

# HardisonInk.com

## **HardisonInk.com preps for delinquent tax bid offer**



**Linda Cooper does what she can to keep the cost of advertising the list of delinquent taxpayers stable.**

**Story and Photos By Jeff M. Hardison © Nov. 24, 2016 at 10:37 a.m.**

**BRONSON** -- Linda Cooper, a former employee of the new-defunct *Levy County Journal*, again expressed her opinion Tuesday (Nov. 22) about how the county might approach the purchase and publication of the delinquent tax list.



**Levy County Attorney Anne Brown listens to the presentation by Linda Cooper.**

Two weeks earlier, she had advised the County Commission of her opinion that since the *Levy County Journal* had published the list as a set of ads at a price for two consecutive years, and that the newspaper had won a four-year bid at that price in a competitive bidding process,

she felt the county should approach the Kentucky-based corporation that is the sole stockholder in the group that owns the *Chiefland Citizen*, *Williston Pioneer* and *Cedar Key Beacon*.

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**County Commissioner Rock Meeks again says the County Commission can reject bids.**



**County Commissioner Matt Brooks hears a very short version of what happened in years gone by in regard to legal ads in Levy County.**

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**County Commission Chairman John Meeks**



**County Commissioner Mike Joyner**

In her presentation Tuesday, Cooper mentioned that the first sealed bid was rejected, and that allowed the *Chiefland Citizen* leadership to rebid lower. Yet, the late Andy Andrews was able to bid the winning price.

Cooper asked the County Commission to seek to continue at the established ad price, but

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given the free market and that the Kentucky-based corporation owns almost every viable paper publication in Levy County, there seems little hope that the list of people who own property and are delinquent in the payment of their ad valorem property taxes will be published by any other paper.

There was some mention of the potential for the weeklies in Gilchrist County or Dixie County, or the daily in Gainesville to bid on the job of advertising the list.

While current Florida state statutes require the list to be published in a newspaper as a mandatory minimum, there is no preclusion from advertising elsewhere as well.

Hence *HardisonInk.com* Publisher Jeff M. Hardison said he will submit a bid to provide a place where people do not need to pay some number of quarters to buy a newsprint version of the list.

“The specifics of my bid will be known when it is opened,” Hardison said. “If the county leaders accept my proposal, then people all over the world will be able to see the list of delinquent taxpayers without having to buy a newspaper.

*HardisonInk.com* is a 6-year-old daily news website that focuses primarily on Levy, Dixie and Gilchrist counties for news coverage.

“I am a well-established professional journalist who earned his first investigative reporting award from the Florida Press Association in 1983 -- even before graduating from the College of Journalism and Communication at the University of Florida in 1984.

“My second Investigative Reporting award from the Florida Press Association was in 2007, before I went to work at the daily *Lake City Reporter*,” he continued. “Those are two of seven awards I earned in statewide competition. Other awards are for Community Service, Environmental Reporter, Front Page Layout, Best Use of Full Color, and Best Public Service. *HardisonInk.com* averages between 10,000 and 12,000 unique visitors now. The weekly newspaper in Chiefland has about 2,000 subscribers.”