

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND
FOR BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

CASE NO. CACE-22-010239-AXXX-CE

TAMARAC HOTELS, INC.,

Plaintiff,

vs.

MARTY KIAR, as the Property Appraiser of
Broward County, Florida; BROWARD
COUNTY, a political subdivision of the State of
Florida; and JIM ZINGALE, as the Executive
Director of the Florida Department of Revenue,

Defendants.

COMPLAINT

COMES NOW the Plaintiff, TAMARAC HOTELS, INC., and hereby sues the Defendants, MARTY KIAR, as the Property Appraiser of Broward County, Florida; BROWARD COUNTY, a political subdivision of the State of Florida; and JIM ZINGALE, as the Executive Director of the Florida Department of Revenue, and, as its cause of action, would state as follows:

1. The Plaintiff, TAMARAC HOTELS, INC. (hereinafter "Plaintiff"), owns real property located in Broward County, Florida, consisting of two commercial parcels, located at 8301 W. Commercial Boulevard, Tamarac, Florida 33351-4371, collectively known as Comfort Suites Sawgrass Mills, the valuation of which property for ad valorem tax purposes is the subject matter of this action.

2. The parcels are more fully described in the records of the Property Appraiser and Tax Collector under the following Parcel Identification Numbers ("the subject properties"): 494109-04-0130 and 494109-04-0160.

3. The Defendant, MARTY KIAR, is the Property Appraiser of Broward County, Florida (hereinafter the "Property Appraiser"), and is sued herein in his official capacity, and not individually.

4. The Defendant, BROWARD COUNTY, a political subdivision of the State of Florida (hereinafter the "Tax Collector"), and is sued herein in its official capacity, and not individually.

5. The Defendant, JIM ZINGALE, is the Executive Director of the Florida Department of Revenue (hereinafter the "DOR"), and is sued herein in his official capacity, and not individually.

6. This Court has jurisdiction of this matter pursuant to Section 194.171(1) of the Florida Statutes.

7. Venue for this action lies in Broward County, Florida pursuant to Section 194.171(1) of the Florida Statutes.

8. Plaintiff is now, and was on January 1, 2021, responsible for the property taxes on the subject properties located in Broward County, the legal descriptions of which are contained in the Property Appraiser's records as listed in Paragraph 2 above.

9. The Broward County Value Adjustment Board certified its Final Decisions on the subject properties on June 28, 2022. The Final Decisions were mailed on July 6, 2022.

10. This action has been timely filed, and all conditions precedent to the filing of this suit have been satisfied.

11. This is an action by Plaintiff contesting the legality and validity of the 2021 ad valorem assessments (market value and assessed value) on the aforesaid tax parcels.

12. At all times material to this cause of action, the Property Appraiser was responsible for properly assessing the value of Plaintiff's parcels in accordance with Florida law.

13. The Tax Collector has the statutory duty to collect the taxes resulting from the assessment of the subject properties. The Tax Collector is joined as a nominal party defendant for the purpose of providing timely notice of this action and to provide this Court with jurisdiction over the Tax Collector to direct a refund of taxes paid upon granting of the relief requested herein.

14. The DOR is joined as a party defendant pursuant to Section 194.181 of the Florida Statutes.

15. The real property for which Plaintiff is responsible for property taxes is subject to assessment by the Property Appraiser for ad valorem tax purposes. Section 192.001(12) of the Florida Statutes defines "real property" to mean "land, buildings, fixtures, and all other improvements to land."

16. As of the filing of this action, the market value assigned to Parcel 4941-09-04-0130 for 2021 is \$6,188,260. The assessed value assigned to Parcel 4941-09-04-0130 for 2021 is also \$6,188,260.

17. As of the filing of this action, the market value assigned to Parcel 4941-09-04-0160 for 2021 is \$3,087,160. The assessed value assigned to Parcel 4941-09-04-0160 for 2021 is also \$3,087,160.

18. These assessments exceed the just and fair market values of the subject properties, and are unlawful and/or invalid because:

- (a) Section 193.011 of the Florida Statutes was not properly or lawfully considered by the Property Appraiser;

- (b) The Property Appraiser has unlawfully, systematically, and intentionally substituted his own assessment policy instead of following the mandates of Section 193.011 of the Florida Statutes and the Florida Constitution with regard to valuing real property for ad valorem tax purposes;
- (c) The assessments are discriminatory in that the assessments are at a higher valuation than other taxable property of like class, nature, character, use, and condition located in Broward County, Florida;
- (d) The assessments are arbitrarily based on valuation practices which are different from the valuation practices generally applied to comparable property within the same class and within Broward County, Florida;
- (e) The assessments include the value of certain intangible property, in violation of Article VII, Section 1(a) of the Florida Constitution; and/or
- (f) The method of assessment used by the Property Appraiser was unrealistic, unjust, excessive, arbitrary, and is in violation of the general laws of the State of Florida cited above and Article I, Section 4 and Article VII of the Florida Constitution, and violates the valuation methods and practices set forth in the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP).

19. As a result of the foregoing over-valuation, the 2021 market values and assessed values greatly exceeds the just values of the subject properties, and the ad valorem taxes

resulting therefrom substantially exceed the taxes which would have been levied on the subject properties had they been properly assessed.

20. Plaintiff has paid the taxes due on the subject properties for 2021, less the 4% discount for early payment in November, but payment of these taxes is not an admission that the tax was due and does not prejudice the right to bring this action. Verification of payment of the taxes to the Tax Collector on these parcels is attached hereto as Composite Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein by this reference.

21. Plaintiff has complied with all conditions precedent to the filing of this action.

WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff, TAMARAC HOTELS, INC., respectfully prays for the Court to render a judgment decreeing (a) that the assessed value and market value of the subject properties for 2021 exceeds just value and/or the subject properties were unlawfully, unequally, and/or invalidly over-assessed for 2021; (b) that the Court establish and declare the lawful amount of the 2021 assessed values and market values or, in the alternative, that the Court remand these assessments to the Property Appraiser with instructions to comply with the provisions of the Florida Statutes and the Florida Constitution; (c) that the 2021 assessments and the resulting taxes be set aside to the extent the same exceeds the just or fair market values of the subject properties; and (d) that the judgment further decree that Plaintiff, TAMARAC HOTELS, INC., is entitled to a refund of taxes paid to the extent that the amount previously paid exceeds the amount of taxes which would be owed on corrected assessments, and such tax refunds shall be promptly paid by the Tax Collector within thirty (30) days of entry of a Final Judgment by this Court. Further, Plaintiff, TAMARAC HOTELS, INC., would request that it be granted such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper, as well as the costs of this action.

LOWNDES, DROSDICK, DOSTER, KANTOR &
REED, P.A.

By: /s/ S. Brendan Lynch

S. Brendan Lynch
Florida Bar No. 0048124
215 North Eola Drive
Post Office Box 2809
Orlando, Florida 32802-2809
Phone: 407-418-6461
Fax: 407-843-4444
brendan.lynch@lowndes-law.com
litcontrol@lowndes-law.com
tracy.kennison@lowndes-law.com
Counsel for Plaintiff

0280142\194896\12036402v1