

Tax Assessor's Office Makes Presentation at The Village Of Deaton Creek

January 18, 2013

Hall County Government leaders presented a program to residents at The Village of Deaton Creek Friday morning on the appraisal process, appeals and exemptions.

Hall County Chief Appraiser Steve Watson, who was one of the program's presenters, said the program was given in response to a request from a resident in the neighborhood.

"We're happy to educate the citizens of Hall County about the appraisal process," Watson said. "We also feel it's our responsibility to listen to any questions and concerns that citizens may have about what we do so that we can respond to those concerns accordingly. Programs like this one give us the opportunity to do just that."

Watson's portion of the presentation covered the major functions of the Tax Assessor's office, how Fair Market Value is determined and the effect of the recent real estate crisis and economic downturn on property values.

Susan Taylor, appraisal manager for the Hall County Tax Assessor's Office, walked residents through the appraisal process, including an explanation of Senate Bill 346 and the inequity and inconsistency of bank sales and auctions.

Hall County Appraisal Systems Coordinator Kelly McCormick presented data specifically related to the sale and value of homes in The Village of Deaton Creek subdivision. He explained how his office has listened to taxpayer complaints and suggestions as they've revalued the entire neighborhood from the ground up. As a result, McCormick said a manual for pricing homes in Deaton Creek has been created, which contains each home plan, building specs, square footage and a plan for all appraisers to follow.

Of course, if residents have any concerns about their appraisal, there is an appeal process all residents can follow. Hall County Clerk of Court Charles Baker talked to residents about what they can do if they disagree with their appraisal. Baker said residents have 45 days to appeal and a revision will be mailed, a new notice will be sent or the appeal will be forwarded to the Board of Equalization. Baker went on to explain that the Board of Equalization, the most common option for appeals, operates at no cost to taxpayers and consists of a three-member panel with a fourth member present to serve in the event of a disqualification. Other appeals options discussed by Baker included arbitration, a hearing officer and Superior Court.

The final portion of Friday's program dealt with Homestead Exemptions and was presented by Deputy Chief Appraiser Don Elrod. Elrod highlighted several exemptions that are available to residents, such as Regular Homestead, partial and total school tax, extra homestead for the elderly and disabled persons and veterans. He said the aforementioned exemptions could reduce a property owner's taxable value by up to \$50,000 in some cases. Elrod also explained how to apply for the exemptions in order to qualify.

For more information about Friday's program at The Village at Deaton Creek or Hall County's appraisal, appeals and exemptions process, contact Hall County Chief Appraiser Steve Watson at 770-531-6733.

[Watch the presentation](#)