



EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATION/LEGAL DIVISION
ACCOUNTING DIVISION
APPEALS DIVISION
ARCHIVES AND RECORDS
CENTURY DIVISION
CHILD SUPPORT
CLERK TO THE BOARD
COUNTY CIVIL
COUNTY CRIMINAL
COURT DIVISION
CIRCUIT CIVIL
CIRCUIT CRIMINAL
DOMESTIC RELATIONS
FAMILY LAW

ERNIE LEE MAGAHA
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT & COMPTROLLER
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

✦ AUDITOR ✦ ACCOUNTANT ✦ EX-OFFICIO CLERK TO THE BOARD ✦ CUSTODIAN OF COUNTY FUNDS ✦

FINANCE
JURY ASSEMBLY
GUARDIANSHIP
HUMAN RESOURCES
JUVENILE DIVISION
MARRIAGE
MENTAL HEALTH
MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS
OFFICIAL RECORDS
OPERATIONAL SERVICES
PROBATE DIVISION
TRAFFIC DIVISION
TREASURY

January 20, 2009

The Honorable Kim A. Skievaski
Chief Judge, First Judicial Circuit of Florida

The Honorable Marie Young, Chairperson
Escambia County Board of County Commissioners

The Honorable James Owens
Public Defender, First Judicial Circuit of Florida

The Honorable David Morgan
Sheriff, Escambia County

The Honorable Bill Eddins
State Attorney, First Judicial Circuit of Florida

The Honorable John Mathis
Chief of Police, City of Pensacola

Re: Budget Issues

In an effort to explain the current budget situation of the Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller's Office in Escambia County, Florida, I provide this letter to you in order to clarify and confirm the actions taken by this Office in the last months. Our Office is striving to manage our budgetary concerns without affecting the services provided to the Citizens of our County and your Offices. I regret that the severity of the situation is causing us to reduce our staff and possibly reduce the service options you currently experience.

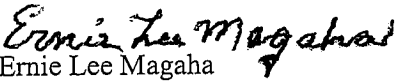
As I have shared with you before, the budgets of our Office include: 1) Non-court services provided to the Board of County Commissioners and Citizens, such as Clerk to the Board functions and Finance; 2) Court-related services provided to the Judiciary, Attorneys, and Citizens, such as Civil, Criminal, and Probate functions and attending Court sessions; and, 3) Official Records services, such as recording documents dealing with property, as well as marriage license and passport services. Our Non-court services budget has been significantly supported by our Official Records budget in the past years. Our revenues have supplemented the operations of both budgets and as you know, such revenue has been reduced due to recent and current economic conditions. We anticipated that the implementation of Article V, Revision 7, in July of 2004 would have an impact on Court-related revenues. As a result of that implementation, our Court-related activities are supported by court fines and fees that we generate. There are several contributing factors for the significant decline in Court revenues; i.e., the decrease in civil filings and the decline in processed civil traffic infractions. Overall, while our Office has three budgets, we remain one organization with one purpose: to inspire public trust through integrity and excellence in customer service.

The number of employees in our Office, the number of departments, the number of vacant positions, the number of locations, and the numerous services we provide have been my focus these last months. Our ability to reach additional efficiencies and utilize technology to the ultimate purpose is being put to the absolute test. I join with you in knowing that the people of this County hired us to manage the offices they pay for, and failing to be

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efficient in every way would be our greatest disservice to them. Therefore, we are in the process of reducing our staff and streamlining our organizational functions. I am aware that our reductions may affect the services you receive from our Office. Please know that we will take every possible measure available to keep both the quality and level of service consistent with your expectations. I thank you in advance for your patience and support.

Sincerely,


Ernie Lee Magaha
Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

cc: Judges of the First Judicial Circuit of Florida
Board of County Commissioners of Escambia County, Florida
Mr. Bob McLaughlin, County Administrator
Mrs. Robin Wright, Court Administrator