

# Pollard Seeks U.S. Senate Seat State Property Valuation Drops \$362M for County

PORTLAND — Benjamin Pollard, who grew up in Blue Hill and resides in Portland, has announced his candidacy for the Democratic nomination for the United States Senate.

Pollard, 39, is the president of Pollard Builders, a residential construction company.

"The primary reason I am running for the Senate is that the divisions between Democrats and Republicans have become so severe that our national security is now more at risk than at any time since the end of the Cold War," Pollard said.

"Many of my views are not traditional elements of the Democratic Party platform," he added. "I believe in a strong national defense, a small central government, streamlined regulations and freedom for enterprises to prosper."

Pollard said that because many of his views cross party lines, if elected to the Senate



Benjamin Pollard

he would be in a unique position to initiate bipartisan dialogue and cooperation.

He said the failure of Congress to extend the debt ceiling in a timely manner, and the failure of the supercommittee to agree on deficit re-

duction strategies, which put into effect massive defense spending cuts, have dramatically reduced American prestige and power.

Pollard said that if elected, he would work to restore the national defense budget to levels necessary to accomplish the nation's military objectives and strengthen the United States' ability to protect freedom in the world.

Pollard was salutatorian at George Stevens Academy. He received a bachelor's degree in international relations from Stanford University and a master's degree in environmental management from the Yale School of Forestry.

In addition to having run a construction company for the past seven years, Pollard has worked as a journalist and served as the news editor of the *Castine Patriot*. He has also served on the Blue Hill Planning Board.

news.fenceviewer.com

BY JACQUELINE WEAVER ELLSWORTH — The value of Hancock County property dropped this year by \$362.6 million, according to David Ledew, director of the Maine Revenue Services property tax division.

The state property valuation decreased from \$13,533,550,000 in 2011 to \$13,170,950,000 in 2012, he said Tuesday.

State property valuations determine what each municipality will receive for state subsidies and what they will pay in county taxes.

The figures reflect property values from two years prior because of the lag time between local and state valuations, Ledew said.

"What it means is that between 2009 and 2010 we were in a downward market," he said. "I have no way of knowing where we are today."

Ledew said the figures represent 100 percent of the value of all property in the county, including residential and commercial property and land.

But the major indicator of trends is the home sale, "because that's what sells," Ledew said.

He said the way the process works is municipalities first assess the value of property in their area and bill residents.

The state then sends field personnel to each of the 489 Maine municipalities to compare the local assessments with market sales for comparable properties.

"We perform a statistical analysis," Ledew said. "It's a major undertaking."

He said once the numbers are compiled they are sent to municipalities, which have 45 days to appeal. The valuations are then certified.

"In 2011, the state valuations decreased in 29 municipalities and increased in 10. The same breakdown held this year, although the municipalities in 2012 had the distinction of having

## 2012 State Valuation

Municipality	State Valuation	Percent Change
Amherst	\$24,250,000	+1.5
Aurora	\$18,550,000	+3.3
Bar Harbor	\$1,389,150,000	+3.8
Blue Hill	\$776,400,000	+1.0
Brooklin	\$367,950,000	+2.9
Brooksville	\$455,450,000	-6.4
Bucksport	\$674,500,000	-1.0
Castine	\$356,800,000	-4.5
Cranberry Isles	\$202,150,000	+2.5
Deer Isle	\$243,950,000	-8.5
Deer Isle	\$545,950,000	-4.0
Eastbrook	\$740,400,000	+5.8
Ellsworth	\$1,059,150,000	-2.5
Franklin	\$165,300,000	+0.5
Frenchboro	\$12,600,000	+1.0
Gouldsboro	\$414,050,000	-2.8
Great Pond	\$30,550,000	-0.8
Hancock	\$347,300,000	-4.5
Lamoine	\$273,750,000	-1.2
Mariaville	\$72,600,000	-2.1
Mount Desert	\$1,993,300,000	-0.8
Orland	\$237,150,000	-3.4
Osborn	\$15,450,000	+4.7
Otis	\$138,600,000	-9.0
Penobscot	\$194,100,000	+1.9
Sedgwick	\$230,500,000	-3.5
Sorrento	\$107,400,000	-0.6
Southwest Harbor	\$676,000,000	-9.9
Stonington	\$302,350,000	-4.9
Sullivan	\$171,900,000	-0.8
Surry	\$344,350,000	-0.6
Swan's Island	\$166,300,000	+1.5
Tremont	\$68,800,000	-0.2
Trenton	\$277,350,000	-5.7
Unorganized Territory	\$240,800,000	-3.9
Walden	\$52,400,000	-1.1
Waltham	\$29,450,000	-0.7
Winter Harbor	\$224,750,000	-2.6
<b>State Valuation Total</b>	<b>\$13,411,750,000</b>	<b>-2.7</b>

SOURCE: Maine Revenue Services Property Tax Division 2012

the largest decrease — 9.9 percent. The town's decrease in state valuation last year was 4.4 percent.

"We always try to be 100 percent of the market," said Town Manager Don Lagrange. "Our goal is to maintain assessments as close as can be to market conditions."

Asked if it meant property values had decreased to that extent, Lagrange said: "I don't think you can draw any conclusions from that. I think we have a very good assessment team that tries to stay on top of it."

The town of Otis had a 9 percent decrease in state valuation for 2012 and an 8.7 percent decrease in 2011.

Herb Dickey, the assessor's agent for the town, said he had not yet had a chance to review the state's figures.

Ledew said he has noticed that home sale prices have reached a standstill.

"In the past they were increasing rather rapidly," Dickey said. "In the past three or four years, it seems to have hit a plateau."

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## Property Owners in Orland Receive Six-month Tax Bills

By RICH HEWITT SPECIAL TO THE ELLSWORTH AMERICAN

ORLAND — Property owners in town should have their six-month tax bills by now.

The town sent out the tax bills right after voters at a special town meeting earlier this month approved a budget for the six-month period from January through June, according to Ed Rankin, chairman of the Board of Selectmen. The six-month budget is a transitional budget as the town changes from a January-December fiscal year to July-June fiscal year that will bring Orland in line with the state's fiscal year.

"We had our meeting on the 10th and the tax bills went out on the 13th," Rankin said Monday.

Voters at the town meeting approved a \$1 million budget for the transitional period in

order to run the town until June 30.

"It was a bare essentials budget," Rankin said. "It covers our winter contracts, the school commitments and the town office."

All nonessentials, as well as regular expenditures such as the county tax, which comes due in September, will be included in the 12-month budget for the period beginning July 1, he said.

The selectmen likely will begin work in April on that budget. The transition also will result in a change in the date of the annual Town Meeting to May so voters can adopt a budget before the start of the new fiscal year on July 1. The elec-

tion of town officers also will shift to May. No date has been set yet for this year's meeting, Rankin said.

The smaller budget did not affect the tax rate, Rankin said, but because it is for just six months, individual tax bills will be about one-third less than a normal tax bill would have been.

Property taxes for the six-month period will have to be paid by March in order to avoid interest. Under the new fiscal year, the town plans to offer taxpayers an option of paying their bills all at once or in two payments, one-half in September and the rest in April.

orland.fenceviewer.com

## Hancock Woman's Club Meets Feb. 4

HANCOCK — The monthly meeting of the Hancock Woman's Club will be held on Saturday, Feb. 4, at 10 a.m. at the Hancock Community Center.

Jennifer Vose, principal of Hancock Grammar School, will be the guest speaker.

The Community Center is located across from the Hancock post office on Route 1. All are welcome.

For more information, call Margo Bailey at 422-0980.

## Saving U.S. Postal Service Forum Set

ELLSWORTH — A community teach-in event on "How to Save America's Postal Service" is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 1, at 7 p.m. in the upstairs meeting room at Ellsworth City Hall.

The event, which is being sponsored by Occupy Ellsworth and local postal workers and customers, will include live discussion, video clips and a question-and-answer period with knowledgeable experts.

Admission is free and refreshments will be served.

## Organizer to Speak at Library Feb. 1

ELLSWORTH — Getting Organized for 2012 with Brenda Cartwright, professional organizer, has been rescheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 1, at 1:30 p.m. at the Ellsworth Public Library.

The event will be held in the library's Riverview Room. Cartwright has been a

professional organizer for over 20 years. She has worked with individuals as well as corporations.

She will share her expertise on such topics as goals, procrastination, organizing tips, time management, clutter control and how to simplify your life.

Information: 667-6363.

## Archaeology Talk Planned Feb. 7

ELLSWORTH — A Downeast Senior College Sandwich Seminar is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 7, at noon in the second floor auditorium at Ellsworth City Hall.

Steven Cox will speak on the topic "Archaeological Digs in Brooklin."

The event is free and open to the public. Those planning to attend are invited to bring a brown bag lunch. Beverages will be provided.

## Open House Set At Bay School

BLUE HILL — The Bay School will hold an open house on Saturday, Feb. 4, from 10 a.m. to noon.

In addition to self-guided campus tours and the opportunity to meet faculty and staff, the event will feature mini-classes, a puppet show, an open rehearsal of the sixth-seventh-grade play "Alice in Wonderland," playtime and a children's tea party at the new preschool North Cottage and refreshments.

The event is free and open to all. The Bay School is located on South Street in Blue Hill.

For more information, call the school office at 374-2187.

## Church Hosting Benefit Potluck

BLUE HILL — The First Congregational Church of Blue Hill will hold a Cabin Fever Reliever potluck and variety show on Friday, Feb. 3, at 6 p.m.

The event is a fund-raiser for the church's youth group. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$3 for children. Children under 6 are admitted free.

For more information, call 374-2891 or e-mail bhcong@yahoo.com.

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