

# A closer look

## Property taxes to decrease on second homes, hold for primary residents

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THE JOURNAL

WALHALLA — Property taxes will hold neutral for primary homeowners in Oconee County, while non-residents will see a slight decrease in their upcoming tax bill issued later this year. Information on the newly set millage pro-

vided by Oconee Auditor Christy Hubbard to The Journal showed vehicle taxes will also decrease. Oconee County Council unanimously accepted Hubbard's recommendation to decrease the overall millage by 3 mills down to 214.9 on Tuesday night. The cut comes to school operations millage from 111.6 to 108.6, which is why non-residents will see a small drop in property taxes. The overall coun-

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Hubbard

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## Duke Energy is Oconee County's largest taxpayer

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ty operations millage drops by 1 to 73.3 mills, but the bond millage increased by 1 to 3.0. Council has not increased the overall millage since 2019. The county now has the lowest overall millage since 2014.

A mill is one one-thousandth of a dollar and a unit of monetary value. Millage is determined based on assessed values for real estate, aircraft, boats, business personal property, manufacturing and other items. Tax notices can be appealed until Jan. 18, 2024, through a written objection with the assessor's office.

### VALUE OF MILL JUMPS

The county also stands to capture the benefits of growth in its tax base, Hubbard said, through the value of the mill jumping.

County operations/  
bonds/Tri-County  
Technical College – up to  
\$640,128, from \$602,892  
School operational – up  
to \$460,698, from \$448,510  
School bonds – up to  
\$685,698, from \$650,510

### NON-RESIDENTIAL BILL EXAMPLE

2022: \$100,000 home  
value, paid \$1,307.40  
2023: \$100,000 home  
value, to pay \$1,289.40  
2022: \$250,000 home val-  
ue, paid \$3,268.50  
2023: \$250,000 home val-  
ue, to pay \$3,223.50  
2022: \$400,000 home  
value, paid \$5,229.60  
2023: \$400,000 home  
value, to pay \$5,157.60

### VEHICLE TAX BILL EXAMPLE

2022: \$25,000 vehicle  
value, paid \$326.85  
2023: \$25,000 vehicle  
value, to pay \$322.35  
2022: \$50,000 vehicle  
value, paid \$653.70  
2023: \$50,000 vehicle  
value, to pay \$644.70

### COUNTY TAXES COLLECTED BOOMS SINCE 1999

Another historical sheet provided by Hubbard shows taxes collected in Oconee County have boomed since 1999, while Duke Energy paid the lowest percentage of total taxes in 2022 since 2019.

Duke Energy is Oconee's largest taxpayer, having paid a \$36,605,185 bill — 24.24 percent of the \$150,995,762 in total taxes — in 2022. Oconee recorded \$101.4 million in total taxes paid in 2013. Duke Energy was billed \$22.5 million in 1999, accounting for 37.98 percent of all taxes paid in Oconee.

According to August numbers provided by the Oconee Economic Alliance, Duke Energy employs 1,300 people in the county — second to only the School District of Oconee County at 1,500