

Administrative Hearings: The Wild West of the Property Tax World

Dealing directly with property owners can often be more challenging than dealing with opposing counsel. The deference and latitude a quasi-judicial body provides to a property owner can also be outside the scope, decorum and norms of traditional court behaviors. This session will explore best practices, advanced techniques, expert advice, key insights and useful strategies for dealing with property owners and presenting at administrative hearing.

Speakers

Damian Lara, Esq.

Damian Lara brings a wealth of experience and perspective to his new role as Bernalillo County Assessor. His experience as a young person working the fields in eastern New Mexico and exposure to stark differences in the quality of life among neighboring communities inspired him to pursue higher education and a career in government. Mr. Lara earned a bachelor's degree in political science and philosophy from Brown University and a law degree from the University of New Mexico.

His public service career began as congressional staffer with the U.S. House of Representatives and includes service as deputy assessor for Bernalillo County and leadership roles with the Assessor's Affiliate of New Mexico Counties; and deputy director for economic development, City of Albuquerque. Legal experience includes representation of immigrant victims of domestic violence, staff attorney for the NM Legislature, and private practice.

William Shepherd, J.D.

Attorney Will Shepherd is the president of William D. Shepherd, P.A. where he practices property tax and real estate valuation litigation. Will has represented property appraisers in all aspects of property tax law for more than 30 years. He was general counsel for the Hillsborough County Property Appraiser for 26 years during which he represented the office in all matters including litigation over real estate and tangible personal property assessments and tax exemption and agricultural classification disputes at the administrative, circuit court and appellate court levels. He is a graduate of the University of South Florida and the University of Illinois Chicago (John Marshall) Law School. He is the recipient of the Florida Chapter IAAO 2018 Member of the Year and Lifetime Achievement awards and is a regular speaker on property tax and real estate valuations matters.

Fabian Montoya

Fabian Montoya has been with the Bernalillo County Assessor's Office since 2011, bringing a wealth of experience in property valuation and assessment. He began his career as an appraiser in 2007 and has since held key leadership roles, including Residential Appraisal Manager and Reappraisal Manager, before becoming Chief Appraiser. A New Mexico State Certified Appraiser since 2010, he is committed to ensuring fair and accurate property assessments for the community.