

February 23, 2022

Dear Isle LaMotte Voter and Neighbor:

I would appreciate your vote representing Isle LaMotte as a **Director on the Champlain Islands Unified Union School District (CIUUSD) Board**. One of the most important qualities in a community is the educational opportunities provided by a progressive school system. Families with young children will gravitate to a community that values a quality elementary school. These families will also help staff our Fire and Rescue Department, volunteer for the Recreation Department, etc. They are the heartbeat and future of any community.

Participating in the last 17 monthly CIUUSD board meetings has provided me an insight about curriculum initiatives, educational and recreational opportunities, staffing and facility logistics, and the many challenges of educating our students during COVID. I am already familiar with the other CIUUSD board members and staff and will be ready to begin supporting our children's educational needs immediately, especially evaluating *Learning Loss* due to the impact of COVID. Furthermore, the importance of maintaining quality elementary education throughout our facilities (North Hero & Grand Isle) is paramount so our children are well prepared for transitioning into a middle school curriculum wherever they choose to attend. Keeping our costs down and within the proposed budget is one of the most important responsibilities a school director has.

**Secondly, I am also running for Lister.** My goal as a new Lister would be to review the property assessment policy and actions by the current board which has led to inconsistent assessments occurring in the past. The following are examples of assessments that either benefit a member of the Board of Listers or Selectboard member:

**2018 Town-Wide Reappraisal - SAGA (Spaulding) assessment**

- SAGA - VT Appraisal Company report documents this property was appraised by the ILM Board of Listers at 64% of value prior to 2018.
  - Debbie Spaulding co-owner of SAGA
  - Longest serving member (over 20 years) on the ILM Board of Listers
  - Board of Listers inadequately assessing her property throughout the years to reflect fair market values.

**SAGA Reduction in Property Assessment – June 2021**

- ILM Board of Listers reduced SAGA property value by \$700,000 due to loss of income **resulting in a reduction of over \$13,000 in property tax liability.**

- Is SAGA valued by *Income Approach to Value (Income Capitalization)*, Page 19-20 *Lister Handbook*? **I have asked the Board of Listers for a response to this question a week ago....no response to date.**
- SAGA is co-owned by a member of the Board of Listers.
- Were other commercial property owners given the same opportunity of a reduced assessed value due to loss of income in 2020 or 2021? The following are just a few examples of properties who may have experienced a loss of income due to COVID:
  - Local lakeside restaurant who could only seat 50% capacity in their restaurant in 2020.
  - Rental properties who experienced 50% loss in bookings due to COVID
- **I have asked the Board of Listers to provide me with a list of other properties who received the same equitable treatment as SAGA, no response to date.**

**Selby Turner Reception Pavilion – 40 ft. X 60 ft.**

- Constructed in 2018
- Public Records Request produces document from Board of Listers notifying the change of assessed value, dated 2020.
  - Listers were aware this building was being constructed throughout 2018.
  - Listers failed to add reception pavilion to this property's assessed value in 2019.
  - Listers increased my assessment in 2019 for closing in my north porch with sliding doors in fall of 2018 yet failed to assess a 40 ft. X 60 ft. building in plain sight from the road.

As you can see by these examples, **one questions whether the current Board of Listers are serving their community or self-interest.** Our community deserves better, I am asking for your vote on March 1<sup>st</sup> to begin moving in a more equitable direction.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached by email [sylvia.jensen@yahoo.com](mailto:sylvia.jensen@yahoo.com) or phone 802-309-5500.

Sincerely,

*Sylvia Jensen*

Sylvia Jensen

4200 Main Street