



SHARON R. BOCK
Clerk & Comptroller
Palm Beach County

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Julie Rosborough

External Communications/Media Relations
Clerk & Comptroller, Palm Beach County
301 N. Olive Ave., West Palm Beach, FL 33401
(Direct) 561.355.6118 (Cell) 561.914.2655
jrosborough@mypalmbeachclerk.com

CLERK USES NEW TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE "VAB" PETITION PROCESS *MyVAB* Offers Online Filing of Property Assessment Challenges and More!

WEST PALM BEACH, FL (August 5, 2008) – Just as notices about proposed property taxes are appearing in homeowners' mailboxes, there's something new that makes disputing the information easier than ever. **MyVAB**, which is now available on the Clerk & Comptroller's Web site, allows property owners to file a petition online challenging the assessed value, classification, exemption or portability status of their property with the Value Adjustment Board, or "VAB."

By filing electronically at www.mypalmbeachclerk.com, property owners can save gas and avoid the hassle of driving to file in person. **MyVAB** also gives people real-time access to their petition, allowing them to view scheduled hearings and to submit supporting materials. Those wanting to file in person, still can, but will also receive online access to their petition.

"Our goal was to implement and use technology to help the public save time and money," said Clerk Sharon Bock. "**MyVAB** is an innovative service that helps you do both. It will also make the VAB filing process more cost-effective and time-efficient for our office."

The Clerk's office, which receives and processes the petitions for VAB, saw a 66 percent increase in petitions to challenge assessed property values over the past two years. Petitions increased from 6,720 in 2005 to 11,184 in 2007 due to rising property values and other factors. This year will likely be just as busy with as many as 15,000 petitions expected by the September 15 filing deadline. By accepting petitions online through **myVAB**, the Clerk's office expects to save thousands in overtime and clerical costs, copy charges and postage alone. It is also expected to simplify the process for others, including the Property Appraiser and special magistrates handling VAB cases.

The Property Appraiser notifies property owners in August of their property's assessed and market values in a Truth in Millage (TRIM) notice. VAB, which consists of three county commissioners and two school board members, approves and hires special magistrates to settle any disputes between the property owner and Property Appraiser. As Clerk to the VAB, the Clerk's office receives and processes petitions, schedules and coordinates hearings, clerks and records the hearings and more. Petitions cost \$15 to file online or in person.

MyVAB uses Axia software designed by Pioneer Technology Group, a Florida-based provider of custom software for county governments. For more information on **myVAB** or the Clerk & Comptroller's office, visit www.mypalmbeachclerk.com or call (561) 355-6289.

The Florida Constitution established the independent office of the Clerk & Comptroller as a public trustee, responsible for safeguarding public records and public funds. Clerk Sharon Bock is directly elected by and accountable to Palm Beach County residents. In addition to the roles of Clerk of the Circuit Court, County Recorder and Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners, the Clerk & Comptroller is the Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer and Auditor for Palm Beach County.

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