



## NEBRASKA AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

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State Auditor

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November 10, 2021

Helen Ohme, Chairperson  
Arcadia Township Valley County  
PO Box 332  
Arcadia, NE 68815

Dear Chairperson Ohme:

The Nebraska Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) has reviewed the audit waiver request received from the Arcadia Township Valley County (Township) for the fiscal year ending 2021. **That request has been approved.**

While performing, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-304 (2021 Neb. Laws, LB 528, § 51), the preliminary examination necessary to determine whether further audit work would be required or the audit waiver should be allowed, the APA noted certain internal control or compliance matters, or other operational issues, within the Township.

The following information is intended to improve internal controls or result in other operational efficiencies.

### Comment and Recommendation

#### Payment of Claims Prior to Board Approval

The APA obtained a copy of a set of minutes for September 5, 2021, that documents the Board's approval of bills for fiscal year ended 2021 – meaning that any Township expenditures for the fiscal year ended 2021 were not approved by the Board prior to payment. A copy of this approval is shown below.

Motion by <u>Lori Bush</u> , second by <u>Dawn Hunt</u> To approve all expenditures for the year ended June 30, 2021.
Voting Yes: <u>yes</u>
Voting No:

The Township Board is required to approve claims against the Township as set out in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 23-255 (Reissue 2012), which states the following, in relevant part:

*All claims and charges against the town, duly audited and allowed by the town board, shall be paid by order so drawn.*

(Emphasis added.) Properly discharging the above statutory duties necessarily entails the Board's approval of all expenditures of Township funds prior to the actual disbursement.

Furthermore, good internal control requires procedures to ensure that all claims are approved by the Board prior to payment and are adequately documented in the minutes of the meeting during which they are approved, specifying the name of each payee, the exact amount of any disbursement, and the specific purpose of the payment.

Without such procedures, there is an increased risk for the loss or misuse of Township funds.

We recommend the Board implement procedures to ensure all claims are approved by the Board prior to payment and are adequately documented in the minutes of the meeting during which they are approved, specifying the name of each payee, the exact amount of any disbursement, and the specific purpose of the payment.

\* \* \* \* \*

The preliminary planning work that resulted in this letter was designed primarily on a test basis and, therefore, may not bring to light all existing weaknesses in the Township's policies or procedures. Nevertheless, our objective is to use the knowledge gained during the performance of that preliminary planning work to make comments and suggestions that we hope will prove useful to the Township.

This communication is intended solely for the information and use of the Township and its management. It is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than those specified parties. However, this letter is a matter of public record, and its distribution is not limited.

If you have any questions, please contact **Dakota Christensen** at **402-499-8702** or **dakota.christensen@nebraska.gov**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Avery", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Avery, CPA  
Assistant Deputy Auditor