



NEBRASKA AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Charlie Janssen
State Auditor

Charlie.Janssen@nebraska.gov
PO Box 98917
State Capitol, Suite 2303
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509
402-471-2111, FAX 402-471-3301
auditors.nebraska.gov

March 22, 2022

Steve Policky, Chairperson
Village of Dwight
P.O. Box 153
Dwight, NE 68635

Dear Chairperson Policky:

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

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

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

Comments and Recommendations

1. Lack of Dual Signatures

The APA obtained the bank statements for the Village's accounts from its fiscal year 2021 audit waiver request. From these statements, the APA noted that seven of the Village checks written during the examination period contained only one signature. An example of such checks is shown below.

VILLAGE OF DWIGHT
PO BOX 153
DWIGHT, NE 68635

10062

DATE: June 7 2021 79-8667048

PAY TO THE ORDER OF Harry M. [redacted] \$554.10

Five hundred fifty four and 10/100 DOLLARS

First Nebraska Bank

FOR SUN SUB [redacted] 3720 [redacted] 70 and [redacted]

#10062 06/09/2021 \$554.10

State statute requires Village checks to be signed by both the Board Chairperson and the Village Clerk. Specifically, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 17-711 (Cum. Supp. 2020) provides the following:

All warrants drawn upon the city treasurer of a city of the second class or village treasurer must be signed by the mayor or chairperson of the village board of trustees and countersigned by the city clerk or village clerk, stating the particular fund to which the same is chargeable, the person to whom payable, and for what particular object. No money shall be otherwise paid than upon such warrants so drawn. Each warrant shall specify the amount included in the adopted budget statement for such fund upon which it is drawn and the amount already expended of such fund.

Good internal control and sound accounting practices require procedures to ensure that Village checks contain the statutorily required endorsements. Without such procedures, there is an increased risk of not only failure to comply with State statute but also the loss and/or misuse of Village funds.

We recommend the Board implement procedures to require dual signatures, from the Board Chairperson and the Village Clerk, on all Village checks, as required by law.

2. Lack of Claim Amount

During our comparison of the Village’s bank account details to claims approved by the Board, the APA observed meeting minutes dated January 4, 2021, and noted that one of the claims listed in the Board’s official proceedings lacked an amount to be paid.

The following is an example of the approved claims listing provided by the Village for January 4, 2021:

VILLAGE OF DWIGHT		
JANUARY 4, 2021 CLAIMS		
9971	Windstream, water \$24.96, Fire \$69.57	\$ 94.53
9972	Butler County RPPD, elec	\$1766.44
9973	Roadrunner, Recycling	\$ 303.98
9974	Ne Public Health Environmental Lab, water tests	\$ 19.00
9975	Lincoln Journal Star, publications	\$ 87.10
9976	Pekny & Assoc. bookkeeping	\$ 420.00
9977	Larry Urbaneck, Sal \$600 less 37.20ss, 8.70 med	\$ 554.10
9978	Jim Mastny, Sal \$200 less 12.40ss, 2.90 med	\$ 184.70
9979	Diane VanDerslice, Sal \$200 less 12.40ss, 2.90 med	\$ 184.70
9980	Cathy Keane	\$.
9981	Larry Aldrich, 8 hrs @\$10=\$80 less 4.96ss, 1.16 med	\$ 73.88
9982	Akrs Equipment, tractor parts	\$ 36.80
9983	Tristan Kocian, 1 hr st. labor \$8 less .56cents ss, .13 cents Med	\$ 8.31
9984	Jeff Kocian, postage for past due water bills 2020	\$ 16.30
9985	George Niemann III, xtra hired help, st cleaning	\$ 110.00

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 19-1102 (Cum. Supp. 2020) requires publication of the Board’s official proceedings, which must include, among other things, the purpose of each claim allowed, as follows:

It shall be the duty of each city clerk or village clerk in every city or village having a population of not more than one hundred thousand inhabitants as determined by the most recent federal decennial census or the most recent revised certified count by the United States Bureau of the Census to prepare and publish the official proceedings of the city council or village board of trustees within thirty days after any meeting of the city council or village board of trustees. The publication shall be in a legal newspaper in or of general circulation in the city or village, shall set forth a statement of the proceedings of the meeting, and shall also include the amount of each claim allowed, the purpose of the claim, and the name of the claimant, except that the aggregate amount of all payroll claims may be included as one item. Between July 15 and August 15 of each year, the employee job titles and the current annual, monthly, or hourly salaries corresponding to such job titles shall be published. Each job title published shall be descriptive and indicative of the duties and functions of the position. The charge for the publication shall not exceed the rates provided for in section 23-122.

(Emphasis added.) Good internal control and sound accounting practices require procedures to ensure that the Board's official proceedings describe the purpose of each claim allowed, and provide the amount approved to be paid. Without such procedures, there is an increased risk of not only failure to comply with statutory publication requirements but also a lack of transparency regarding the nature of public expenditures.

We recommend the Board implement procedures to ensure the amount of each claim allowed is included in the Board's official proceedings and published in accordance with State statute.

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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 Village'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 Village.

This communication is intended solely for the information and use of the Village 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 cursive script, appearing to read "Mark Avery", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Avery, CPA
Assistant Deputy Auditor