



NEWS

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GBI audit on Superior Court Clerk's Office complete

GLYNN COUNTY, Ga. – Glynn County has recently been made aware that the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) has completed its audit into accounts of the Clerk of Superior Court. In November of 2016, Glynn County was informed by the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia that the GBI audit reveals that there are unaccounted-for funds in the Superior Court Clerk's Office. Based on the limited information that the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council was able to share with Glynn County, the amount of unaccounted-for funds in accounts of the Clerk's Office is estimated to be approximately \$673,000 for the review period of January 2011 to May of 2014. Glynn County understands that this matter is still under review by the GBI and the Prosecuting Attorney's Council of Georgia for potential prosecution and that because of the sensitive nature of the ongoing investigation, the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council is currently unable to share the vast majority of the details that went into arriving at this number. Any criminal prosecution would be handled by the Prosecuting Attorney's Council due to the recusal of the District Attorney's Office.

In the time since receiving this limited information in November and with the understanding that an internal audit at this time by Glynn County would not impede or interfere with the state's investigation, Glynn County has already begun the process of engaging an independent auditor to conduct a forensic audit of the accounts of the Office of the Clerk of Superior Court and anticipates that it will have an auditing firm engaged by January 1, 2017, when Superior Court

Clerk-elect Ron Adams takes office. Prior to this time, Glynn County was not in a position to audit the Superior Court Clerk's accounts due to the fact that these are fiduciary funds, thus custodial in nature, held by a constitutional officer of the County. Access to the books of a constitutional officer requires permission of that constitutional officer which had not been provided to the County, apparently due to concerns within the Clerk's Office about providing materials to the County that overlapped with materials that the GBI was also investigating. However, with there no longer appearing to be any concerns about the County performing its own audit and Clerk-elect Adams taking office in January, 2017, Clerk-elect Adams has called for the County to conduct an audit into the accounts, thus opening up the books for the County to review upon his taking office. Glynn County looks forward to working with Superior Court Clerk-elect Adams to better understand the scope of the issues and the details involved.

Due to the nature of a constitutional office, Glynn County officials are only able to make suggestions and recommendations on best accounting practices to ensure that the proper internal controls are in place. Various changes in the internal controls have already been made, and we will continue to work with Clerk-elect Adams, based upon the findings of the County's audit, to further identify and address issues.

Upon completion of Glynn County's independent forensic audit, Glynn County hopes that it will be able to independently identify the amount of money that is unaccounted-for, the reason(s) that the funds are unaccounted-for, and to whom such funds may belong or be owed.

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