

Fact Sheet

Department Head:

Douglas C. Flinn

Full Time Employees:

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The City Assessor's office is responsible for assessing more than 11,640 parcels of real estate within the boundaries of the City of Staunton on a biennial basis, while adhering to the Code of Virginia and Generally Accepted Appraisal Principles. The Code calls for assessments to be at 100% fair market value at the time of assessment, January 1st of each year. Virginia Law specifically identifies the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO) as a named professional organization that prescribes generally accepted appraisal practices, procedures, rules and standards in the valuation of property. The City of Staunton Real Estate Assessments department follows the guidelines of the IAAO and is a member of the Virginia Chapter of the IAAO. The office assesses both taxable and non-taxable properties considering the Cost, Income and Sales Comparison approaches to value using mass appraisal techniques. This process requires significant data collection and analysis as well as the hearing of appeals of new assessments during administrative appeals, the Board of Equalization hearings and the Circuit Court.

The assessor's office is also responsible for the administration of the Rehabilitation Abatement program. This program allows for the abatement of some taxes on improvements made to older properties for seven years. Staunton abates around 18 million dollars in assessments annually.

The office administers the Land Use assessment program. This program allows for lower assessments based on farm use values in the Agriculture & Forestal districts for participating properties. This program defers around \$22 million in assessment annually.

The assessor's office also aids other departments of the city in real estate related matters as well as aiding the general public and other professional with real estate related matters.

The office's senior appraiser and transfer technician both report directly to the assessor.

Initiatives

Assessor's office will always strive continuously to improve assessment ratios studies from one assessment year to the next. The office will make more data and forms available to the public to make more efficient use of staff time. Maintaining the most accurate and up to date property information to equitably and uniformly value properties throughout the city for *ad valorem* tax purposes.

Fact Sheet

Department Head:

Rick Johnson

Full Time Employees:

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The Treasurer is an elected official serving a four-year term who is responsible to the citizens of Staunton for the receipt and collection of revenue, the safekeeping of revenue, and the appropriate accounting for and disbursements of revenue.

Revenue collections come from the billing of real estate and personal property taxes and collections of parking ticket fees, dog license fees, parking permit fees, etc. The Treasurer is also responsible for the collection of state funds under the Code of Virginia. All incoming funds to the City come through the Treasurer's office for verification. Staff also assist other department in the collection of delinquent accounts.

Initiatives

- Automate more processes in office in conjunction with State agencies.
- Have new deputy treasurers achieve Master Deputy Treasurer certifications.
- Continue to improve the online payment experience for taxpayers.

Fact Sheet

Department Head:

Jessie L. Moyers

Full Time Employees:

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The Finance Department administers financial management and operations for both the City of Staunton and the Staunton City Schools. The team strives to manage the city's and the school's finances in an efficient, ethical, and transparent manner. The ultimate goal of the Finance department is to maximize the effective and efficient use of public funds while providing exemplary customer service that is both fair and equal. The Finance department prides itself on having clean audits.

The following areas are under the purview of the Finance Department: budgeting, capital planning, grant administration, debt issuance, preparation of the annual comprehensive financial report, accounts payable, payroll processing, utility billing and collections, health insurance accounting and compliance reporting, purchasing, risk management, cash reconciliation, investment management, annual external audits, inventory management, general billing, fixed asset accounting, and general accounting.

The Finance Department processes almost 9,000 accounts payable checks and wires and over 18,000 payroll direct deposits and checks on an annual basis for both the city and the schools. The Finance Department also processes approximately 90,000 bills annually for water, sewer, refuse, stormwater, and parking. This equates to revenues of approximately \$14 million.

Fact Sheet

Department Head:

Maggie Ragon

Full Time Employees:

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The purpose of the Commissioner of Revenue's Office (COR) is to discover all taxable property located within the City limits and to fairly and equitably assess taxes on personal property, business licenses and local option taxes. They are also charged with assisting residents in preparation and filing of state income tax and to administer the real estate tax relief program for the elderly and disabled. They also administer the real estate and property tax relief programs for disabled veterans and their surviving spouses.

All staff in the COR office are directly involved with all duties. The deputies are each cross trained on all functions. The COR office has standards of accountability and a customer service police, as well as a code of ethics that are shared by all COR offices across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Refer to current financial statements to review levels of assessment for each property category. Assessments were made on 25,181 personal property accounts and 2,473 business accounts. In 2023, 386 taxpayers were assisted in filing state tax returns. Assessments were also made on 22 public service corporations and nine bank franchise holders.

The Commissioner of Revenue is an elected position and serves a four-year term.