Tyler to return for appeals

Company to defend cases before Board of Assessment Appeals

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WALHALLA — Tyler Technologies Inc., the company vilified by many residents for the nature of Oconee's county-wide reassessment, must return to support its appraisals during formal appeals.



Moulder

According to the $1.8 million contract signed by Tyler and the county, the company is required to have a representative available for up to 25 person days "to explain and defend the assessed values" under oath at hearings before the County Board of Assessment Appeals.

Tyler representatives closed their temporary office at the Brown Building in Walhalla on Oct. 21. They did so after complying with the contract's requirement of conducting "250 person days" of informal hearings with those who challenged their new property values.

The burden of hearing and dealing with the objections raised by property owners shifted from Tyler to the Oconee County Assessor's Office.

County Administrator Scott Moulder, whose time has mostly been consumed by the reassessment's messy aftermath, said last week that in excess of $30,000 was moved from contingency to the assessor's budget to deal with the mountain of appeals.

Moulder said the transfer of funds was needed to hire temporary help in the Assessor's Office and cover overtime pay, including work done on Saturdays.

More than 6,000 Oconee County taxpayers have contested their reassessed property values by filing an appeal by the Dec. 9 deadline. County officials could not provide a total number of appeals filed on Monday.

Taxpayers have two options available beyond the appeals process with Tyler and the county.

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South Carolina law in Section 12-60-2530 spells out a process whereby property owners can file a formal appeal before the Oconee County Board of Assessment Appeals. A panel of one's peers is then tasked with resolving the appraisal dispute.

It takes a majority decision by members of the board present to render a ruling. In case of a tie, the assessor's initial decision would be upheld.

An application to file a case with the board is available through the Assessor's Office and must be filled and submitted with supporting evidence by Jan. 16.

The second option is that the taxpayer or the county could challenge the board's ruling by contesting the case before the Administrative Law Judge Division.

Any support by Tyler during the formal appeals process beyond the 25 days called for in the contract would cost the county an additional fee of $900 per day.

The contract further states that Tyler would charge $1,200 per day for representing the county before the State Board of Tax Appeal or in court.

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