

A PEEK INSIDE THE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

Issue 13

January 2019

ERIE COUNTY AUDITOR NEWSLETTER

End of the year thoughts from our Auditor

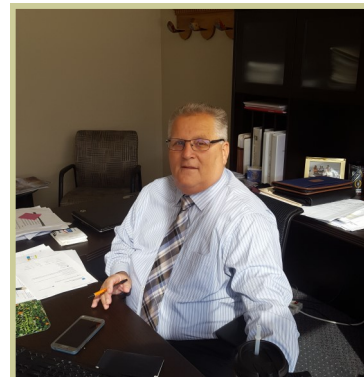
This has been a very busy time for us in the Auditor's Office. The Finance Staff had to deal with an IRS audit that was very time consuming. The overall Audit was very good but did identify areas we need to make changes, specifically how some people were paid by the County. We worked with the affected departments to conform to the suggested changes with minimum disruption in their routines. We also helped develop a software solution to collect the new bed tax enhancements that go into effect 1/1/2019. The software will enable us to assist the cities, villages and townships to efficiently and cost effectively collect the appropriate bed tax for all entities involved (see article page 3).

The Real Estate Staff completed the 2018 State mandated revaluation of all properties in Erie County. We met with a significant number of businesses and property owners to review issues they identified with the value of their property. Our software enhancements using a Paperless Reappraisal System (PRS) proved to be both efficient and cost effective. We completed our task of submitting to the State the results of our revaluation early, had little follow up to do and our abstract was accepted and approved on time (see article below). Some of my staff led the effort to identify a

permitting solution that could be utilized by all the political subdivisions in the County. Again, by working together with the Township, Village and City building officials we were able to implement a new software that all will be using as of January 1, 2019, except the City of Sandusky who previously committed to another software prior to the decision of a County-wide system. That process resulted in cost savings for all that are using the software and is a win-win for all of us. Special thanks to Perkins Township, Vermilion City and Township and Huron City and Township building officials in making this happen. It is truly amazing what we can accomplish when we are pulling in the same direction.

The Erie County Treasurer will be sending out tax bills early January due by the 15th of February. Board of Revision (BOR) value complaints are due, by State Statute, in the Auditor's Office by the close of business March 31, 2019 (**because March 31, 2019 is a Sunday we will be accepting complaints until the close of business 4:00 P.M., on Monday April 1, 2019.**)

Last, in this Holiday Season (Hanukah, Christmas, New Year), for that matter all year long, be kind to one another, reach out to someone in need and practice the true meaning of the season. From the Erie County Auditor's Office have a Happy and Safe New Year.



Richard Jeffrey

2018 Erie County Revaluation

The 2018 Revaluation went paperless and was an overall success! Our office utilized a lot of new technology and trained our staff with a more hands on approach so we can not only make most of the changes in-house and take responsibility but also to better understand and answer tax payers questions. I pushed for my staff and ultimately myself to "own" the process with the assistance of our contracted appraisal firm John G Cleminshaw Inc. We were able to complete the revaluation just shy of 3 months early, this allowed us

time to go back over neighborhoods, current sales and address issues that tax payers brought to our attention during our numerous informal hearings. Erie County has over 600+ neighborhoods, and upwards of 47,000 parcels. The County as a whole had \$4.4% residential value change, with a few districts that had heavy residential increases; Vermilion \pm 9%, Huron \pm 6% and Perkins \pm 4%. We understand these increases are a sudden shock but the sales are abundant overall proving a positive growth in Erie County!

Inside this Issue:

- 2018 Erie County Revaluation
- Office Holder of the Year Award
- Lodging tax software
- Weights and Measures Certificate of Completion

Office Holder of the Year Award

Thomson Reuters Corporation, a multinational mass media and information firm, is the software provider for the Erie County Auditor's office. Every year they nominate and select six different Public Sector Champion Awards, which honors government jurisdictions and officials that have achieved excellence in planning, leadership and service:

- Office Holder of the Year
- Excellence in Business Process Transformation
- Excellence in Community Service
- Excellence in Office Leadership
- Excellence in Crisis Management
- Excellence in Public Outreach

This years' recipients were announced at the Thomson Reuters SYNERGY 2018 Conference Award Banquet held in Riverside, California September 19.

"Thomson Reuters Public Sector Champion Awards honor government tax professionals who personify excellence and good stewardship in their work each day" said Keith Nichols, managing director of Government for the Tax Professionals business of Thompson Reuters "it is a pleasure to recognize this years' winners and their dedication to their constituents."

Our very own Erie County Auditor, Richard H. Jeffrey was nominated and awarded the prestigious **Office Holder of the Year**. He was presented and accepted this award at the Thomson Reuters User Conference held in Columbus on Thursday October 4, with some of the office staff in attendance.



2019 Lodging Tax Changes

On May 10, 2018, the Erie County Commissioners passed Resolution 18-190, changing the lodging excise tax code of regulations. The regulations remain the same for Hotels (4% of their rentals to Erie County), some of the local entities did have a change in their rate (those specific entities have been made aware of any changes). This regulation change will now include all Erie County rental property (the addition of transient guests), no matter how many beds rented, effective January 01, 2019. A transient guest includes persons occupying a room or rooms for sleeping accommodations less than thirty (30) consecutive days. Meaning all personal homes, apartments and Bed and Breakfast locations, rented through agencies such as, but not limited to, AirBNB, VRBO and/or via word of mouth.

Please see our website www.erie.iviewauditor.com and click on the **Hotel Lodging Tax** tab on the left hand side to get the 2019 information. New regulations and the registration form can be found here:

Hotel Lodging Tax

2019 Lodging Tax Guidelines

AUDITOR'S OFFICE REGISTRATION OF NEW RENTAL PROPERTIES: Please fill out the attached registration form if you were not a 2018 lodging/rental tax payer. Send it or scan and email it to our office so we can set up your rental account number which is specific to your taxing district location. You will need to know this account number when you pay your taxes on the website. We will email the account number to you. There is NO cost for registration with Erie County.

[Registration form PDF](#)

ONLINE REGISTRATION FOR ALL OLD AND NEW RENTAL PROPERTIES: Please go online to the Localgov software website at <https://lata.localgov.org/> and register your business. [Click here to register your business.](#) Please review the attached user guide that we have below. You will enter preliminary information and then it will send you an activation email. Once you get the email, please click on the link to go in and activate and set up the rest of your account.

[Erie County-Localgov-Tax-User Guide](#)

2018 Tax payments- including December or 4th Quarter 2018 payments- Please continue to send us the paper return and check via the mail.

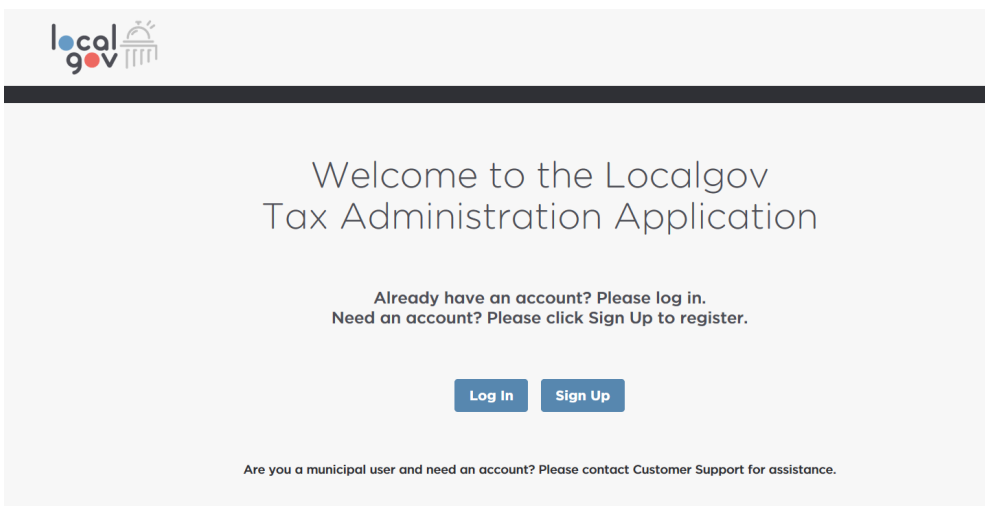
2019 Lodging Tax payments : Please use the Localgov website starting with January 2019 rents you collect. Filings can be monthly or quarterly.

Please monitor our website for notice that the forms are ready for your tax payment and reporting.

[Download the Hotel Lodging Excise Tax Code of Regulations \(4% 2019 Regulations\)](#)

[Download the Erie County - Lodging Tax Return 4% \(Effective thru December 31, 2018\)](#)

Owners must complete and return a registration form for EACH location in order to be assigned a registration number. Erie County registration is **FREE**. All proprietors will need to register their properties online as well as make payments online via the localgov software. To register your business click on the link as seen above "Click here to register your business" under the Online Registration for All Old and New Rental Properties or you can go to <https://lata.localgov.org> and click the "sign up" button.



There is also an Erie County-Localgov- Tax- User Guide on our website. Please read it or print it out for review to use when you register. If you have any questions, please call Heather or Jenny at our office at 419-627-7743 or 419-627-7746 from 8 am to 4pm Monday through Friday.

Weights & Measures Certificate of Completion

Richard Jeffrey, Erie County Auditor and Jeff Fantozzi, Weights and Measures Inspector have been awarded their certificate of fulfillment of the Ohio Training Program Requirements for weights and measures personnel at a recent Ohio Department of Agriculture Weights and Measures Training in Reynoldsburg.

Areas of training completed include History of weights and measures, weights and measures administration, Ohio weights and measure laws, Handbook 44, Handbook 133, Handbook 130 Uniforms Packaging and Labeling regulations not listed and numerous training program courses. Continuing education and training hours must be maintained per year by Erie County to hold its credibility and keep up with the constant changes with technology.



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We're on the Web!
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2018 Erie County Retirees

Cindy Blazik
Anthony Caponi
William Feld
Harese Henderson
Jeffrey Hippely
Ralph Lee
Tim Lloyd
Judy McCurdy
Janet Mesenburg
Douglas Ott
Lizzette Robertson
Paul Schnittker
Gwendolyn Stovall
Karen Volz
Jean Wertenbach
Roberta Wiedle
Cindy Wilken

Erie County Thanks You for your years of service to the community!