

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 14, 2021

More than \$18.1 million in delinquent property taxes received during annual tax certificate sale

DeLand, Fla. – When Volusia County’s 2021 tax certificate sale was finalized today, the tally of property taxes received from the online auction was more than \$18.1 million. Certificates were offered on 12,864 delinquent properties this year – a decrease over the previous two years. “Even though the County was recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, fewer property owners were delinquent on their taxes this year,” said Will Roberts, Volusia County Tax Collector. “The high number of real estate transactions likely are playing a role in this since real estate taxes often are paid at closing. The federal stimulus checks received by many households also may have helped property owners pay the tax bill.” Property taxes are paid in arrears and cover the period Jan. 1 through Dec. 31. The 2021 tax certificate sale covered taxes for calendar year 2020, which were due March 31, 2021.

Of the tax certificates placed up for bid, 9,849 sold to bidders. Some of the 7,060 bidders were awarded more than one tax certificate. The average interest rate earned on tax certificates sold was 3.67 percent.

The remaining 3,015 certificates did not receive a bid and were issued to the County of Volusia, per Florida statute. The County earns 18 percent interest annually on tax certificates. Auction participants bid on the interest rate that they propose to charge the delinquent property tax owner. The bidding starts at the State-mandated maximum rate of 18 percent and proceeds downward in increments of at least one-quarter percent. The lowest interest rate bid is the winner.

A tax certificate represents a first priority tax lien on real property. It does not convey title to the land. Tax certificates are investments and not a deed to the property.

On or before June 1 of the same year the taxes become delinquent, the tax collector holds a public sale of tax certificates for parcels on which taxes have not been paid. The cost to purchase a certificate is listed beside each parcel in the delinquent advertisement. This cost includes gross tax, a 3% fee, advertising costs, and the cost of the tax certificate sale. This year’s auction collected more than \$18.5 million in delinquent taxes, fees and advertising costs collectively.

Once a tax lien or certificate is recorded on the property and the taxes remain unpaid after the tax lien sale for two years, the tax certificate holder may start the tax deed sale process. The property could be sold to the highest bidder at an auction held by the Clerk of the Circuit Court. “The sooner the property owner pays the amount due, the less interest they will have to pay to prevent the property from the possibility of going to a tax deed sale,” Roberts added.

For more information on tax certificates, please visit vctaxcollector.org or call the Office of the Tax Collector at 386-736-5938.

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