Lower taxes?

Auditor to recommend decrease in millage

BY CARLOS GALARZA
THE JOURNAL

WALHALLA — Oconee County property taxpayers likely will see lower tax bills this fall.

Also, unlike last year when taxpayers waited until late November to begin receiving their tax notices because of problems with software programs, county officials expect no glitches this time around.

County Auditor Ken Nix said Friday he would recommend to County Council a decrease in millage.

Nix is on Tuesday night's council agenda.


Nix

"At this time a decrease in millage is anticipated," Nix said.

The decrease is made possible because assessed property values are up over a year ago, Nix said.

Oconee's total assessed value in 2009 topped $522 million.

A decrease from the current 215.3 mills would result in property owners seeing a reduction in property taxes unless they've made improvements to t that increased their property values.

Nix declines to say how much of a decrease he will propose to council. However, if approved by council, it would mark the second-straight decrease in millage for taxpayers.

Last year's millage levy was 1.4 mills less than in 2008.

For someone with a home assessed at $100,000, and without a homestead exemption, last year's millage decrease resulted in a tax bill about $9.20 less than the previous year. Someone with homestead exemption, also with a home assessed at $100,000, would have paid $4.60 less in taxes.

Nix's recommendation to decrease millage comes one week after County Administrator Scott Moulder told a Seneca Rotary Club gathering that he favored rolling back the millage rate.

Moulder told the Rotarians that his recommendation would be swayed by whether property values were significantly lower that last year because of the weak economy.

Nix said recently that employees from the county's four tax center departments were working extra hours, including weekends, to prepare tax notices on time and avoid delays.

The state deadline for having tax notices available to the public is Oct. 1.

carlos@dailyjm.com | (864) 973-6685