



Don Spencer Santa Rosa County Clerk of Court's Goals Accomplished During the first 18 Months and New Challenges

It is hard to believe it has been over 18 months since coming into office. We have met all of our goals that were set during the campaign. We have put the county's monthly expenditures over \$10,000 on the Clerks web site as the monthly vendor check register. We no longer have three Chief Deputies; we only have one Chief Deputy and a Chief of Staff. We were awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (CAFR) by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. We received a clean audit for the Clerk's office and the county for FY 2013. We have started our back posting project in the Recording Department so our records will be able to be seen online back to 1960. We have initiated online foreclosure sales and, in the near future, we will have online tax deed sales.

We are now totally paperless and we no longer take files to the courtrooms. Our Judges use SmartBench for access to the Clerk files while in their office or in the Courtroom.

Our monthly paper expenses have gone from \$845 FY11/12 to \$790 FY12/13 to \$340 FY13/14. Our expenses for court file folders have gone from \$10,047 FY11/12 to \$10,963 FY12/13 to \$0.00 FY13/14. We are now able to use these savings to enhance customer service to the public.

Over the past 18 months through our e-filing, our office has received 188,338 documents filed electronically from attorneys filing in both the Civil and Criminal courts. This past month, the Florida Courts E-Filing Authority added self-represented litigants as parties that can now file through the Portal making electronic filing available to parties represented by counsel and representing themselves. We are also receiving E-Citations online.

We have updated our Finance case management system and are in the process of going to a paperless timesheet. We plan to also implement the paperless time sheet on the Board side of the County. We have added a Collection Department to assist with collecting fees and keeping people on their partial payment plan. Our office does not send bills to individuals who have signed up for the partial payment plans so we have set up an automatic ROBOCALL system that calls the customer and reminds them of their next payment due date. The system also sends the customer an e-mail notice that

reminds them of their payment. We are offering automatic payments in the form of automatic bank draft and automatic credit card payments to help assist our customers. We have implemented a business dress code, suggestion box for employees and customers, tighten requisition procedures and have a new CLERICUS test server. We cancelled a failed scanning project with Micro Graphics and saved the Clerk's Office money.

The Clerks Association (Florida Clerk of Courts and Comptrollers) is in the process of setting up a KIOSK system for Santa Rosa County which will allow individuals to pay their traffic citations through the KIOSK. The Clerks Association is also in the process of updating our jury selection program which will provide easier access for our citizens of Santa Rosa County.

There was a **30%** turnover in the Clerk's office when I came into office. We lost over 30 employees a year. We have addressed this by getting our managers and employees involved in our department. We hold bi-weekly meetings with the managers and monthly meeting with the employees. I attend these meetings and listen to our employee's ideas and problems. We have reorganized the Clerk's Office and reclassified the employees to higher pay grades. Our supervisors and employees have been sent to training which they had never been able to attend in the past.

We have the employees involved in the decision making process of the Clerk's Office which lets them know they are part of our team. This concept has worked; we have increased employee morale and improved customer service. Over the last 12 months we have had 4 employees leave. One retired, two left for better paying jobs and one moved to Orlando to be with her husband. Our turnover rate has gone from **30%** to less than **4%**.

We are scanning our old records in Archives for public viewing. We are in the process of setting up a Smart Phone App for the Clerk's office.

The Office of the Clerk of the Court received a 100% accuracy rating on our Computerized Criminal History Audit by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). This Clerk's records were audited to ensure that staff were making informed decisions regarding firearm purchase eligibility, concealed weapon permits and licensure for certain sensitive professions. We also received a Certificate of Achievement for a Perfect Score on Passport Compliance from the U.S Department of State Passport Services.

We have updated our web page to include our Mission Statement, weekly court schedule, monthly investment reports, tax deed surplus, financial statements, monthly vendor check register, unclaimed jury payments and press releases.

After 240 hours of New Clerk training, I became a Certified Clerk of the Circuit Court by the Florida Supreme Court in March 2014.

We are constantly setting new goals and facing the challenges presented to the office by the Florida Legislature with a positive and can do attitude. The office operates under a team concept and together we make a difference to our customers.

This is a fantastic job! We have a wonderful staff of employees that make the office operate smoothly. The Santa Rosa County Clerk's office would not function as well as it has the last 18 months without the devoted employees that work in the Office of the Clerk of the Court in Santa Rosa County.

Clerk Don Spencer said "we have wonder employees in our Department and this could not have been accomplished if not for them. It is a team effort that has made this happen. Thanks to all of our employees."