Reappraisal company's track record solid

Tyler Technologies' portfolio includes $12 million job in New Orleans



Reassessment 2010:
The high price of pricing property

Editor's note: This is the second of a four-part series exploring this year's reappraisal of properties in Oconee County.

BY CARLOS GALARZA
THE JOURNAL

WALHALLA — Bill Grizzle of Burlington, N.C., will play an important role when Tyler Technologies, Inc. begins work in the coming weeks on a countywide reassessment of residential and commercial properties in Oconee County.

Grizzle is Tyler's field manager who will supervise teams of data collectors that will canvass the county to make sure accurate information is on record for all properties.

Crews of five data collectors wearing vests clearly identifying them will be armed with maps and measuring tapes as they do a block or two at a time.

If property owners comes out asking questions, it is Grizzle's job to talk to them and address concerns.

Grizzle began with Tyler in 2001 as a data collector when the company was hired to do a reappraisal in Alamance County, N.C., where he lived. He and Luther Nicholson, the project manager for Tyler's 1.8 million reappraisal in Oconee County, will hire anywhere from 15 to 20 area residents for the job.

Nicholson said the company's goal is to base the reappraisal at 100 percent market value.

Grizzle and his crews have their work cut out for them. The job entails canvassing a county containing 62,500 parcels with a taxable value of $7.7 billion

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TYLER: Notices will be mailed by July 1, 2011

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as of the reassessment implemented in 2006.

The new valuations assessed and on record by Dec. 31 will be used to send out reassessment notices by July 1, 2011.

Although counties have hired private companies to do their reassessment in the past, including Oconee County in 1975, it has rarely been done in South Carolina in recent years.

The controversial 2006 reassessment led to the filing of 4,842 informal appeals and hundreds of formal appeals that jammed the Board of Assessment Appeals. Given that recent history, all eyes are on Tyler Technologies to see what comes out of the expensive reappraisal.

When the Oconee County Procurement Office issued a request for proposals (RFP) in February, Tyler's bid stood out from the crowd. Recalling the politically messy 2006 reassessment, County Council turned to Tyler and its proven track record with the hope that this year's reassessment will go as smooth as possible.

Traded publicly on the New York Stock Exchange, Tyler reported first quarter 2010 total revenues of $69.8 million. The company expects total revenues to top $300 million in 2010.

Tyler's CLT division is the nation's largest provider of mass appraisal and property tax software and reassessment outsourcing services. Since its founding in 1938 as the Cole Layer Trumble Co., the division has provided appraisal outsourcing services and property tax administration software to more than 1,200 assessing jurisdictions in the United States and Canada.

Forbes Magazine has named Tyler one of "America's Best 200 Small companies" three years running.

The $1.8 million contract with Oconee is one of Tyler's smallest accounts in its portfolio, which includes a $12 million contract for a complete reappraisal of New Orleans.

Tyler's complete reassessment program in Oconee includes a site visit to each property, which has not been done in 17 years.

During the public comment period of the County Council meeting in which Tyler was chosen to do the reassessment, a resident said he was concerned with having an outside company determining the value of local properties.

Tyler CLT President David Johnson addressed the concerns.

"We understand the local real estate market," Johnson said. "We'll consult with local professionals and probably hire them."

Nicholson said his team also would be responsible for informally meeting with residents that question the new appraisals.

"We'll listen to people and make sure our data is correct," Nicholson said. "Then we'll explain to them how we rendered the market value."

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