



**Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller**

February 25, 2016

## **Jefferson County Audit Reveals Theft from Planning and Zoning Office**

The Comptroller's annual audit of Jefferson County government, released today, includes three findings, one of which describes a \$21,752 theft from the Planning and Zoning Office.

Last month, former employee Rhonda Michelle Reece was indicted on one count of theft over \$10,000, one count of theft over \$1,000, and four counts of official misconduct.

Comptroller auditors were first alerted to this issue by officials from Jefferson County after a citizen received a past-due notice for his adequate facilities tax – a bill which the citizen could prove he had already paid.

Jefferson County's finance director, with assistance from the Comptroller's office, performed an internal review of the receipts and deposits of the Planning and Zoning Office and found the problem was more widespread.

The internal review determined that \$21,752 in adequate facilities tax and building permit collections were unaccounted for. These unaccounted for collections were for the period September 2013 through June 2015.

The district attorney general was notified of the shortage, and the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation conducted an investigation, resulting in the charges against Ms. Reece.

"Jefferson County can reduce the risk of theft by segregating money-handling duties within its Planning and Zoning Office," said Comptroller Justin P. Wilson. "The county finance director has indicated that this weakness has been corrected, and steps are being taken to recover the cash shortage."

View the full Jefferson County Audit Report at <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/la/>

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