



NEBRASKA AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

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December 9, 2008

Board of Supervisors
Buffalo County, Nebraska

Dear Supervisors:

We have audited the basic financial statements of Buffalo County (County) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2008, and have issued our report thereon dated December 9, 2008. In planning and performing our audit of the basic financial statements of the County, we considered internal control in order to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the basic financial statements. An audit does not include examining the effectiveness of internal control and does not provide assurance on internal control. We also performed tests of the County's compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants.

During our audit, we noted certain matters involving internal control over financial reporting and other operational matters that are presented here. These comments and recommendations are intended to improve the internal control over financial reporting or result in operational efficiencies in the areas as follows:

COUNTY OVERALL

Segregation of Duties

Good internal control includes a plan of organization, procedures, and records designed to safeguard assets and provide reliable financial records. A system of internal control should include a proper segregation of duties so no one individual is capable of handling all phases of a transaction from beginning to end.

We noted the offices of the County each had a lack of segregation of duties since one person could handle all aspects of processing a transaction from beginning to end. Due to a limited number of personnel, an adequate segregation of duties is not possible without additional cost. This was also noted in prior audits.

We recommend the County review this situation. As always, the County must weigh the cost of hiring additional personnel versus the benefit of a proper segregation of duties.

COUNTY TREASURER

Bank Securities

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 77-2395 (Reissue 2003) states “the custodial official shall not have on deposit in such depository any public money or public funds in excess of the amount insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, unless and until the depository has furnished to the custodial official securities, the market value of which are in an amount not less than one hundred two percent of the amount on deposit which is in excess of the amount so insured.”

We noted times during large collection cycles where securities did not fully cover deposits. These time periods were generally limited to a few days before the excess deposits were transferred to other financial institutions.

We recommend the County Treasurer insure securities fully cover deposits at all times.

County’s Response: I understand the importance of securing all funds appropriately. The daily collections are deposited to the bank, after balancing all transactions, on the following day. The posting and deposit reflect the actual day of collection, which causes a possible overage in heavy collection periods. A transfer is made immediately to maintain the balance for the pledged collateral.

It should be noted this report is critical in nature since it contains only our comments and recommendations on the areas noted for improvement and does not include our observations on any strong features of the County.

Draft copies of this report were furnished to the County to provide them an opportunity to review the report and to respond to the comments and recommendations included in this report. All formal responses received have been incorporated into this report. Where no response has been included, the County declined to respond. Responses have been objectively evaluated and recognized, as appropriate, in the report. Responses that indicate corrective action has been taken were not verified at this time, but will be verified in the next audit.

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesy extended to our auditors during the course of the audit.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the County, the appropriate Federal and regulatory agencies, and citizens of the State of Nebraska, and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

Sincerely,

Signed Original on File

Deann Haeffner
Assistant Deputy Auditor