



Jason E. Mumpower, Comptroller of the Treasury

August 20, 2021

Former Bristol-Bluff City Utility District Manager Misappropriated Nearly \$300,000

Tina Grindstaff Indicted on Four Counts of Theft

An investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office has resulted in the indictment of Tina Grindstaff who served as the Bristol-Bluff City Utility District Manager from August 5, 2008 through June 6, 2019.

Comptroller investigators found that Grindstaff misappropriated at least \$294,810.71 in district funds by directing unauthorized compensation to herself. This compensation included payments for overtime, leave, holiday, and bonus pay that were not authorized by the district's board of commissioners or Grindstaff's employment agreement.

In addition to paying herself unauthorized compensation, Grindstaff paid bonuses to employees totaling at least \$24,025 that were not approved by the board of commissioners. These bonuses were not reflected on the employees' annual W-2 forms.

The investigation also reveals that Grindstaff directed questionable payments and provided life insurance for her father totaling at least \$132,907.13.

Furthermore, Grindstaff made questionable payments to her aunt totaling \$24,200. Investigators were unable to locate sufficient documentation and board authorization to support these payments.

Finally, Grindstaff made questionable purchases and withdrawals totaling \$13,897.33. Some of these disbursements included money for a boat repair, pool equipment, veterinary expenses, a karaoke machine, and tanning bed bulbs. Investigators could not determine if these disbursements were exclusively for the benefit of the district.

In July 2021, the Sullivan County Grand Jury indicted Tina L. Grindstaff on one count of theft over \$250,000, one count of theft over \$60,000, and two counts of theft over \$2,500.

"There are a number of operations that must be strengthened within this utility district," said Comptroller Jason Mumpower. "These include adopting specific personnel policies regarding compensation, maintaining an equipment inventory list, and acquiring a dependable accounting system to ensure accurate financial statements. I'm pleased to note that commissioners are taking steps to address these issues."

To view the investigative report, go to: <https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/investigations/find.html>



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