

Reassessment riles Oconee residents

BY CARLOS GALARZA
THE JOURNAL

WALHALLA — The Oconee County Council faced the first wave of negative fallout from a \$1.8 million countywide reassessment of property values that was conducted by a private company.

Residents were not alone in taking the microphone Wednesday night to complain about high appraisals.

Councilman Wayne McCall jumped in to question whether Tyler Technologies Inc., which con-



ducted the reassessment, violated its contract.

McCall asked County Administrator Scott Moulder to confirm for him whether the contract required

Tyler to conduct on-site appraisals. Moulder said the contract did require on-site inspections.

McCall said mistakes made on his reassessment leads him to believe that Tyler relied on satellite images instead of personal inspections. He said

Tyler listed trailers on his property where trailers don't exist.

SEE REASSESSMENT PAGE A1

REASSESSMENT:

FROM PAGE A1

"Does it constitute fraud?" McCall asked, referring to Tyler's alleged use of satellite images instead of personal inspections.

Moulder said he was not ready prepared to go that far.

"I've heard everything you've just said," Moulder told McCall. "Until we look at the evidence and discuss it with legal counsel... I'm not prepared to make

that statement."

Earlier, property owner Mendel Stone related his own bad experience with Tyler's reassessment. He said one property was up 300 percent, another 10 percent and another by a different amount.

Stone said he's made no improvements on the properties where he keeps chicken houses. Yet, he said someone at Tyler told him that he'd have to get

'This reassessment is a mess,' McCall said

his own appraisal to contest the reassessment.

"I think you're doing an injustice to the farmland," Stone said.

Moulder said the county already has a manila folder filled with reassessments that have errors.

Moulder said an appraisal is the best tool to challenge the reassessment, but said it's not a requirement. He said property

owners could get comparable values from real estate agents or present other evidence to make a case.

Property owners have 90 days from the date of receiving their reassessment notices to appeal.

"There are errors and we've seen a number of them," Moulder said. "If you're not satisfied, contact the assessor or myself."

Council Chairman Joel Thrift said Tyler was contracted in an

effort to minimize the problems.

"It's not a perfect system," Thrift said. "It was not perfect in 2006 (during the previous reassessment). We see now there are glitches."

McCall was more colorful in his characterization of the process.

"This reassessment is a mess," he said.