

**ATTESTATION REPORT  
OF  
SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY COURT  
JULY 1, 2015, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017**

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**Issued on April 17, 2018**

# SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY COURT

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# SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY COURT

## COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATION

During our examination of the Scotts Bluff County Court, we noted a certain deficiency and other operational matters that are presented here.

This comment and recommendation is intended to improve the internal control over financial reporting or result in operational efficiencies in the following area:

### **Segregation of Duties**

Good internal control includes a plan of organization, procedures, and documentation designed to safeguard assets and to 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 that the office of the County Court lacked a sufficient segregation of duties, as one person had control of the bank records and control of the accounting records. A lack of segregation of duties increases the risk of possible errors or irregularities; however, due to a limited number of personnel, an adequate segregation of duties is not possible without additional cost. Further, personnel are under the direction of both the Nebraska State Court Administrator and the Presiding Judge. We have included this comment in previous examinations. We consider this to be a material weakness.

We recommend the County Court and the Nebraska State Court Administrator review this situation. As always, the cost of hiring additional personnel versus the benefit of a proper segregation of duties must be weighed.

*County Court's Response: The accounting clerk does have control over the bank records and the accounting records as is required by her job description. The major duties for the accounting clerk as described in the Nebraska Supreme Court Job Descriptions for County Court Positions include responsibility over accounts payable/receivable and accounting work in the maintenance and balancing of all financial records of the county court. Some of the examples of work listed in the job description include performing daily cash balancing functions, maintaining the court bank accounts, regularly making deposits, writing checks, and reconciling such accounts, and monitoring daily, monthly, and annual JUSTICE reports. The Scotts Bluff County Court has taken steps to alleviate the lack of segregation of duties which include having the clerk magistrate also monitor and review the daily, monthly and annual JUSTICE reports, having a different employee other than the accounting clerk who prepares the daily deposit take the deposit to the bank, and not allowing the accounting clerk to issue monetary receipts. In addition to these measures, a Nebraska Supreme Court financial specialist reviews and monitors the financial records of the Scotts Bluff County Court on a regular basis.*

It should be noted this report is critical in nature, as it contains only our comment and recommendation on the area noted for improvement and does not include our observations on any accounting strengths of the County Court.

# SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY COURT

## **COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATION**

(Concluded)

Draft copies of this report were furnished to the County Court to provide management an opportunity to review the report and to respond to the comment and recommendation included in this report. The formal response received has been incorporated into this report. The response has been objectively evaluated and recognized, as appropriate, in the report. A response that indicates corrective action has been taken was not verified at this time, but it will be verified in the next examination.



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### SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY COURT

#### INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT

Scotts Bluff County Court  
Gering, Nebraska 69341

We have examined the accompanying Schedules of Changes in Assets and Liabilities Arising from Cash Transactions of the Scotts Bluff County Court as of and for the period July 1, 2015, to December 31, 2016, and the calendar year ending December 31, 2017. The County Court's management is responsible for the Schedules based on the accounting system and procedures set forth in Note 1. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the Schedules based on our examination.

Our examination was conducted in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the standards applicable to attestation engagements contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we perform the examination to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the Schedules are based on the accounting system and procedures set forth in Note 1, in all material respects. An examination involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the Schedules of Changes in Assets and Liabilities Arising from Cash Transactions. The nature, timing, and extent of the procedures selected depend on our judgment, including an assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the Schedules, whether due to fraud or error. We believe that the evidence we obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the Schedules of Changes in Assets and Liabilities Arising from Cash Transactions for the period July 1, 2015, to December 31, 2016, and the calendar year ending December 31, 2017, is based on the accounting system and procedures prescribed by the Nebraska Supreme Court, as set forth in Note 1, in all material respects.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we are required to report findings of deficiencies in internal control, violations of provisions of contracts or grant agreements, abuse that is material to the Schedules, and any fraud and illegal acts that are more than inconsequential that come to our attention during our examination. We are also required to obtain the views of management on those matters. We performed our examination to express an opinion on whether the Schedules are presented in accordance with the criteria described above and not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the internal control over the Schedules or on compliance and other matters; accordingly, we express no such opinions. Our examination disclosed a certain finding that is required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*, and that finding, along with the views of management, is described in the Comment Section of the report.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of management, the Supreme Court, others within the County Court, and the appropriate Federal and regulatory agencies, and it is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties. However, this report is a matter of public record, and its distribution is not limited.

April 12, 2018



Craig Kubicek, CPA, CFE  
Assistant Deputy Auditor  
Lincoln, Nebraska

**SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY COURT**  
**GERING, NEBRASKA**  
**SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**  
**ARISING FROM CASH TRANSACTIONS**  
**AGENCY FUNDS**

For the Period Ending December 31, 2016

	Balance July 1, 2015	Additions	Deductions	Balance December 31, 2016
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Cash and Deposits	\$ 276,271	\$ 2,528,826	\$ 2,619,298	\$ 185,799
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Due to State Treasurer:				
Regular Fees	\$ 24,289	\$ 327,386	\$ 335,617	\$ 16,058
Law Enforcement Fees	1,698	27,321	27,492	1,527
State Judges Retirement Fund	6,025	115,889	115,412	6,502
Court Administrative Fees	9,934	179,492	179,276	10,150
Legal Services Fees	5,886	100,170	99,904	6,152
Due to County Treasurer:				
Regular Fines	32,278	603,297	601,004	34,571
Overload Fines	625	18,775	17,825	1,575
Regular Fees	2,645	60,956	62,110	1,491
Petty Cash Fund	1,000	-	600	400
Due to Municipalities:				
Regular Fines	5,215	74,557	75,990	3,782
Regular Fees	17	6,967	6,834	150
Trust Fund Payable	186,659	1,014,016	1,097,234	103,441
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 276,271</b>	<b>\$ 2,528,826</b>	<b>\$ 2,619,298</b>	<b>\$ 185,799</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the schedule.

**SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY COURT**  
**GERING, NEBRASKA**  
**SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**  
**ARISING FROM CASH TRANSACTIONS**  
**AGENCY FUNDS**

For the Calendar Year Ended December 31, 2017

	<u>Balance</u>			<u>Balance</u>
	<u>January 1, 2017</u>	<u>Additions</u>	<u>Deductions</u>	<u>December 31, 2017</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Cash and Deposits	\$ 185,799	\$ 1,741,942	\$ 1,696,251	\$ 231,490
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Due to State Treasurer:				
Regular Fees	\$ 16,058	\$ 205,578	\$ 204,874	\$ 16,762
Law Enforcement Fees	1,527	16,615	16,956	1,186
State Judges Retirement Fund	6,502	77,745	78,052	6,195
Court Administrative Fees	10,150	121,634	123,282	8,502
Legal Services Fees	6,152	66,599	67,883	4,868
Due to County Treasurer:				
Regular Fines	34,571	364,161	374,518	24,214
Overload Fines	1,575	5,750	7,075	250
Regular Fees	1,491	18,142	18,052	1,581
Petty Cash Fund	400	-	-	400
Due to Municipalities:				
Regular Fines	3,782	47,180	45,988	4,974
Regular Fees	150	5,765	5,615	300
Trust Fund Payable	103,441	812,773	753,956	162,258
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u>\$ 185,799</u>	<u>\$ 1,741,942</u>	<u>\$ 1,696,251</u>	<u>\$ 231,490</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the schedule.



**SCOTTS BLUFF COUNTY COURT**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL SCHEDULES**

For the Period Ended December 31, 2016, and Calendar Year Ended December 31, 2017

**1. Criteria**

**A. Reporting Entity**

The Scotts Bluff County Court is established by State statute and is administratively operated through the Court Administrator's Office of the Nebraska Supreme Court, which is part of the State of Nebraska reporting entity. The Schedules of Changes in Assets and Liabilities Arising from Cash Transactions of the County Court reflect only the Agency Funds activity of the County Court, including the receipts and their subsequent disbursement to the appropriate entities for which they were collected. The Schedules do not reflect the personal services expenses of the County Court, which are paid by the Nebraska Supreme Court, or the operating expenses, which are paid by Scotts Bluff County.

**B. Basis of Accounting**

The accounting records of the County Court Agency Funds are maintained, and the Schedules of Changes in Assets and Liabilities Arising from Cash Transactions have been prepared, based on the accounting system and procedures prescribed by the Nebraska Supreme Court. Under this system of accounting, fines, fees, and receipts relating to trust funds are shown as additions to assets and as an increase in the related liability when received. Likewise, disbursements are shown as deductions to assets and as a decrease in the related liability when a check is written.

**2. Deposits and Investments**

Funds held by the County Court are deposited and invested in accordance with rules issued by the Supreme Court, as directed by Neb. Rev. Stat. § 25-2713 (Reissue 2016). Funds are generally consolidated in an interest-bearing checking account; however, the County Court may order certain trust funds to be invested separately. Any deposits in excess of the amount insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation are required by Neb. Rev. Stat. § 77-2326.04 (Reissue 2009) to be secured either by a surety bond or as provided in the Public Funds Deposit Security Act.