

# Reassessment

## hits speed bump

### Completion pushed to July 1; assessment notices delayed

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WALHALLA — Oconee County property owners are going to have to wait longer to learn the new assessed values of their homes and businesses.

County Administrator Scott Moulder said this week that the deadline to complete reassessment has been moved to July 1.

Moulder blamed the delay on time lost last year when prob-

lems with the county's Manatron tax software system resurfaced. Although the software problems have since been worked out, it did put the private firm in charge of the county's reassessment behind schedule.

Oconee contracted Tyler Technologies, Inc. for \$1.8 million last year to handle approximately 62,500 residential and commercial properties in the county.

Luther Nicholson, Tyler's project supervisor in Oconee, told

The Journal last month that the company was on track to complete the reassessment by the original deadline of May 1. Nicholson said at the time that the work was 99 percent complete and that field workers were conducting site inspections of Keowee homes outside of Seneca.

The delay until July 1 to submit proposed appraisal values to the S.C. Department of Revenue for

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Oconee's reassessment of property values that began last spring won't be completed by the May 1 deadline, County Administrator Scott Moulder said this week.

approval means that the date to start mailing out tax notices to property owners with the new values also must change.

Nicholson said he hoped to start mailing out assessment notices by July 1, but that now could be delayed a month or two, depending on when DOR approves the new appraised values.

Moulder said at Tuesday night's Oconee County Council meeting that Tyler had hired a second shift to work on data entry that already is in process. Moulder added that Tyler also was in the process of reviewing commercial property.

Moulder said last week in rolling out his proposed 2011-12 budget

## MP: Supervisor says notices will be delayed 1 month or 2

that Tyler officials are indicating to him that assessed property values would stay the same or go up. However, he chose to use existing tax revenues in making his budget projections.

"In looking at the data and talking with Tyler Technologies, I can't guarantee you anything," Moulder said. "I don't know until those reassessment numbers hit, until all the appeals are worked through, until we get those numbers ..."

However, Moulder said Tyler is indicating that increases in land values and improvements made to properties that weren't on the books to begin with could result in an overall increase in the county's assessed values.

"That's their early projection," Moulder said last week. "I didn't project an increase. I projected it to stay as it is."

Nonetheless, Moulder warned council to be ready to make tough decisions ahead. He said that if the assessments go down, which now doesn't appear likely, council might have to increase the millage.

On the flip side, if the values go up as Tyler suggests, council may have to decide whether to keep the additional revenues generated in accordance with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) growth of 1.64 percent or "give it back to the citizens like we did this current year."