

# Pennsylvania State Board of Certified Real Estate Appraisers Newsletter

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## Chairman's Message Spring 2009

By Robert F. McRae, Chairman

In October 2007, the board held another meeting outside Harrisburg in its commitment to offer opportunities where more certified appraisers, assessors and the public can attend board meetings. The meeting was held in Stroudsburg and was graciously hosted by the Monroe County Assessment Office, Thomas J. Hill, CPE, Chief Assessor, and the Monroe County Commissioners, and was well attended by a diverse group.

Following the meeting, Hill invited the board to hold a meeting in Harrisburg at the spring conference of the Assessors' Association of Pennsylvania's (AAP). Although an "official" board meeting was not logistically feasible, the board, in cooperation with Basil Merenda, Esq., commissioner, Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs, presented a continuing education seminar based upon board mandates, functions, and activities. In addition to Commissioner Merenda, Daniel A. Bradley, vice chairman and professional member, Valentino H. Pasquarella, Jr., professional member, and your chairman represented the board.

The seminar was very well attended and received many positive comments from the attendees and AAP leadership. It was very exciting for me, and for the commissioner and participating board members, to be a part of this first-time event, which provided yet another opportunity and venue for greater participation in board activities by those we serve. I'd like to thank Tom Hill and the AAP leadership for inviting the board to its conference.

With the Appraiser Qualifications Board (AQB) mandated appraiser qualification changes in January 2008 came new AQB generated examinations. Initially there were significant problems concerning the administration of these examinations. The board was made aware of these problems by our constituency and took immediate action to address these problems. The first indication that there were problems came to the board through AAP. Although the AQB is not involved with the Certified Pennsylvania Evaluator (CPE) – assessor – examinations, the problems with the appraiser

examinations impacted the CPE exam.

Our review identified one contributing factor to these problems: the certified appraiser examinations are now written by the AQB and graded in accordance with AQB criteria. Consequently, state boards and their vendors have no direct control. AQB wanted to have a representative sampling of examinations in order to formulate a "cut score," holding up grade reporting to examinees.

The Commissioner's Office and the BPOA Legal Office became actively involved in the examination problems and offered the board unlimited support in addressing the situation and resolving the problem. While some may feel that the corrective measures took too long to implement, I can assure you that the problems were addressed at what might be considered "warp speed." Today, it seems that most of the problems have been addressed. Your board will continue to monitor the administration, delivery, and pass/fail rates for all examinations. I want to apologize for the inconvenience and confusion and thank you for your patience.

For me, the honor of serving as your chairman continues and the diverse challenges that your board faces continue to keep my service very interesting and rewarding. As always, I remain at your service.

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## Frequently Asked Questions of the Pennsylvania State Board of Certified Real Estate Appraisers

By Daniel A. Bradley

### **Q: When and where are board meetings held?**

**A:** Typically, board meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month in Harrisburg, One Penn Center, 2601 North Third Street. Once or twice a year, a board meeting is held in another location. The board has held meetings in Pittsburgh, West Chester, Williamsport, and Stroudsburg. There is a public comment period scheduled during each board meeting, and attendees are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity. Check the board's [Web site](#) for schedule and directions.

### **Q: I called the board office but I am told I cannot speak with a board member. Why?**

**A:** Board members are working appraisers and private citizens. They are not full-time state employees, and they do not work in the board office. A full-time administrative staff handles the normal, day-to-day operations of the Appraisal Board. Furthermore, individual board members are not permitted to provide advisory opinions on behalf of the board.

### **Q: There is an appraiser in my area who I believe is providing inflated property values. Why does the board not go after him/her?**

**A:** The disciplinary process is complaint-driven. The board is responsible for holding hearings and adjudicating cases. Board members are not permitted to investigate or prosecute cases. If you have evidence of appraiser misconduct, you are strongly encouraged to file a formal complaint with the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs. Unless a complaint is filed, nothing can or will be done by the bureau or the board.

### **Q: I received a copy of an appraisal report that I believe to be deficient. How do I go about filing a complaint?**

**A:** There are several ways in which to file a complaint. You may submit your complaint online at [www.dos.state.pa.us](http://www.dos.state.pa.us). If you wish to file a complaint by mail, you may request a complaint form by calling the Professional Compliance Office Hotline at 1-800-822-2113. Complainants should also submit copies of reports or any additional documentation that will support the complaint. A complaint may be filed anonymously, but it may be necessary for the complainant to attend a formal hearing and testify in support of the complaint. After a complaint is filed, the department will not provide status reports, but will notify the complainant of final disposition.

### **Q: Who owns a completed appraisal report? Can a lender transfer an appraisal report to another lender without the appraiser's consent?**

**A:** The State Board of Certified Real Estate Appraisers has no authority over mortgage lenders. Federal bank regulatory agencies permit a regulated institution to accept an appraisal report that was originally prepared for another regulated institution. Therefore, the board cannot prohibit the practice of a lender utilizing an appraisal report that was originally prepared for another. Appraisers should be aware that the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) does not permit an appraiser to "readdress" an appraisal report from one lender/client to another by removing the original client's name and replacing it with the name of a new client.

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