



State of Tennessee

Justin P. Wilson, State Comptroller

For Immediate Release: Aug. 12, 2010

Former Hickman County Clerk Misused County Funds and Resources

Former Hickman County Clerk Andrea Totty misused taxpayer dollars, manipulated two motor vehicle renewal transactions and used taxpayer-funded computer equipment for personal benefit, an investigation by the Comptroller's Division of County Audit has revealed.

Auditors began investigating after the Hickman County mayor reported suspected irregularities in financial records and missing inventory from the clerk's office.

Auditors found that, on at least five occasions between Aug. 1, 2009 and June 14, 2010, Totty wrote unauthorized office checks, included those checks in the office's bank deposits, then removed cash from the office equal to the check amounts. Those five checks, which were not repaid, totaled \$4,628.50.

The auditors also discovered that Totty had issued 21 other unauthorized checks - totaling \$4,780 - to obtain cash for her personal use. However, Totty used a personal credit card to repay that money before those checks were processed.

During a meeting with auditors and local law enforcement officials in June, Totty admitted to diverting the office funds for her personal use and immediately resigned from office.

The investigation also discovered that Totty voided county records so she and a friend would not have to pay vehicle registration renewal fees. Furthermore, the investigation revealed that Totty and Randel Totty, who previously served as Hickman County Clerk, removed laptop computers from the office for their personal use.

"Hickman County properly reported this matter to us in accordance with the state's fraud reporting statute," said Jim Arnette, director of the Division of County Audit. "Our investigative staff, along with the district attorney general, did an excellent job of identifying the issues included in our report. The misuse of public funds is always troubling. However, when elected officials are involved, it is extremely disappointing. The Comptroller's office is committed to eliminating fraud, waste and abuse of public money."

"I want to commend our auditors and local law enforcement officials for the outstanding work they have done on this case," Comptroller Justin P. Wilson said. "Our auditors have made some recommendations to Hickman County officials about steps they can take to help avoid similar issues from arising again in the future. I hope and trust that Hickman County officials will follow those recommendations."

To view the full report online, go to: [http://www.comptroller1.state.tn.us/repository/CA/2010/Hickman County Clerk.pdf](http://www.comptroller1.state.tn.us/repository/CA/2010/Hickman%20County%20Clerk.pdf)

