



The 2020 Tax Statement



A newsletter of the Galveston County Tax Office – Where the race for quality has no finish line!



from the desk of

Cheryl E. Johnson

I had anticipated the year of “perfect vision” to be one of great advances, but it turned out to be one of many changes as we were all called upon to rethink our lifestyles and workspaces. Whether COVID-19 has resulted in a permanent new “norm” will not be known for some time.

Changes in tax law took effect this year as well with the most significant resulting from Senate Bill 2. Texas property owners received postcards from county appraisal districts in August directing them to databases from which the impact of 2020 values applied to 2020 government tax rate proposals could be reviewed and input submitted. Additionally, dates, times and locations of scheduled local government public hearings were made available (at CAD, each local government and GCTO websites).

If you missed those, take time to examine the 2020 tax bill (see back for a five-year history of value, rates and taxes) then visit www.galcotax.com; click on the Truth in Taxation link, find the telephone number and email for every elected official in Galveston County. Non-GCTO government partners were required to provide this information to us and most did.

What’s New in 2020?

Although it may be too late to change the bottom line this year, it is never too late to voice your opinion. It took years to change these laws to both limit government growth and shine a bright light on it (for your benefit).

The 87th Legislature will convene January 12, 2021. Although spending limits and transparency were achieved last round, appraisal values continue to erode tax savings. By the time you read this, I will have submitted recommendations to the two primary legislative committees responsible for taxation – House Ways and Means and Senate Property Tax. That input can be found on the GCTO homepage under “Hot Topics.”

HB 3 compressed school district tax rates in 2019 and 2020 so you will see tax rate reductions reflected on the statement for each of these years. Only appraisal creep or substantial improvement would have interfered with ISD tax savings in these years. If COVID-19 has not drastically affected revenues, it is likely the State will continue to fund rate “compression” into the future. Compression forces down ISD rates as values increase.

All but one protest class was cancelled in 2020. The 2021 schedule is included on page 2. Visit the GCTO homepage for updates on ALL Tax Office news throughout the year.

GCTO COMMANDMENTS OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

1. The customer is never an interruption to our work – the customer IS our work
2. Brighten every customer’s day, greet everyone with a smile
3. Whenever possible, acknowledge customers by name
4. Project professionalism, courtesy and dignity to everyone
5. State things in a positive way
6. NEVER argue with a customer
7. Always go the extra mile to provide assistance
8. Never say, “I don’t know what to do” without saying, “but I would be more than happy to find out.”
9. Never blame someone else
10. Never forget that the customer pays our salary
11. Be remarkable!

HAVE A MORTGAGE?

For the fourth and final year, we mailed tax statements to owners of ALL properties (except for those requesting an e-statement), even if requested by a mortgage company. This was originally done to prevent delinquencies because of mortgage company errors. We successfully passed legislation to help ease this situation and will **NO LONGER MAIL TO ALL PARTIES** in 2021!

If you escrow your taxes, take the time to call the mortgage company and confirm it requested the bill. If taking advantage of a payment option (split or quarter pay), insure the mortgage company will allow it. It takes less time for you to validate that than the time it takes for a refund to be issued!

Contact GCTO

 Full time locations open 8 am to 5 pm Monday - Friday

General Information.....	(409) 766-2284 or Toll Free (877) 766-2284
Fax.....	(409) 766-2479
Email.....	galcotax@co.galveston.tx.us
Website.....	www.galcotax.com
Cheryl E. Johnson, PCC, Tax Assessor/Collector	(409) 766-2260
Sheryl R. Swift, PCC, Chief Deputy Business Services	(409) 766-2474
Erma Evans, PCC, Chief Deputy Property Tax & Support Services.....	(409) 766-2476
Property Tax Department.....	(409) 766-2481
Motor Vehicle Registration Information (Galveston Branch)	(409) 766-2485
Voter Registration Department	(409) 766-2280 or Toll Free (888) 976-2280

We are partners with *Texas Parks & Wildlife* for water vessel registration & titling. Services provided for all Texans including change of address and issuing replacement identification cards!



WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS!

