



COMPTROLLER'S INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Haywood County Mayor

June 30, 2020

Justin P. Wilson
Comptroller of the Treasury



DIVISION OF INVESTIGATIONS



JUSTIN P. WILSON
Comptroller

JASON E. MUMPOWER
Deputy Comptroller

June 30, 2020

Haywood County Mayor
and County Commissioners
1 North Washington Ave.
Brownsville, TN 38012

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury conducted an investigation of selected records of the Haywood County Mayor, and the results are presented herein.

Copies of this report are being forwarded to Governor Bill Lee, the State Attorney General, the District Attorney General of the 26th Judicial District, certain state legislators, and various other interested parties. A copy of the report is available for public inspection in our office and may be viewed at <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/ia/>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin P. Wilson", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Justin P. Wilson
Comptroller of the Treasury

JPW/MLC

INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Haywood County Mayor

The Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury investigated an allegation of malfeasance related to the former mayor of Haywood County. The Comptroller's Office initiated the investigation after the District Attorney General of the 26th Judicial District was assigned as the District Attorney General Pro-Tem for a case from the 28th Judicial District involving the former Haywood County Mayor related to the misuse of a county-owned vehicle. The results of this investigation were communicated with the Office of the District Attorney General of the 26th Judicial District.

BACKGROUND



Haywood County is located in West Tennessee; the county seat is Brownsville. A 20 member county commission acts as the county's legislative body and the county mayor serves as its chief executive officer. The former mayor served as Haywood County Mayor from 2004 to 2018 and did not seek another term.

RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION

- **THE FORMER COUNTY MAYOR FALSELY FILED AN ACCIDENT CLAIM FOR A COUNTY-OWNED VEHICLE THAT TOTALED \$4,024.47**

Our investigation revealed that the former mayor's wife was involved in an accident in May 2018 while driving the mayor's assigned county-owned vehicle in Brownsville. At the time of the accident the wife's driver's license had been suspended by the state Department of Safety and Homeland Security effective April 26, 2018. The former mayor falsely reported the accident to the county's insurance provider stating that he was driving the vehicle at the time of the accident. The cost to repair the vehicle totaled \$4,024.47. The insurance provider paid \$3,524.47, and Haywood County paid the insurance deductible of \$500 to a local body shop.

- **THE FORMER COUNTY MAYOR ALLOWED HIS WIFE TO USE A COUNTY-OWNED VEHICLE FOR HER PERSONAL USE**

The former county mayor allowed his wife, who was not a county employee, to use his assigned county-owned vehicle for her personal use. Our investigation confirmed the wife's improper use of the county-owned vehicle through interviews with county employees and a local citizen, and video/audio recorded at a traffic stop by a local law enforcement officer. The traffic stop occurred on July 24, 2018, when the Jackson Police Department issued his wife a traffic citation for driving on a suspended driver's license and the failure to maintain a single lane. The state Department of Safety and Homeland Security suspended her driver's license from April 26, 2018 to October 26, 2018, due to numerous traffic citations.

INTERNAL CONTROL AND COMPLIANCE DEFICIENCY

Our investigation revealed the following compliance deficiency regarding the management of county-owned vehicles:

Deficiency: Haywood County Does Not Have an Official Vehicle Use Policy

Haywood County has not adopted an official vehicle use policy to provide guidance to county employees and require county vehicles to be used only for official business. The lack of an official use policy facilitated the improper use of the county vehicle by the former county mayor's wife.
