

Complete statement by former Bulloch County Clerk of Courts Sherri Akins

“When I began my first and only job in the clerk’s office more than four decades ago, I could not have been more thrilled. Over the years I learned the same job skills and commitment handed down by Ms. Hattie Powell and Ms. Eubie Anderson, and I always sought to follow that example.

“That meant extraordinarily long hours, ever-growing responsibilities and complexity in managing the office, and a chronic shortage of resources to carry out those duties. I want to assure ... my fellow citizens of this wonderful county that I have never done less than my very best to serve you and be faithful to the trust given to me.

“It is still somewhat mind-boggling to stand here and face this situation today. I have never stolen one cent of public money, and that is a fact. It does appear, however, that the use of better accounting practices in the period after I retired as clerk may have resolved the questions that have come up in their investigation.

“I have the support and guidance of my dear family, my church, innumerable friends, and the finest lawyers in the world. They have kept me going and given me the strength to wrestle with this decision, and I am eternally grateful to them all. What leads me to my choice today, however, is what I lack. I do not have the \$100,000 or more in legal costs, and the yearlong sleepless nights that a trial would require. More importantly, I no longer have

(late husband) Herman to stand with me through this fight, and I want it to end.”

The complete statement of Bulloch County Clerk of Courts Teresa Tucker

“I have never committed any theft, never enriched myself from public service or taken anything of value that did not belong to me while working in the office of the Bulloch County Clerk of Courts.

“I have entered a plea to the charge of violation of oath of office as clerk of court as I acknowledge having made mistakes in the management of the office while serving as the elected clerk of court.

“My biggest mistake was allowing the office to continue to operate in essentially the same

manner as it had operated during the 30 years that I worked there, including allowing employees to cash checks out of the office deposits and allowing these checks to be held temporarily.

“ I trusted employees who obviously took advantage of that trust and their position. While I made significant changes after becoming the elected clerk in January 2009, the office had not been equipped or staffed to handle the large increase in filings and overall increase in court activity that has occurred as Bulloch County has experienced so much growth.

“I regret not making more drastic changes upon becoming the clerk of court. I want to thank my many friends and supporters during my time as clerk of courts.”

