



Photos by Dave Askins

BIDDING at the Wentworth tax deed property auction Tuesday morning was Jordan Youngberg, who was able to purchase the property with an offer of \$6,000.

Wentworth tax deed property sells at auction for \$6,000

Winning bid was \$500 above assessed value

By **DAVE ASKINS**
Staff Reporter

A tax deed parcel in downtown Wentworth will return to the tax rolls after it was purchased for \$6,000 at auction Tuesday morning by Jordan Youngberg, owner of Youngberg Pest Control.

Just before the auction was held, the Lake County Commission canceled a total of \$899.26 in delinquent taxes on the property, which includes a roughly 950-square-foot building. It's located on the west side of Main Street in downtown Wentworth just south of 1st St., the north neighbor of the post office, across the way from Wayne's Repair.

Youngberg's winning bid was \$500 more than the property's assessed value of \$5,500. After the auction, Youngberg said he planned to use the space to store his

pest control equipment.

About 20 people — including bidders, commissioners, staff and media — attended the auction. Some attendees were assembled on the benches next to the stairs in the entryway or standing along the opposite wall. Others took up spots around the corner toward the Register of Deeds Office across from the Treasurer's Office — not visible to those in the entryway. At least three people bid actively during the auction, and all of them were visible to Commission Chair Kelli Wollmann, who presided over the auction from the north side of the lobby, facing south.

Where did Wollmann start the bidding? At \$68, because the county's administrative cash costs associated with preparing the property for auction — including newspaper publication — amounted to that much. The county is first in line to recover those costs from the proceeds of the sale.

In the early bidding,

Wollmann ratcheted up the amount only in small increments — possibly influenced by the most recent tax deed auction the county held, which was won with a single bid of \$56. After 13 bids, the amount stood at just \$600, and Youngberg ventured that the next ask could be \$1,000.

"Let's get this over with," he grinned. But the bidding wasn't exactly over, even as the bids hit four figures.

Wollmann increased the ask in \$500 chunks, and bidding remained fairly lively. She eventually arrived at \$6,000, which prompted Youngberg to raise his hand a final time. Wollmann asked for \$6,500 but got no offers.

Youngberg confirmed with Wollmann that his was the high bid at that point. The clarification was apt, because he'd inadvertently bid against himself in some of the early rounds, possibly due to his vantage point, which obscured other bidders.

Wollmann walked the amount down from \$6,500 in \$100 increments, but got no

additional bids, finally declaring the property sold to Youngberg for \$6,000.

That's the same amount as Youngberg's state senator's salary. He represents District 18, which includes Lake County.

The previous morning, Youngberg had chaired the first meeting of the legislature's Government Accountability Task Force, which is charged with the task of reviewing campaign finance limits and some kind of enforcement mechanism. The task force was created as part of the repeal of Initiated Measure 22 during this year's legislative session.

Most legislators who voted to repeal IM22 out of concerns over its constitutionality did so with the assurance that they would replace it with legislation that was constitutionally well-grounded. The task force Youngberg is chairing over the summer and through the fall is supposed to deliver that kind of legislation — on campaign finance limits.