



# Orange County Comptroller Clerk of the Board Report

For the Year Ended September 30, 2017  
October 6, 2017



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## Introduction

This is the Fiscal Year 16/17 Report of the Clerk of the Board Department. This report contains a collection of statistics and illustrations representing BCC meeting related activities.

By statute, the County Comptroller also serves as Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners. The Clerk of the Board Department prepares meeting minutes and integrates public records online to provide citizens access to meeting minutes, documentation and media in a searchable format. The department is responsible for ensuring that all Board documents are consistent with Board actions. This activity is completed through inspection and evaluation. The department maintains "Board Records" of the Orange County Board of County Commissioners. Examples of documents include ordinances, resolutions, agreements, contracts, land use reports and conditions of approval, annexation notices and notice of public hearings. Orange County's Board records include meeting minutes back to 1869.

The department is responsible for scheduling public hearings before the Commissioners. Scheduling includes preparation and publication of legal notices, providing notice to other impacted or interested parties, and notification of the outcome.

The department also serves as the staff to the Value Adjustment Board. Staff processes approximately 3000 petitions (property owners contesting the tax assessment of their home or business property) annually. Staff assists with preparing the County's tax roll for final certification, prepares annual reports and meeting agendas, performs audits, prepares statistical reports, and solicits special magistrates.



## Section 1

### Clerk of the Board Department Highlights

**BCC Meeting Minutes and Records Management Automated Software:** On October 4, 2016, the Clerk's Office launched the Granicus™ solution. The automated solution is designed to provide integrated Board records to the public, reduce staff time spent on creating records, and manage integrated Board records. The cloud-hosted solution enables staff to connect all media content to relevant public meeting documents, meeting minutes and supporting materials.

Because of this progress, the public can access, search, track and share public data through the Clerk's webpage. Prior to rolling out the automated software, Clerk's Office staff spent approximately seven to nine days preparing BCC meeting minutes. With the software upgrade, Clerk's Office staff spends less than half that time preparing BCC meeting minutes. Meeting minutes are now published two days following the BCC meeting.

**Final Report of the 2017 Value Adjustment Board (VAB):** On March 30, 2017, the Clerk's Office published its Final Report of the 2017 VAB. The 74-page report summarized activities and expenses of the VAB and provided illustrated annual comparisons between tax cycles. While preparing the final report, Clerk's Office staff spent approximately five weeks reviewing special magistrates' recommendations, confirming taxable property values, conducting audits, calculating shift in property taxes due to actions taken by the VAB and finally, preparing the required Notice of Tax Impact.

**Standard Operating Procedures Manual:** On August 3, 2017, approximately two years after streamlining procedures, the Clerk's Office rolled out its Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual. The SOP manual is used to ensure processes are well thought through, that each task in a process is performed consistently, and important data is recorded, along with error or deviations so corrective action can be taken. It lists instructions, step-by-step, on how to complete tasks assigned to office staff. It is the main ingredient for successful quality control and quality assurance. The manual divides tasks assigned to Clerk of the BCC staff as well as Value Adjustment Board (VAB) staff.

**Comptroller Custodian of Public Records:** On September 22, 2017, Comptroller Diamond designated the Manager of the Office of the Clerk of the Board as Records Custodian for the Comptroller's Office ("Records Custodian"). Clerk's Office staff will assist the Manager with the public records responsibilities of the Comptroller's Office.



Clerk's Office staff will monitor an assigned public records email address for incoming public records emails and will log all public record requests under a NetShare drive that can be monitored by other Comptroller's Office staff. Clerk's Office staff will also answer and respond to telephone calls and other communications requesting public records.

**Microfilm Conversion Project:** During FY17, Clerk's Office staff made great strides toward preparing 300 dpi-digitized images for conversion to 16 mm silver base archival microfilm. This time-consuming office project required careful review to ensure that all pertinent Board records were included with the BCC meeting date information.

Data files were provided to the contractor responsible for the conversion to film. The contractor provided original rolls of 16mm silver base archival quality microfilm created from digitized images. All images returned met ISO 18901:2010 standards for microfilm in the camera negative version. Further, all microfilm complied with the Property Records Industry Association (PRIA) standards for electronic images to film as delineated in the PRIA Recording Electronic Images on Roll Microfilm: A Best Practices White Paper.

During FY16/17, Clerk's Office staff combined 99,787 digitized images for calendar years 2014, 2015 and 2016.



## Section 2

### BCC Public Hearing Newspaper Publications And Abutter Notices

County Administrative Policy 3.01 provides that the Comptroller Clerk of the BCC is responsible for scheduling all public hearings of the BCC, placing any required legal advertisements for those public hearings, and generating the long-range public hearing agendas. The Clerk's Office places any required legal advertisements in accordance with Florida Statutes or County Code referenced on the written request for public hearing.

1. During FY16/17, the Clerk's Office scheduled 277 public hearings on the County Long Range Agenda. This total is comparable to the 279 public hearings scheduled on the Long Range Agenda during FY15/16.
2. Of those 277 public hearings scheduled on the County Long Range Agenda, the Clerk's Office prepared 234 advertisements for publication in the Orlando Sentinel. Total costs for all advertisements amounted to \$142,418.11. This total represents an 18% increase over FY15/16 when total costs amounted to \$116,100.62. This increase could be a result of lengthier advertisements or an increase in the number of display advertisements published during the fiscal year.
3. During FY16/17, the Clerk's Office began tracking the total number of notices mailed to property owners abutting affected properties. The Clerk's Office mailed 13,033 abutter notices for public hearings scheduled for consideration by the BCC between April 11, 2017 and September 19, 2017.



## Section 3

### BCC Members and Meeting Statistics

Commissioners for Districts 1, 3 & 5 were elected during the general election held in November 2016. The Mayor and Commissioners for Districts 2, 4 and 6 will be elected in 2018. Seven elected members serve four-year terms including the Mayor who is elected at large. Commissioner Siplin was appointed Vice-Mayor for 2017.

- Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs (2014)
- District 1 Commissioner S. Scott Boyd (2012)  
District 1 Commissioner Betsey VanderLey (2016)
- District 2 Commissioner Bryan Nelson (2014)
- District 3 Commissioner Pete Clarke (2016)
- District 4 Commissioner Jennifer Thompson (2014)
- District 5 Commissioner Ted Edwards (2012)  
District 5 Commissioner Emily Bonilla (2016)
- District 6 Commissioner Victoria P. Siplin (2014)

**Meeting Details:** During FY16/17, the BCC conducted 26 regular Board meetings in the Commission Chambers located on the first floor of the County Administration Center at 201 S. Rosalind Avenue, Orlando.

The BCC considered 1,129 consent agenda items including 263 agreements and 144 resolutions.

In addition, the BCC discussed 101 discussion items and led 28 work sessions.

Lastly, the BCC conducted 277 public hearings and adopted 28 County ordinances.

This year, 645 speakers addressed the Board during the open public comment portion of meeting.



**Informational Items:** The Clerk's Office routinely receives documents /correspondence for filing unrelated to actions taken by the BCC. Staff places these documents on a BCC meeting agenda as Information Items. One hundred and two (102) items were filed for the record. The following list represents examples of documents received from various agencies.

Agreements  
Annexation Ordinances  
Bonds-Appointed Public Official Bonds  
Bonds-Elected Public Official Bonds  
Budgets of Constitutional Officers  
Central Florida Research Park  
Certificates of Appointment, Reappointment  
Charter Review Commission  
Circuit Court  
Community Development Districts  
Community Redevelopment Agency  
County Fee Officers  
East Central Florida Regional Planning Council  
Educational Facilities Authority  
Financial Statements - Annual  
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry  
Florida Department of Transportation  
Florida Legislature  
Florida Public Service Commission  
Florida State Office of Auditor General  
Greater Orlando Airport Authority  
Greater Orlando Chamber of Commerce  
Improvement Districts  
Health Facilities Authority  
Human Services Council  
Humane Society Laws  
Local Planning Agency  
Letters of Credit  
Notices from other Counties/Cities  
Oaths of Office  
Orange County Industrial Development Authority  
Orange Soil and Water Conservation District  
Orlando/Orange County Expressway Authority  
Orlando Utilities Commission  
Ordinance from other Counties/Cities  
Plant Closing Notifications  
Quality Assurance Unit



Ranger Drainage District  
Responsible Growth Committee  
St. Johns River Water Management District  
South Florida Water Management District  
South Seminole and North Orange County Wastewater Transmission Authority  
Tax Deeds  
Tohopekaliga Water Authority  
Valencia Water Control District  
U.S. Federal Court  
Utilities' Interlocal Agreements  
West Orange Healthcare District/Health Central  
Writ of Certiorari - under Circuit Court - Writ of Certiorari  
Zellwood Drainage and Wastewater Control District

**Meeting Minutes:** The Clerk's Office prepared five hundred and eighty-four (584) pages of meeting minutes capturing all actions taken by the BCC.



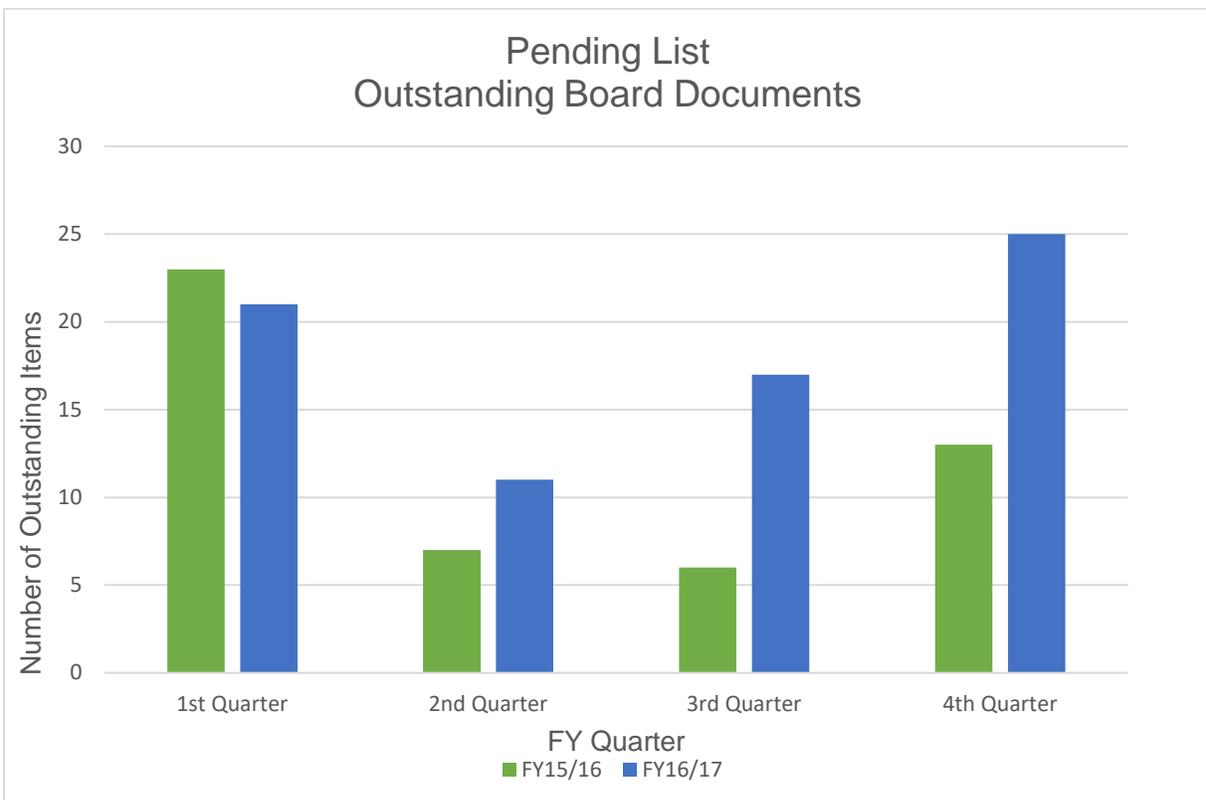
## Section 4

### Pending Board Records and Information/Records Requests

**Outstanding/Pending Board Documents:** The Clerk's Office maintains permanent files and Board records. Board documentation not received with original documents, or documents forwarded by the Clerk's Office for execution by outside parties, require a missing document and/or execution request memo. To complete the Board record, the Clerk's Office must issue a missing document or execution request memo to County staff when returning Board documentation to County departments.

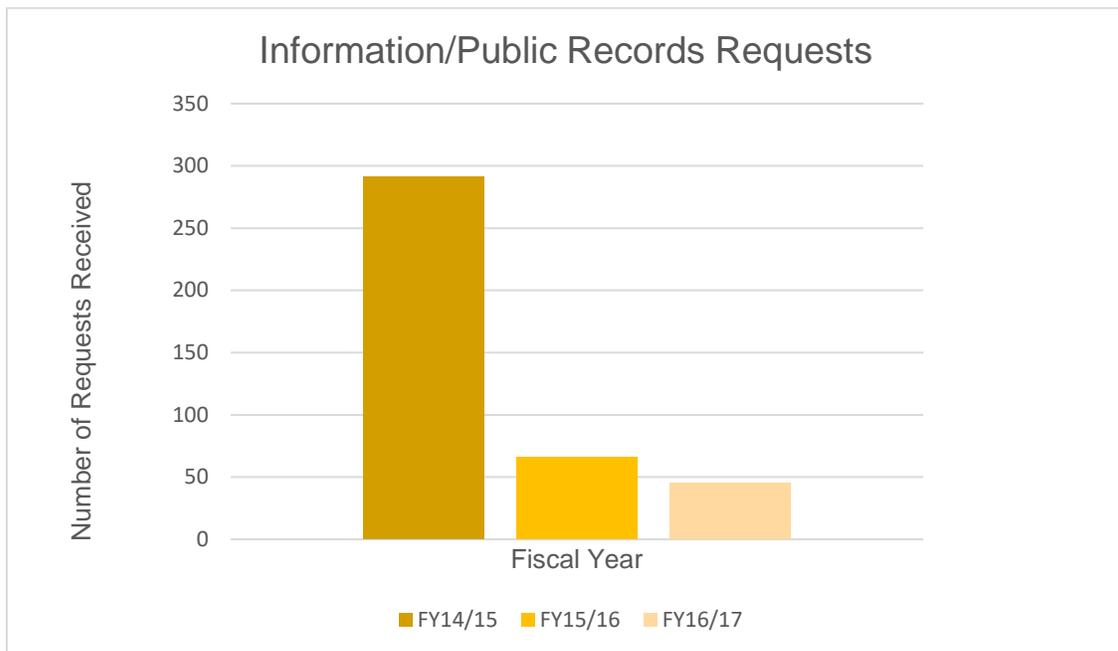
Staff prepared quarterly Pending Board Records Lists for distribution to County Administration and staff to enlist assistance in obtaining outstanding pending Board records.

During FY16/17, Clerk's Office staff tracked 84 Board records on the outstanding documents list. Twenty items, or 24%, remained incomplete at least until the following quarter.





**Information/Public Records Requests:** During FY16/17, the Clerk's Office experienced a 47 percent reduction in the number of information/records requests received compared to FY15/16. As previously noted, in October 2017, the office implemented new software that incorporated the minutes, video and supporting materials for BCC meetings. The innovation in technology greatly improved citizen's access to records, subsequently reducing the need for citizens to contact Clerk staff for copies of records.





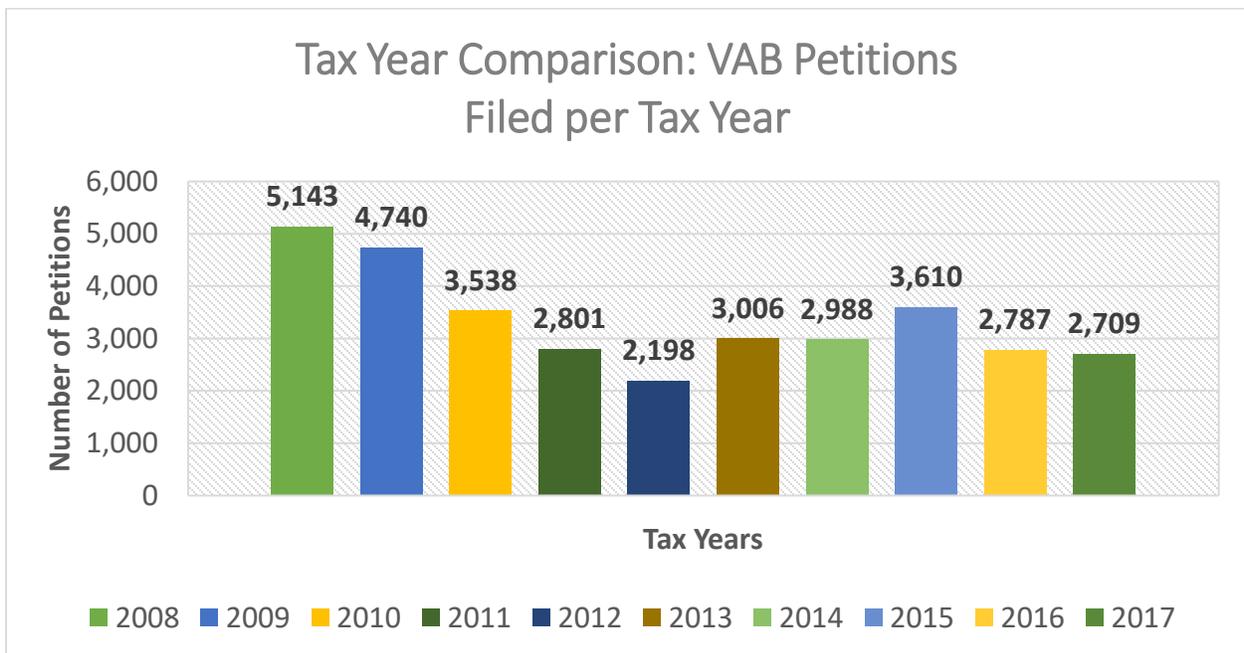
## Section 5

### Value Adjustment Board (VAB)

The VAB is an independent board established by Florida law to provide property owners a way in which to address complaints regarding the Property Appraiser's (PA) assessment of property, denial of an exemption or classification and / or the denial of a tax deferral. The five-member VAB consists of two members of the governing board of the county, one member of the school board, and two citizen members (one of which the BCC must appoint and must own homestead property and the other of which the school board must approve and must own a business occupying commercial space located within the school district). The VAB appoints private counsel who has practiced law for over five years. In counties, such as Orange, whose population is greater than 75,000, the VAB appoints special magistrates to conduct hearings and make recommendations to the VAB for final decision.

The Comptroller Clerk of the governing board serves as Clerk of the VAB. Under the direction of the Deputy Clerk, Clerk's Office staff verifies through legal counsel that the VAB meets all of the requirements for the Organizational Meeting before conducting any hearings.

Between October 2016 and April 2017, the 2016 tax cycle experienced a thirty (30) percent reduction in the total number of petitions filed with the Clerk. At the time of this report, petition filing remains steady. The following chart provides a summary of petition activity during the last ten years.





During FY16/17, there was a 28 percent reduction in the number of hearings conducted by special magistrates during 2015. From October 12, 2016 – March 6, 2017, special magistrates conducted 1,244 hearings for properties located in Orange County.

The Deputy Clerk collected \$42,440.00 in petition filing fees and further paid approximately \$455,255.63 in expenses. Over-all expenditures reflect a 25% decrease in expenses paid totaling \$568,856.51 during the 2015 tax cycle running from October 2015 through June 2016.