

CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

175 Fulweiler Avenue, Room 101/Auburn, California 95603/(530) 889-4020
Fax: (530) 889-4099 www.placer.ca.gov

October 29, 2008

Kristen Spears
6560 Longridge Court
Foresthill, CA 95631

Dear Applicant:

The Board of Supervisors will consider applications submitted for the interim position of County Assessor at a regular meeting on November 4, 2008. The item is scheduled for 9:30am and you are welcome to attend this meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact the Board of Supervisors' office at 530-889-4010.

Sincerely,

COUNTY OF PLACER
CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Megan Ciafardoni
Administrative Secretary



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October 29, 2008

Christina Manley
1607 Kentucky Way
Rocklin, CA 95765

Dear Applicant:

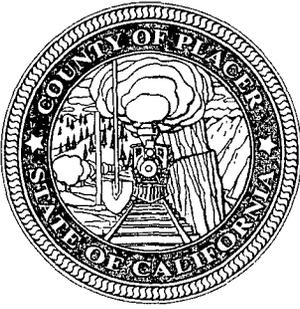
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John Evpak
8506 Phoenix Avenue
Fair Oaks, CA 95628

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October 29, 2008

Patricia Jean Moore
P.O. Box 406
Applegate, CA 95703

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October 29, 2008

Edward Martini
538 Sawka Drive
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Applicant:

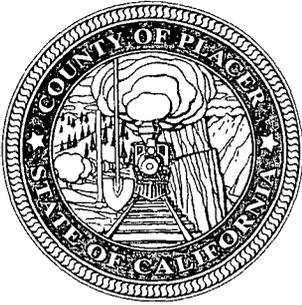
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October 29, 2008

Jarret Stedifor
4429 Northampton Drive
Carmichael, CA 95608

Dear Applicant:

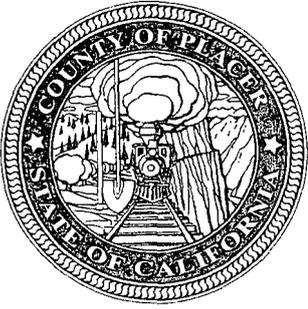
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October 29, 2008

Laurene Riley
P.O. Box 4007
Auburn, CA 95604

Dear Applicant:

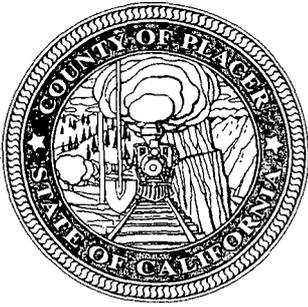
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October 29, 2008

Thomas Hudson
9971 Base Line Road
Elverta, CA 95626

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October 29, 2008

Steven Brown
12522 Lakeshore N.
Loomis, CA 95602

Dear Applicant:

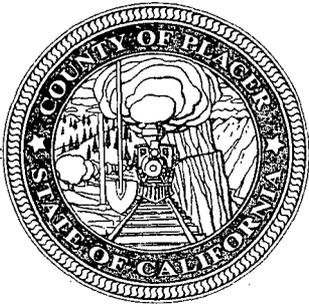
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October 29, 2008

Warren Burns
3958 Happy Road
Loomis, CA 95650

Dear Applicant:

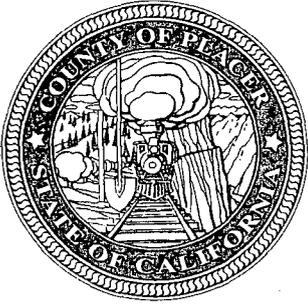
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October 29, 2008

Omer Stiff
903 Cobble Creek Circle
Rocklin, CA 95677

Dear Applicant:

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October 29, 2008

Wayne Nader
13837 Range Court
Auburn, CA 95602

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October 29, 2008

Kevin Eckard
342 Kevin Court
Auburn, CA 95603

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CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Megan Ciafardoni
Administrative Secretary

Correspondence Received



**Sacramento County
Office of the Assessor**

Kenneth D. Stieger, Assessor
Kathleen Kelleher, Assistant Assessor

RECEIVED

OCT 29 2008

**CLERK OF THE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Real Property Division
3701 Power Inn Road, Suite 3000
Sacramento, CA 95826-4329
www.assessor.saccounty.net
(916) 875-0700

October 27, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to have this opportunity to write a letter of reference for Jarret Stedifor as he applies for the position of Assessor in the County of Placer.

Over the past 10 years, Jarret has been assigned the responsibility for a variety of tasks in the Sacramento County Assessor's Office. As a real property appraiser, Jarret consistently completed his assigned valuation work ahead of schedule and was quick to offer his assistance to others to complete their work. His strong work ethic and thorough understanding of appraisal methodology were a few of the primary reasons for Jarret's unprecedented rise from Student Intern to Real Property Supervisor in less than 6 years.

Though Jarret is a skilled appraiser and has done a great job in the valuation of a wide range of properties, it is his leadership skills and ability to inspire others which have made him such an invaluable asset for our office. For example, because of workload shifts Jarret was given responsibility of two separate appraisal units over the past 2 years. Neither of these units had completed a timely closeout of their workload in the prior year. Under Jarret's leadership, each of the crews completed a timely closeout of more units with fewer staff. Jarret's successes with his primary tasks have lead to additional opportunities for leadership roles in other projects within our office.

Jarret was put in charge of our highly successful vineyard project where we enrolled approximately 20,000 acres of previously non-assessed vines. He was the primary developer of the program all of our real property supervisors use to create their work-to-do lists. Jarret was also a leader on the team which helped develop our current automated Prop 8 valuation program. These tasks were all successfully completed in addition to his Supervisorial duties.

It has always been a tremendous pleasure for me to work with Jarret, and this sentiment has frequently been conveyed to me by other managers as well as taxpayers. He is extremely professional in his interactions and that, along with his customer service skills have made him one of the preferred spokesmen for our office.

While the loss of Jarret will be a significant one for the Sacramento County Assessor's Office, this position presents an excellent opportunity both for the County of Placer and Jarret. His work ethic, strong leadership and people skills make him an excellent choice for the office of Assessor for the County of Placer.

I highly recommend Jarret Stedifor for the position of Assessor at the County of Placer.

Sincerely,

Curt Caldwell
Chief Appraiser
Sacramento County Assessor's Office
caldwellc@saccounty.net

(916) 876-5326

[Ch1] Letterhead (6/2008)



Sacramento County
Office of the Assessor
Kenneth D. Stieger, Assessor
Kathleen Kelleher, Assistant Assessor

RECEIVED

OCT 29 2008

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Sacramento, CA 95826-4329
www.assessor.saccounty.net
(916) 875-0700

October 27, 2008

Placer County Board of Supervisors
175 Fulweiler Avenue
Auburn, California 95603

Dear Board Members:

It is my pleasure to highly recommend Jarret Stedifor for the current, vacant position of interim Placer County Assessor. I have known and worked closely with Jarret for the past ten years in our Real Property Division and have come to depend on him as an extremely valuable member of my team of Real Property Supervisors. I hold him in very high regard.

Jarret possesses all the many attributes that would allow him to succeed in the position of interim county assessor. He is extremely competent in every task he takes on and has excellent managerial and organizational skills. He embraces every new challenge that comes his way with a high level of energy and and is a proven motivator of his staff. He has an impressive grasp of the many work processes within our office and has been instrumental in helping us establish a positive culture of team work, cooperation and mutual respect among all of our work units.

Certainly one of Jarret's strongest attributes is his professional and positive demeanor. He would be excellent in the capacity of Assessor because of his innate ability to lead by example, and to work well with a wide variety of people and with other county departments. He has had a good deal of exposure over the years answering taxpayer's questions, addressing their concerns, and providing the public with a high level of customer service.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on his behalf.

Sincerely,

Cynthia A. Hennessy
Chief Real Property Appraiser



Sacramento County
Office of the Assessor
Kenneth D. Stieger, Assessor
Kathleen Kelleher, Assistant Assessor

RECEIVED

OCT 29 2008

**CLERK OF THE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Administration
3701 Power Inn Road, Suite 3000
Sacramento, CA 95826-4329
www.assessor.saccounty.net
(916) 875-0760

October 27, 2008

Re: RECOMMENDATION OF JARRET STEDIFOR

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I'd like to take this opportunity to recommend to you Jarret Stedifor, Supervising Real Property Appraiser. Jarret has been with the Sacramento County Assessor's Office since 1998, progressing from an entry level position to supervisor of 17 employees.

Throughout his tenure with the Office, he has taken on projects of increasing difficulty and has consistently delivered solid results. Most recently, he was responsible for the analysis of over 120,000 residential properties to determine if they qualified for property tax reductions. The project was completed on schedule and his conclusions were well supported.

He is an able project leader, with good organizational skills. Although he's team-oriented and collaborative in his approach, he knows when it's time to make a decision and move on.

Jarret has great people skills, is an excellent public speaker and is a downright nice guy. I believe he'd be an asset in any leadership role in your organization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen Kelleher".

Kathleen Kelleher
Assistant Assessor

Kristen Spears
6560 Longridge Court
Foresthill, CA 95631

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CLERK OF THE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

October 29, 2008

Jim Holmes
Placer County Supervisor, District 3
175 Fulweiler Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Supervisor Holmes:

I appreciate the recent opportunity to discuss with you my qualifications for the position of Assessor. It is an important decision that you and your fellow Board of Supervisor members make on November 4th. As we discussed, the current economic situation makes the job of an Assessor extremely challenging, and I believe that I am uniquely equipped for the position of Placer County Assessor, given my qualifications:

- Proven track record as an executive leader with the Placer County Assessor Department
- Experience leading a large assessment operation composed of multiple management levels, 85 staff positions, an \$8 Million operating budget, and delivery of a \$60 billion assessment roll
- Ability to run an assessment program so effectively that Assessors statewide come to visit and model our practices
- Commitment to consistent delivery of practical, responsive customer service to constituents
- Leadership recognized for fostering teamwork and development of innovative programs embracing technology and efficiency
- Fiscally conservative management style that is responsive to current budget challenges
- Demonstrated experience developing processes consistent with both the complex statutory environment and our county computerized property tax system, Megabyte.
- Proven ability to lead a complex decline in value assessment program for the 3rd consecutive year

I am eager to face the challenges of the office and look forward to providing excellent public service to Placer County property owners. I have been endorsed not only by highly respected retired Assessor, Bruce Dear, but by a number of Assessors across the state. I am committed to running an aggressive election campaign under the advisement of a talented local campaign manager.

I bring experience and continuity at a time when Assessors across the state recognize the complexity of the assessment business and the risks of inexperience in this fiscally important position. I ask for your support on November 4th for an appointment to Assessor.

Sincerely,



Kristen Spears