

County of Bamberg

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Trent Kinard – District #1

Sharon Hammond – District #2

Larry Haynes – District #3

Joe Guess, Jr. – District #4

Isaiah Odom – District #5

Evert Comer, Jr., *Chairman* – District #6

Clint Carter, *Vice Chairman* – District #7



Joey R. Preston

Administrator

Rose R. Shepherd

Clerk to Council

Press Release

To: News Media

CC: Bamberg County Administration

From: Bamberg County Public Information Office

Date: June 2017

Re: Bamberg County presents unclaimed funds to SC State Treasurer

Bamberg, South Carolina (June 2017) – On June 28, 2017, in order to become compliant with the S.C. Uniform Unclaimed Property Act, Bamberg County Administrator, Joey Preston, Deputy Administrator, Thomas Thomas, and Bamberg County Council members Evert Comer, Jr. (Chair), Trent Kinard and Larry Haynes presented South Carolina State Treasurer Curtis Loftis with a check for \$19,912.30. This check represented unclaimed funds from Bamberg County's Magistrate Court and the Detention Center. Bamberg County's Clerk of Court remitted \$52,099 in unclaimed bond funds to the State Treasurer's Office in May 2017.

The Uniform Unclaimed Property Act is a South Carolina state law, which states that all intangible property held by the County for more than five years is presumed abandoned and becomes state property. During a 2016 financial audit, County staff was informed that the County was non-compliant with the Uniform Unclaimed Property Act. With the guidance of state officials, Gina Smith, County Controller, created the Bamberg County Unclaimed Property Policy. The Magistrate's Court, Detention Center, and Clerk of Court inventoried all unclaimed property and performed their due diligence to locate the rightful owners. The Clerk of Court, James (Pedie) Hiers, and his staff returned \$38,000 in bond accounts to County residents.

By remitting these unclaimed funds to the State Treasurer, Bamberg County is now compliant with the Uniform Unclaimed Property Act. The County's financial records and internal controls were strengthened by these efforts. "It is notable that a small, rural county like Bamberg County returns money to the State Treasurer's Office," stated Joey Preston, Bamberg County Administrator. "It was no small act to research old records, some of which dated to the 1990's, to reconcile this unclaimed property. The staff worked diligently to return the money locally whenever possible."

As a result of the Unclaimed Property Project, Bamberg County now has procedures and policies in place to conduct an annual inventory of unclaimed funds. The County will report and remit all unclaimed funds to the State Treasurer's Office on a yearly basis.

1234 NORTH STREET P.O. BOX 149 BAMBERG, SOUTH CAROLINA 29003

Phone: (803) 245-5191 Fax: (803) 245-3027

“I am proud to present these funds to the State Treasurer, and in doing so, ensure Bamberg County is compliant with the state’s Uniform Unclaimed Property Act,” said Evert Comer, Jr., Bamberg County Council Chairman. “County Council thanks Bamberg County staff, particularly County Administrator, Joey Preston, and County Controller, Gina Smith, for leading the efforts to adhere to state laws and maintain good financial standing for our County and its residents.”

For more information on this press release, email info@bambergcounty.sc.gov.

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