

Assessor

To the Editor:

The most important job of an assessor is to protect the tax base. I did that for 22 years. The NYS settlement damaged Colton's tax base and it will be an uphill battle to even maintain the much reduced tax base that we currently have. The new Erie Boulevard 2007 litigation is but another example of an attack on our tax base.

In 2006 I worked with representatives of Erie Boulevard to arrive at an assessed value that we could all live with. Erie Boulevard, the town's largest taxpayer, took no action against their 2006 assessment.

Since I was fired as assessor chair in 2007 and was not able to work with hydro representatives, I see that our new assessor chair failed to exercise due diligence in his assessment of the hydros. Now, the town is in court because of the 2007 assessments and the current chair's failure to negotiate.

As I look at the candidates running for assessor, by far, the person who will best represent taxpayer interests is Micki Nesbitt, Republican candidate for assessor. He has asked me many questions about assessing and I find that he is knowledgeable and willing to learn. With his commitment to Colton taxpayers, he will work for fair assessments and to protect our tax base.

On Monday Oct. 22, I filed my absentee ballot. I voted Bill Swafford for Supervisor, Mary Jane Watson and Ed Wright for Town Board and Micki Nesbitt for Assessor. It is clear to me that these people will best represent taxpayer interests and will work to keep taxes low.

They have the experience, willingness to learn, and will go above and beyond to represent Colton taxpayers. Most importantly, they will not sell out the taxpayers and will stand firm against attacks to our tax base.

This year nearly 500 people petitioned the town board to reinstate me as Assessor Chairman. I thank these people for that and ask that they and all others vote for Bill Swafford, Mary Jane Watson, Ed Wright and Micki Nesbitt.

Richard Owens
Former Chair Town of
Colton Assessors