

**UTAH STATE TAX COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

9:00 a.m., Thursday, October 8, 2015

Commission Hearing Room 1025, 210 North 1950 West, Salt Lake City, Utah

**Participating:**

John L. Valentine – Commission Chair

Michael J. Cragun – Commissioner

Robert P. Pero – Commissioner

Rebecca L. Rockwell – Commissioner

Barry Conover – Executive Director

**Commission Office:**

Christa Johnson, Commission Executive Assistant

**Note:** A copy of related materials and an audio recording of the meeting can be found on the Tax Commission website: <http://tax.utah.gov/commission-office/meetings>.

**I. Call to Order**

Commission Chair Valentine called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

**II. Public Comment (individuals or groups wishing to address the Commissioners for up to three minutes on matters not related to a pending or reasonably imminent appeal to the Tax Commission)**

Commission Chair Valentine asked if anyone wished to address the Tax Commissioners. There were no comments.

**III. Approving Commission Meeting Minutes of Thursday, August 27, 2015**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Cragun moved to approve the Commission meeting minutes of Thursday, August 27, 2015. The motion passed unanimously.

**IV. Approve submission of proposed rule amendments to Division of Administrative Rules for publication in Utah Register**

1. R884-24P-53. 2016 Valuation Guides for Valuation of Land Subject to the Farmland Assessment Act Pursuant to Utah Code Ann. Section 59-2-515.

Commissioner Rockwell introduced the following proposed rule amendment for the Commission to consider and submit for publication to the Division of Administrative Rules:

Rule R884-24P-53. 2016 Valuation Guides for Valuation of Land Subject to the Farmland Assessment Act Pursuant to Utah Code Ann. Section 59-2-515.

The amendment annually updates the agricultural productive values to be applied by county assessors to land qualifying for valuation and assessment under the Farmland Assessment Act

(FAA). The values are recommended to the Commission by the State Farmland Evaluation Advisory Committee, which meets under the authority of Section 59-2-514.

Section 59-2-515 authorizes the State Tax Commission to promulgate rules regarding the Property Tax Act, Part 5, Farmland Assessment Act. Section 59-2-514 authorizes the State Tax Commission to receive valuation recommendations from the State Farmland Evaluation Advisory Committee for implementation as outlined in R884-24P-53. The rule sets the per acre values for 418 separate class-county combinations. This year it is proposed that 126 rates decrease slightly, 164 increase slightly, and 128 have no change.

Commissioner Pero, chair of the State Farmland Evaluation Advisory Committee, said that the committee met on Tuesday, September 29, 2015, to consider the Farmland Evaluation Report prepared by Utah State University (USU). The report analyzes the several classifications of land in agricultural use in the various areas of the State and recommends values based upon productive capabilities of the land when devoted to agricultural use. The values in the report are summarized according to six land uses: irrigated cropland, orchard cropland, meadow cropland, dry cropland, grazing land and non-production land. To derive the values for each land use USU looked at changing crop prices, changing costs, crop yields (or productivity) and crop mixes. The State Farmland Evaluation Advisory Committee voted unanimously to recommend the values in the USU Report for 2015 to the Tax Commission. These values are in the updated R884-24P-53 now before the Commission.

Commissioner Rockwell explained that the rule will be posted in the November 1, 2015, Bulletin. The 30-day public comment period will end December 1, 2015. The earliest date for the amendments to become effective is December 8, 2015.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Rockwell moved to approve submission of Rule R884-24P-53. 2016 Valuation Guides for Valuation of Land Subject to the Farmland Assessment Act, which contains the values recommended by the State Farmland Evaluation Advisory Committee to the Division of Administrative Rules. The motion passed unanimously.

## **V. Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Conover reported that the agency is in the process of rolling out the voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) system. The phones are being installed and the Cisco phone training for all employees is currently taking place. Call center employees will be trained on the Interactive Intelligence software (ININ). Once the Cisco phone is installed, the employee may practice making inside agency calls. All current phones will remain active and working until October 26, 2015, when the system goes live.

Mr. Conover thanked Scott Smith, Deputy Executive Director for his support and dedication to this project.

Mr. Conover reported that October is designated as National Cyber Security Awareness month. The agency is kicking off a permanent security awareness program. The program will

cover a variety of topics that apply to security. In addition, materials will be provided throughout the year to keep employees updated on the latest security issues.

## **VI. Commissioners' Report**

Commissioner Cragun noted that today is the agency's Annual Recognition Lunch for employees' years of service with the state.

Commissioner Cragun complimented the Property Tax Division for the presentations that were made in the three-day formal hearing held this week.

Commission Chair Valentine reported that the agency has contracted with LexisNexis for a legal research database. There are nine professional licenses and 27 support staff licenses. The database system is essential for the agency to use as a research tool.

## **VII. Adjourn**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Cragun moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Commission Chair Valentine adjourned the meeting at 9:21 a.m.

**Approved on:** Thursday, October 22, 2015

**Attested:** Christa Johnson

Executive Assistant

Utah State Tax Commission