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***For Immediate Release***

## **Wayne County Assistant Deputy Treasurer of Land Management and Detroit Woman Charged in Connection with Fraudulent Quit Claim Deed**

### **Allegations**

On December 18, 2015, a quit claim deed (QCD) was recorded with the Register of Deeds (ROD) for a home in the 600 block of Burlingame in Detroit that was owned by Edwina White. On January 7, 2016, the Burlingame home in the Woodward Village Neighborhood was conveyed from Edwina White to Donna White. Edwina White died in September 2015. Donna White and Edwina White are not related to each other.

On April 27, 2016, a woman affiliated with the Woodward Village Neighborhood Association became aware that property records showed that Edwina White's Burlingame home was transferred after she was deceased. As a result, the woman became suspicious and made a fraud complaint to the Wayne County Mortgage and Deed Fraud Unit.

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In May 2016, an investigation was conducted by the Wayne County Mortgage and Deed Fraud Unit\* which revealed that from May 2015 until the end of her life in September 2015, Edwina White resided in another location with her daughter and never knew or met with Defendant Donna White. The investigation established that it would have been impossible for Edwina White to have signed the QCD on December 18, 2015 because she died on September 7, 2015. It is alleged that Donna White obtained a forged deed purported to have been signed by Edwina White, which fraudulently transferred her home to Defendant Donna White, 61 (DOB: 5/29/55), of Detroit.

During December 2015, Felicia Ann Tyler, 50 (DOB: 7/29/66), was Wayne County Assistant Deputy Treasurer of Land Management. It is alleged that on December 18, 2015, Defendant Tyler destroyed one QCD for the Burlingame home and that she recreated a new QCD, which purported to have the signature of Edwina White. Ms. Tyler is alleged have violated the Michigan Public Notary Act because she knowingly notarized the QCD without having Edwina White sign the document in her presence.

### **Charges for Defendant Donna White**

Defendant White has been charged with: Uttering and Publishing a Document Affecting Real Property (14 year Felony), Forgery of a Document Affecting Real Property (14 year Felony) and Filing a Fraudulent Conveyance (Three year Felony).

### **Charges for Defendant Felicia Ann Tyler**

Defendant Tyler has been charged with one count of Notary Public Violation (four year Felony). She has been placed on Administrative Leave Without Pay from her position at the Wayne County Treasurer's Office.

Defendants Felicia Ann Tyler and Donna White were arraigned this morning before Magistrate Bari Blake Wood. The PCC is scheduled for September 1, 2016 at 8:30 a.m.; the preliminary examination is scheduled for September 7, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. Both hearings are before Judge Shannon Holmes. Both defendants received a \$10,000 personal bond.

### **Quote from Register of Deeds Bernard Youngblood**

"This is the second case in recent years brought to our task by neighbors. I cannot stress enough the importance of an *active* Homeowners Association to maintain the harmony and safety within a neighborhood. In addition, this case also demonstrates the importance and the responsibility Notaries have in real estate transfers. Notaries are the gatekeepers to uphold the integrity of the documents. Our team assisted in amending Michigan laws reflecting their importance in a transaction. Notaries are now held to a higher standard and should review recent changes."

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**Quote from Wayne County Sheriff Napoleon**

“Residents and property owners expect that the public's trust will be preserved at every turn, and rightly so. If someone attempts to break the law, they shouldn't be aided by those assigned to facilitate the process. And we certainly won't turn a blind eye to an offense by anyone, whether they're in the public or government personnel.”

**Quote from Wayne County Prosecutor Kym L. Worthy**

“Fraudulent transfers of property have the potential to erode our neighborhoods. It is important to report fraudulent activity occurring in Wayne County to the Register of Deeds’ **Fraud Hotline**: (313) 224-5869.”

\* In 2005, the Wayne County Mortgage and Deed Fraud Unit was created. It is a partnership with the Register of Deeds, the Prosecutor’s Office and the Sheriff’s Office to solve the epidemic problem of mortgage and deed fraud in Wayne County.

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