

## **Why Are REALTOR Membership Dues Due so Early?**

For many years, annual membership dues for CAR members were billed in early October and with a due date of December 1<sup>st</sup>. Over the years, leadership heard concerns expressed by members regarding the timing of the deadline for payment of annual REALTOR membership dues. Simply put, the December 1<sup>st</sup> financial obligation, coupled with the first quarter MLS fees, which were due shortly thereafter on January 1<sup>st</sup>, came at one of the worst times of the year. Given the seasonal nature of the business the end of the year seems to present a financial burden for some of our members.

Over the years, CAR leadership had discussed a variety of possible solutions to this problem. However, the fact that we are the “collection arm” for the state and national associations of REALTORS limits the options. CAR must collect for state and national in advance of the start of the year. While thought was given to altering CAR’s dues payment cycle we have no ability to alter the state and national association’s dues payment cycle.

The thinking was that dues payments should be due at a time of year when REALTORS are more likely to generate income and thus be better able to meet their financial obligation (e.g., August 1<sup>st</sup>). Also, a review of the billing process in other associations around the state revealed that this was a solution that has been adopted in a number of locales and seemed to work.

After much discussion, the decision was made to recommend that the due date for payment of local, state and national dues be moved up to August 1<sup>st</sup>. Ultimately, it was the general membership of CAR that agreed with this recommendation as evidenced by the bylaws change to Article X (Dues and Assessments) approved at a meeting on February 23, 2012.

During the 2014 merger discussions between CAR and WCIAR the disparity in dues billing due dates was noted. In light of this disparity, an agreement was reached to gradually, over a three year period, move up the dues billing due date for Chapter members. This dues billing schedule was incorporated into the Merger Plan and ratified by both CAR members and WCIAR members when they approved the Merger Plan put before the respective member organizations.

We realize there is NO ideal time to pay membership dues. However, we hope the background information helps to understand how we arrived at the current billing schedule. Should you have any questions regarding this please feel free to contact me at 217-698-7000 or [dsale@caaronline.com](mailto:dsale@caaronline.com) to discuss.