



BAHAMAS – March 2022

CONTENTS

INUNDATED WITH DISPUTES: REAL ESTATE ASSOC. SEEKS EXTENSION ON REAL PROPERTY TAX AMID “INFLATED VALUATIONS”	1
--	----------

INUNDATED WITH DISPUTES: REAL ESTATE ASSOC. SEEKS EXTENSION ON REAL PROPERTY TAX AMID “INFLATED VALUATIONS”

As scores of Bahamians face “inflated valuations” of their homes for tax purposes by the Department of Inland Revenue, the Bahamas Real Estate Association said yesterday that it has requested an extension on the end of month deadline due to the share volume of queries being sought through appraisers and the association.

The deadline to dispute this year’s tax bills is today.

In an interview with Eyewitness News, Bahamas Real Estate Association (BREA) President Christine Wallace-Whitfield said she wrote to the Department of Inland Revenue requesting the extension “just because of the fact that we’re just inundated with so many people querying” valuations of homes for tax purposes.

She said while the department had not responded as of yesterday afternoon, the government has sought to work with the association following talks to “help all of those who have any queries on their real property tax”.

The BREA president encouraged homeowners to query their bills where there appears to be disparities and apply for extensions on the period to pay.

“I can tell you the licensed appraisers have been very, very busy and inundated with getting appraisals done,” Wallace-Whitfield said.

International Property Tax Institute

IPTI Xtracts- The items included in IPTI Xtracts have been extracted from published information. IPTI accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of the information or any opinions expressed in the articles.

“It has been great business, but as I have said this before, we could have eliminated all of this had we sat down, in the beginning, to really think about it thoroughly.

“We are here now at this point, so let’s just try to see how much we can rectify this situation to make everybody as comfortable with what it is that they have before them in terms of their real property tax numbers.”

Minister of Economic Affairs Michael Halkitis has advised anyone who is dissatisfied with the reassessed level of their real property tax this year to file an appeal.

Eyewitness News reported yesterday that the owners of a condominium complex on Paradise Island received bills this year that was nearly 300 percent over the government’s valuation the year prior, and nearly 200 percent over the independently appraised value performed last month.

Those homeowners have disputed those bills.

There have been reports of homeowners receiving tax bills that were 300 percent and 400 percent over the actual value of their homes.

The process to appeal requires an independent valuation — a process bemoaned by some due to the cost.

Others have questioned the methodology of the Department of Inland Revenue’s assessment of homes and why its valuations are not more in line with appraisers.

Wilshire Bethel, a licensed appraiser, told Eyewitness News he has been inundated with calls for appraisals in recent months.

“I have been asked to do a few, and a number of persons that I know of personally — other appraisers — they have been asked,” he said.

“I’ve had in particular an instance where valuations, for instance, Bayside on Paradise Island where values are normally at their very height, when it’s at its best, at approximately, give or take, say half a million dollars.

“And the value given by the real property section has classified those properties well over \$1 million.

“In other words, it’s over twice, three times the actual value. That’s what I’m aware of. But there is a lot of properties that are overvalued for the purpose of real property tax.”

Bethel said valuations that are considered unreasonable ought to be challenged.

International Property Tax Institute

IPTI Xtracts- The items included in IPTI Xtracts have been extracted from published information. IPTI accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of the information or any opinions expressed in the articles.

He noted, however, that there have been instances where properties were undervalued and following an appraisal it was determined that Inland Revenue was being “generous”.

“But there are a lot of instances where the values have been overstated...”

International Property Tax Institute

IPTI Xtracts- The items included in IPTI Xtracts have been extracted from published information. IPTI accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of the information or any opinions expressed in the articles.