



# DIVISION OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

KEN BURKE, CPA

Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller  
Pinellas County, FL



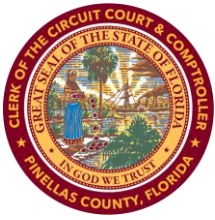
## INVESTIGATION OF THE OFFICE OF FLEET AND ASSET MANAGEMENT MISAPPROPRIATION OF PROPERTY



**Melissa Dondero, CPA, CIA, CIG, CIGA, CIGI, CITP, CRMA, CFS, CECFE**  
**Inspector General/Chief Audit Executive**

**Investigation Team**  
**Darcy Eckert, CFE, CIGA, CIGI, CCA, CECFE, CFS, CGI - Assistant Inspector General**  
**Eric Rann, CPA, CIA - Inspector General II**

**REPORT NO. 2026-11**  
**APRIL 23, 2026**



## KEN BURKE, CPA

Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller  
Pinellas County, FL

Clerk of the County Court • Recorder of Deeds  
Clerk and Accountant of the Board of County Commissioners  
Custodian of County Funds • County Auditor

### Division of Inspector General

510 Bay Avenue, Clearwater, FL 33756  
Telephone: (727) 464-8371 | Fax: (727) 464-8386  
Fraud hotline: (727) 45FRAUD (453-7283)  
www.mypinellasclerk.gov



April 23, 2026

Robert Mills, Director, Office of Fleet and Asset Management

The Division of Inspector General's Public Integrity Unit has completed an investigation of the following allegations:

- Allegation 1. Respondent 1 approved an Office of Fleet and Asset Management (OFAM) employee (Respondent 2 and/or Respondent 3) to allow a subcontractor to improperly remove OFAM property.
- Allegation 2. Respondent 2 (Thomas Hargett) allowed a subcontractor to improperly remove OFAM property.
- Allegation 3. Respondent 3 (Gregory Herremans) allowed a subcontractor to improperly remove OFAM property.

It is the IG's practice to name respondents in a report when an allegation is substantiated. We concluded that allegation one was **unfounded**; it was proved to be false, or there was no credible evidence to support it. We concluded that allegations two and three were **substantiated**; there was sufficient evidence to conclude the allegations were true.

The recommendations presented in this report may not be all-inclusive of areas where improvement may be needed; however, we believe implementation of the recommendations will strengthen the current internal controls.

We appreciate the cooperation shown by the staff of Fleet and Asset Management during the course of this investigation.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Melissa Dondero*

Melissa Dondero  
Inspector General/Chief Audit Executive

cc: The Honorable Chair and Members of the Board of County Commissioners  
Barry Burton, County Administrator  
Don Moore, Division Manager, Office of Fleet and Asset Management  
Ken Burke, CPA, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS.....	4
INTRODUCTION.....	5
Predicate .....	5
Allegations.....	5
Background.....	5
INVESTIGATION ACTIVITY AND CONCLUSIONS.....	7
INVESTIGATION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	11

# ABBREVIATIONS

CCCFA1	Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller Finance Accountant 1
County	Pinellas County
CPM	Construction and Property Management
Fleet	County Fleet Management Property
Hargett	Thomas Hargett, Fleet Mechanic Supervisor (Respondent 2)
Herremans	Gregory Herremans, Fleet Asset Analyst (Respondent 3)
IG	Division of Inspector General
Lifts	Drive-On Vehicle Lifts
OFAM	Office of Fleet and Asset Management
PIU	Public Integrity Unit
SDP P&P	Surplus and Disposal of Property Policy and Procedures

# INTRODUCTION

## Predicate

The Division of Inspector General (IG) Public Integrity Unit (PIU) received a complaint that Pinellas County (County) equipment, specifically four drive-on vehicle lifts (lifts), were being advertised for sale on Facebook Marketplace. The complainant learned from the seller that the lifts were being stored at the County's Fleet Management property (Fleet), but had been given to a County subcontractor. During the preliminary review, the IG learned that three OFAM employees were involved in the disposal of the lifts.

## Allegations

The IG's PIU investigated the following allegations:

- Respondent 1 approved an Office of Fleet and Asset Management (OFAM) employee (Respondent 2 and/or Respondent 3) to allow a subcontractor to improperly remove OFAM property.
- Respondent 2, Thomas Hargett, Fleet Mechanic Supervisor (Hargett), allowed a subcontractor to improperly remove OFAM property.
- Respondent 3, Gregory Herremans, Fleet Asset Analyst (Herremans), allowed a subcontractor to improperly remove OFAM property.

To determine whether the allegations were substantiated, we reviewed policies, procedures, and appropriate records. We also interviewed staff and other parties, as needed. Our investigation was conducted in compliance with the Quality Standards for Investigations found within the *Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General* as published by the Association of Inspectors General and *The Florida Inspectors General Standards Manual* from The Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.

## Background

The OFAM strives to make the County's thousands of assets, from street signs to bridges to buildings, last longer to maximize savings and reduce waste. The department addresses risks such as changing weather patterns and flooding and helps make the County and its residents more prepared to handle these challenges. OFAM ensures County initiatives follow a holistic approach that considers the community, the environment, and the economy.

The OFAM is made up of four programs:

- Enterprise Asset Management
- Fleet Management
- Energy and Water Conservation
- Resiliency

The Respondents work within Fleet Management. Fleet Management's mission includes the following:

- Responding rapidly and effectively to the transportation, equipment maintenance, and fabrication needs of County departments and agencies.
- Integrating technology, materials, labor, and information to maximize the returns available from these assets and to create value.
- Creating value by identifying and adapting to opportunities created by social and technological progress.
- Establishing a leadership position among other public and private fleet organizations by earning the confidence and respect of users, suppliers, and competitors, and by materially contributing to the field of fleet management.

The County's Surplus and Disposal of Property Policy and Procedures (SDP P&P) dictate specific instructions for disposing of County assets:

**Junk**

Property, which is unusable and determined to have no commercial value, or property for which the cost of sale would exceed expected returns, may be junked. Property shall not be junked by the custodial department. Property shall either be delivered to the Surplus Warehouse for junking, or if it is not efficient or logical to transport surplus to the Surplus Warehouse, the Facilities and Real Property Division<sup>1</sup> will inspect the property and render a disposal decision. In either case, adequate documentation shall be provided to the Facilities and Real Property Division.

**Scrap**

Property which is unusable, but has value as a material (scrap metal, aluminum), may be scrapped. Property shall not be scrapped by the custodial department. Property shall either be delivered to the Surplus Warehouse for scrapping or, if the property cannot be transported to the Surplus Warehouse, the Facilities and Real Property Division will inspect the property and render a disposal decision. In either case, adequate documentation should be obtained and filed with the Finance Division - Fixed Assets."

---

<sup>1</sup> Facilities and Real Property Division is now called Construction and Property Management (CPM).

# INVESTIGATION ACTIVITY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Division of Inspector General uses the following terminology for the conclusion of fact/findings:

- **Substantiated** – An allegation is substantiated when there is sufficient evidence to conclude the allegation is true.
- **Unsubstantiated** – An allegation is unsubstantiated when there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation.
- **Unfounded** – An allegation is unfounded when it is proved to be false, or there is no credible evidence to support it.
- **Justified** – An allegation is justified when it is proved to be true. However, the actions were appropriate in the circumstances.

## **Allegation 1. Respondent 1 approved an OFAM employee (Respondent 2 and/or Respondent 3) to allow a subcontractor to improperly remove OFAM property.**

As noted above, in January 2026, a complainant reported that they viewed County property for sale on Facebook Marketplace. They were concerned that a subcontractor may have received the property without appropriate approval and that the prescribed policy for the disposal of surplus County property was not followed.

The complainant also contacted County leaders which resulted in OFAM management requesting written statements from each of the respondents, which were sent to the IG. Respondent 1 provided the following information in their written statement:

A few months prior to January 2026, Hargett approached Respondent 1 to look at the lifts and Respondent 1 agreed they should be disposed of. Hargett also notified Respondent 1 some time after that conversation that a subcontractor was interested in the lifts and they discussed the costs associated with scrapping the lifts. Respondent 1 had a meeting with a Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller Finance Accountant 1, who was responsible for maintaining the County's fixed assets. Per the CCCFA1, the lifts were never set up as County assets. During this discussion, it was agreed that the appropriate action was to dispose of the lifts in accordance with the SDP P&P. Respondent 1 indicated Herremans was in attendance for the meeting with the Finance Accountant, and Respondent 1 directed Herremans to dispose of the lifts by getting them prepared as surplus items.

The IG conducted a sworn interview with Respondent 1. Respondent 1 gave an explanation of events that matched the information contained in their written statement. Respondent 1 added that they spoke with Hargett, and Hargett proposed that it would be more cost-

effective to give the lifts to a subcontractor since it would take two to three hours per lift to dismantle them for loading into the scrap dumpster. Respondent 1 stated they could have been clearer with Hargett, emphasizing that the lifts had to be disposed of according to the SDP P&P. Respondent 1 did not expect Hargett to ignore the County's procedures, but recognized that they did not explicitly tell Hargett to follow these procedures after Hargett asked about giving the lifts to a subcontractor.

The IG attempted to review video recordings from Fleet Management's cameras; however, the cameras at Fleet had been non-operational. OFAM management reported to the IG that the cameras had been non-operational for approximately seven years. The IG notified the OFAM Director, who immediately initiated work to install working cameras at the Fleet property.

The lifts were not delivered to the Surplus Warehouse, nor was CPM contacted. Adequate documentation of the disposition of the lifts was neither created, filed, nor provided to the Finance Division or CPM, as required by the SDP P&P.

The SDP P&P were not followed; however, there was no formal approval by Respondent 1 for Hargett to ignore the established procedures. Hargett and Herremans both reported to the IG that they were not advised by Respondent 1 to give the lifts to the subcontractor.

We determined the allegation was **unfounded**.

## **Allegation 2. Hargett allowed a subcontractor to improperly remove OFAM property.**

As noted above, the IG received and reviewed written statements from the respondents. Hargett's statement included the following information:

Hargett reported the same information Respondent 1 reported about their initial interactions to dispose of the lifts. A week later, Hargett told a subcontractor they could take the lifts. A few months later, in January 2026, the subcontractor removed one lift, and on the same day, a Fleet Management employee approached Hargett and showed him a Facebook Marketplace posting for all four lifts. Hargett and the Fleet Management employee reported the information to Herremans and Herremans called the subcontractor to remove the posting.

The IG conducted a sworn interview with Hargett. Hargett provided information that matched his written statement. Hargett said he was unaware of the SDP P&P and he only suggested giving the lifts to the contractor in an effort to clean up the Fleet yard.

As part of our investigation, we conducted sworn interviews with two Fleet Management employees who witnessed the subcontractor taking the lift or viewed the Facebook Marketplace post. These employees confirmed that they had spoken with Hargett and Herremans immediately after their observations and corroborated Hargett's and Herremans'

sworn testimonies. We also interviewed the Finance Accountant who spoke with Respondent 1. The Finance Accountant stated that the lifts were never assigned as assets and advised Respondent 1 to dispose of the lifts in accordance with the SDP P&P.

We interviewed the subcontractor who took the lift, and he indicated he was told by Hargett that he could take the lifts. However, after taking one of them, he learned that the County was upset about the Facebook Marketplace post and he would not be able to take the other three lifts.

The lifts were not delivered to the Surplus Warehouse, nor was CPM contacted. Adequate documentation of the disposition of the lifts was neither created, filed, nor provided to the Finance Division or CPM, as required by the SDP P&P.

Hargett allowed a subcontractor to take the lift; we determined the allegation was **substantiated**.

### **Allegation 3. Herremans allowed a subcontractor to improperly remove OFAM property.**

As noted above, the IG received and reviewed written statements from the respondents. Herremans provided the following information in his written statement:

Fleet Management had four vehicle lifts donated to them by the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority in the 1990s. The lifts were never assigned as assets. Fleet Management used the lifts for 10-15 years, but because the units kept requiring repairs and were unsafe to use, management decided to replace them with new lifts. The lifts were uninstalled in approximately 2018, and they remained onsite until January 2026. Management was going to scrap the lifts, but they would have had to spend time and labor "cutting up" the lifts to put them in the scrap metal dumpster. Management was also considering transporting them to the metal scrap yard, but this would have been labor-intensive and not cost-effective.

In November 2025, Fleet Management had a demolition subcontractor on-site performing the teardown of their awnings. Herremans was aware that Hargett had contacted Respondent 1 to see if the demolition subcontractor could take the lifts, and Respondent 1 approved of this idea.

In January 2026, Herremans contacted Respondent 1, and Respondent 1 called the Finance Accountant. The result of the phone call was that the vehicle lifts were not assigned as assets and could be scrapped. The following day, a Fleet Management employee came into Herremans' office and alerted him that someone was taking one of the lifts, but before Herremans could get outside, they were gone.

Later that day, another Fleet Management employee alerted Herremans that there was a Facebook Marketplace post about “vehicle lifts for sale” with a picture of the lifts that were at the Fleet property. Herremans immediately messaged the poster to call him, which the poster did, and reported that he was the demolition subcontractor and had made the post to sell the lifts, as instructed by his boss. Herremans told the subcontractor to take down the post, which he did immediately, and told the subcontractor not to remove any other lifts from the property.

The IG conducted a sworn interview with Herremans. Herremans gave an explanation of events that matched his written statement. In addition, Herremans stated that he was not involved in the conversation between Respondent 1 and Hargett in which scrapping the four lifts was discussed, and Herremans had never disposed of County property by allowing a subcontractor to take it. Herremans also clarified that he was not present for the conversation between Respondent 1 and Hargett and only knew what Hargett told Herremans. Herremans did not believe Respondent 1 approved of giving the lifts to a subcontractor, based on what Hargett told him, but understood his written statement reflected that and said it was wrong.

As a Fleet Asset Analyst, Herremans was expected to perform professional-level fleet management work, including understanding and applying County surplus policies and procedures for disposing of surplus fleet assets. Herremans was responsible for preparing Board staff reports to support surplus declarations and managing adjustments to the Vehicle Replacement Plan. As a result of Herremans' work responsibilities, he should have known that surplus County property cannot be given away and must follow the SDP P&P.

As part of our investigation, we conducted sworn interviews with two Fleet Management employees who witnessed the subcontractor taking the lift or viewed the Facebook Marketplace post. These employees confirmed that they had spoken with Hargett and Herremans immediately after their observations and corroborated Hargett's and Herremans' sworn testimonies. We also interviewed the Finance Accountant who spoke with Respondent 1. The Finance Accountant stated that the lifts were never assigned as assets and advised Respondent 1 to dispose of the lifts in accordance with the SDP P&P.

The lifts were not delivered to the Surplus Warehouse, nor was CPM contacted. Adequate documentation of the disposition of the lifts was neither created, filed, nor provided to the Finance Division or CPM, as required by the SDP P&P.

Herremans was aware of the County's SDP P&P and allowed a subcontractor to take the lift; we determined the allegation was **substantiated**.

During the investigation, OFAM management indicated they were revising the SDP P&P to reflect the organizational changes within the department and provided a draft of the SDP P&P to the IG. As noted below, when the SDP P&P are updated, OFAM management should share the revisions with staff as a refresher opportunity.

# INVESTIGATION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of our investigative work above, we did not note any investigative findings, but we have the following recommendations for management.

## **We Recommend Management:**

- A. Evaluate the actions of Respondent 2 and Respondent 3 and consider disciplinary action in accordance with Rule 6. Discipline.
- B. Update the Surplus and Disposal of County Property Policy and Procedures as planned.
- C. Ensure Fleet Management staff are trained on the updated Surplus and Disposal of County Property Policy and Procedures when applicable.
- D. Complete work to ensure cameras at Fleet Management are operational.

## **Management Response and Action Plan:**

### **A. Management Concur.**

- ✓ **Individual(s) Responsible for Implementation:** Don Moore, Division Manager, Fleet Management
- ✓ **Planned Implementation Completion Date:** April 30, 2026

### **B. Management Concur.** The new policy will be developed and approved by July 2026.

- ✓ **Individual(s) Responsible for Implementation:** Bill Greer, Director, Construction and Policy Management
- ✓ **Planned Implementation Completion Date:** July 31, 2026

### **C. Management Concur.** Fleet staff will be trained on the new policy by August 31, 2026. In the interim, an internal Fleet Surplus and Scrap Policy has been developed, and staff have been trained to ensure consistent and compliant processes are in place. This approach allows operations to continue effectively while aligning with the forthcoming policy framework.

- ✓ **Individual(s) Responsible for Implementation:** Robert Mills, Director, Office of Fleet and Asset Management

✓ **Planned Implementation Completion Date:** August 31, 2026

D. **Management Concur.** The current system is no longer functional and requires full replacement. A needs assessment is currently underway, and upon its completion, quotes will be solicited. The system is projected to be operational by December 31, 2026.

✓ **Individual(s) Responsible for Implementation:** Robert Mills, Director, Office of Fleet and Asset Management

✓ **Planned Implementation Completion Date:** December 31, 2026



# DIVISION OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

**KEN BURKE, CPA**

Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller  
Pinellas County, FL



**SERVING YOU:**  
AUDIT SERVICES  
INVESTIGATIONS  
GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES  
CONSULTING  
TRAINING  
COUNTY FRAUD HOTLINE  
GUARDIANSHIP FRAUD HOTLINE  
PCSO PREA HOTLINE

 [mypinellasclerk.gov/Home/Inspector-General](http://mypinellasclerk.gov/Home/Inspector-General)

 [x.com/PinellasIG](https://x.com/PinellasIG)

 [facebook.com/igpinellas](https://facebook.com/igpinellas)

Call: (727) 464-8371

Fax: (727) 464-8386

Fraud: (727) 45FRAUD  
(727) 453-7283

Write:

Division of Inspector General  
510 Bay Avenue  
Clearwater, FL 33756