Reassessment of Oconee properties to cost $1.8 million

Council to vote Tuesday on Ohio company's winning bid

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WALHALLA — The Oconee County Council will convene in special session Tuesday to act on a staff recommendation that an out-state firm be hired to reassess property values this year.

Tyler Technologies of Dayton, Ohio, beat out four other proposals with a winning bid of $1.8 million.

In a statement released this week by Clerk to Council Beth Hulse, Tyler has a track record for making good on its commitment to complete reassessments in time to mail out tax assessment notices by July 1, 2011.

"Tyler Technologies has extensive experience with mass appraisals in a number of states and will provide the county and the taxpayers with a high degree of confidence that we will achieve a quality and fair appraisal," Hulse said in the statement.

Although reassessment is the responsibility of County Assessor Leslie Smith, Interim Administrator Gene Klugh recommended the hiring of a private firm to do the work. During a council workshop in February, Klugh cited the assessor's limited staff, the volume of work, which includes on-site inspections not required in 2006, and the quick turnaround needed to have appraisals completed.

Since then, Smith has announced his retirement. His last day on the job is Wednesday.

According to county officials, it would cost as much as $1.5 million for the assessor to do reassessment internally, and the earliest it would be completed is 2012.

The Assessor's Office has eight staff appraisers, one chief appraiser responsible for appraising supervisions and no deputy assessor. Smith said current staffing is only adequate to handle ongoing workload and favored the outsourcing of the reassessment this year.

If the council approves the recommendation to hire Tyler, the company is committed to start planning the project no later than April 16.

Tuesday's meeting begins at 5:30 p.m.

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