



“Commitment to Service”

For Immediate Release

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TAX COLLECTOR’S OFFICE TO RELINQUISH ISSUANCE AUTHORITY OF BEACH DRIVING, BEACH VESSEL LAUNCH, CHARTER AND DOG ON THE BEACH PERMITS BACK TO BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS *COUNTY TO DETERMINE NEXT ISSUING AUTHORITY*

DeFuniak Springs, FL (February 14, 2011) – Walton County Tax Collector Rhonda Skipper will soon return issuance authority for Beach Driving, Vessel Launch, Charter and Dog on the Beach Permits back to the Walton County Board of County Commissioners (BCC). Skipper notified Commissioners last week of the decision citing the operational expenses involved with issuing the permits.

The Walton County Tax Collector’s Office is currently the sole issuing authority on behalf of the BCC for the Beach Driving, Beach Vessel Launch, Charter and Dog on the Beach permits. Recent changes to the Beach Permitting Ordinance and the operational costs involved with issuing requirements played a role in Skipper’s decision to no longer serve as the issuance authority.

A primary reason for this business decision was the provision allowing all registered voters in Walton County to apply for a lottery of 150 permits. This provision creates the potential for thousands of applications to be accepted, and each one must be processed, verified, and archived for public records. The staff time required to comply with the ordinance is not fiscally sound for the \$1,500 annual revenue generated for the Tax Collector’s Office which was already processing beach permits at a fiscal deficit. Transition of the services to a new issuing authority will occur before the renewal period for Beach Driving, Vessel Launch, and Charter permits opens in April.

“Recent ordinance changes caused concern about the operational expenses involved with issuing permits in accordance to the new requirements. As my office gears up to begin offering Drivers License services early next year, it seemed now would be an appropriate time to discontinue serving as the issuing authority for beach permits,” said Tax Collector Rhonda Skipper.

Skipper expressed to Commissioners that she and her staff would work closely with the County to ensure a smooth transition to the succeeding issuing authority.

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