



Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller

February 15, 2017

Former Samburg City Recorder Pocketed City Cash

An investigation by Tennessee Comptroller Justin P. Wilson and the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation has found that former Samburg city recorder Mary Swain stole at least \$31,759 of public money.

Swain started stealing money as early as August 2012, and she continued to defraud the city until just before her resignation in October 2014.

Mary Swain was responsible for collecting money on behalf of the city, and Comptroller investigators found that she failed to deposit at least \$14,471 of the cash she received for property taxes, garbage pick-up, and other city services. In fact, during the period July 1, 2013, through September 30, 2014, with the exception of fire protection fee collections, Swain deposited only \$85 of the cash she received.



Additionally, Swain issued checks to herself totaling at least \$17,287 and used the money for her personal benefit. Swain signed the former mayor's and former vice mayor's signatures on some checks. Other checks were signed in advance by the former mayor or former vice mayor, who thought the checks would be used to pay legitimate city invoices.

Investigators also noted numerous other questionable payments made by Swain for food items and party supplies using city money. Documentation for these purchases was insufficient to determine if they were for legitimate city business.

Swain admitted to investigators that she took city cash and wrote city checks to herself for her personal use.

In February 2017, Mary Swain was indicted by the Obion County Grand Jury on one count of theft over \$10,000.

"City officials must take steps to ensure employees are keeping the public's trust," said Comptroller Justin P. Wilson. "This situation could have been avoided with stronger oversight. If no one is looking over a person's shoulder, fraud can thrive."

To view the special investigation report online, go to: <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/ia/>.

If you suspect fraud, waste or abuse of public money in Tennessee, call the Comptroller's toll-free hotline at (800) 232-5454, or file a report online at: www.comptroller.tn.gov/hotline. Follow us on twitter: [@TNCOT](https://twitter.com/TNCOT)

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