Property value notices going out next week

Oconee County prepares for appeals

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WALHALLA — Oconee property owners won't have to wait much longer to see how they fared after the countywide reassessment.

County officials said Thursday that notices containing new reassessed property values would be mailed out early next week.

Oconee outsourced reassessment to Tyler Technologies Inc. and paid the firm $1.8 million to handle the job required every five years by the state.

County Administrator Scott Moulder said Thursday that Tyler also would be managing the first round of "informal appeals."

Oconee is bracing for a large number of appeals.

During the previous reassessment in 2006, a deluge of some 5,000 appeals rained down on the Oconee County Assessor's Office. Many of the appeals dragged on for years.

County Council took reassessment out of the Assessor's hands and outsourced the job to Tyler, in part, because of the messy process in 2006.

Before Moulder was hired last year, council determined that the Assessor's Office was not prepared to tackle reassessment.

It did not take long for Assessor Leslie Smith to step down. Linda Shugart moved over from head of the Delinquent Tax Office to become the Assessor.

Moulder said that when reassessment appeals begin, he encourages the public to take along supporting documentation.

Tyler will hear the informal appeals at the Brown Building in Walhalla, next to the Oconee Heritage Center.

County Auditor Ken Nix said this week during his millage proposal to council that real property values came in at about $333 million.

Nix said he shaved $11 million from the $333 million to account for an historical average of appeals of about 3.5 percent.

"I imagine a lot of people will appeal," Nix said at Tuesday's council meeting. "Whether the values change or not remains to be seen. It'll be about five months before we really know the true story of what the real property will be."

Taxpayers have 90 days to appeal once they receive their reassessment notices.

Nix said tax notices would be mailed the first week of October.

"I encourage all taxpayers to see he reassessment notices once they are mailed and also review their tax notices to make sure all the information is correct," Nix said.