

Tax Assessors' New Slogan Emphasizes Service to Citizens

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"We appraise property, but we value people."

That simple sentence is the new motto for the Hall County Tax Assessors Office following an in-office contest to come up with a slogan that captures the office's overall mission.

Chief Appraiser Steve Watson said he wanted to provide the office with a clear vision of what its roll is in the community, so he held a contest for his employees, promising a prize to whoever came up with the best slogan for the office.

"We have some major projects coming up in 2014 that will significantly impact the community, so I thought it was important to get input from staff as to what would set the tone for those projects and their overall process," said Watson.

He said several employees submitted wonderful ideas, but he said the winning slogan, submitted by Appraiser Tim Barrett, stood out to the management team.

"Tim's focus on valuing people lines up with the servant's attitude we need to have," Watson said.

"We're proud of Tim's contribution in and out of the office, and we believe his heart for service will be contagious and give us all a better chance to succeed and serve."

Barrett said he didn't have to look far to find inspiration for his winning phrase.

"I looked at it from the perspective of personalities, attitudes and motivations that we already have in place in our office," Barrett said. "Customer service is not something that we struggle to achieve, it's what we like and do as an office staff."

In return for his winning submission, Barrett received a gift certificate to Poor Richard's restaurant in Gainesville, courtesy of Watson.

Watson said the new motto, "We appraise property, but we value people," will be prominently displayed throughout the Tax Assessors office, from wall art to desk signs to eventually the office's letterhead. Most importantly, he said the motto will be demonstrated in how his staff does business.

"Giving back to the community is an honor; we're lucky to have jobs that enable us to do just that every day," he said.

The Hall County Tax Assessors Office is charged by law to appraise all real and personal property at fair market value for determining the tax base. Watson said the real and personal property they appraise is owned by people, who depend on his office to serve them. He said the new motto emphasizes that distinction.

"We appraise property, but we value people," Watson said. "I think this simple phrase embodies everything we are required to do, and it's simple, short and sweet."

Sometimes the most profound ideas are said with a minimum amount of words.