



# NEBRASKA AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mike Foley  
State Auditor

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

March 19, 2026

Dennis Johnson, Chairperson  
Village of Comstock  
PO Box 55  
Comstock, NE 68828

Dear Chairperson Johnson:

The Nebraska Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) has reviewed the audit waiver request received from the Village of Comstock (Village) for the fiscal year ending 2025. **That request has been approved.**

While performing, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-304 (Supp. 2025), 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 Claim Purpose

During our comparison of the Village’s bank account details to claims approved by the Board, the APA reviewed meeting minutes dated April 8, 2025, and noted multiple claims listed therein lacked descriptions of their respective purposes. The following is an example of the approved claims listing provided by the Village for April 8, 2025:

LVRPPD-----	\$747.45
COLONIAL LIFE INS.-----	\$338.99
VSP INSURANCE-----	\$25.99
BLACK HILLS ENERGY-----	\$515.93
HAMILTON-----	\$123.72
DEBORAH RITZ: OFFICE SUPPLIES-----	\$68.49
DEBORAH RITZ (WAGES)-----	\$596.58
WAGES WH-----	\$49.42
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	
<b>GENERAL_____</b>	<b>\$2,466.57</b>

<b><u>STREET</u></b>	
LVRPPD-----	\$213.38
S.ABRAHAM: WAGES-----	\$1,962.74
WAGES WH:-----	\$351.39
S.ABRAHAM: PICKLEBALL NET-----	\$55.17
TROTTER SERVICE: FUEL-----	\$985.65
S.ABRAHAM: WATER CONFERENCE-----	\$272.12
NICHOLS PLUMBING: REPAIRS-----	\$3,124.26
Ne PUBLIC HEALTH LAB: WATER TEST-----	\$32.00
ONE CALL CONCEPT: 811 LOCATE-----	\$2.78
DAVID RHOADS: MILEAGE-----	\$268.00
MASCHKAS BUILDING CENTER: SEALANT-----	\$62.97
NeRWA: WATER CONFERENCE-----	\$445.00
VIKING: WATER TOWER MAINTENANCE-----	\$7,475.00
<b>SUBTOTAL STREET</b> -----	<b>\$15,250.46</b>
<b><u>UTILITIES</u></b>	
LVRPPD-----	\$499.73
GARBAGE-----	\$992.50
<b>SUBTOTAL UTILITIES</b> -----	<b>\$1,492.23</b>

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1413(1) (Reissue 2024) of the Open Meetings Act (Act), which is set out at Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 84-1407 to 84-1414 (Reissue 2024, Supp. 2025), requires political subdivisions and other public entities to “keep minutes of all meetings showing the time, place, members present and absent, and the substance of all matters discussed.” (Emphasis added.)

Additionally, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 19-1102 (Reissue 2022) 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 meeting minutes describe the purpose of each claim allowed.

Without such procedures, there is an increased risk of not only failure to comply with statutory requirements pertaining to the keeping of proper meeting minutes and the publication of the municipality’s “official proceedings” but also a lack of transparency regarding the nature of public expenditures.

The APA identified a similar issue in a prior review and disclosed it to the Village in a letter dated February 11, 2025, which can be found on the APA’s website. However, this issue does not appear to have been corrected after the APA’s notification.

We recommend the Board implement procedures to ensure the purpose of each claim allowed is included in both the Board’s meeting minutes and the “official proceedings” required to be published afterwards.

**2. Payment of Unapproved Claims**

During our comparison of the Village’s bank account details to claims approved by the Board, the APA identified the following checks, totaling \$698.86, which were paid but not included on the claims listing to be approved by the Board.

Details of the unapproved payments are included in the table below:

<b>Name/Vendor</b>	<b>Check Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Check #</b>
NE Dept of Revenue	4/10/25	\$ 373.08	ACH
U.S. Post Office	4/7/25	56.00	735
Grint Farm Supply	4/7/25	34.28	737
Matt Dockhorn	4/8/25	73.88	739
David Rhoads	4/8/25	69.26	741
Will Kirwan	4/8/25	46.18	742
Kimberly Post	4/8/25	46.18	740
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 698.86</b>	

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 17-614(1)(a) (Cum. Supp. 2024) sets out the proper method for the appropriation or payment of money by the Village, as follows:

*All ordinances and resolutions or orders for the appropriation or payment of money shall require for their passage or adoption the concurrence of a majority of all elected members of the city council in a city of the second class or village board of trustees.*

(Emphasis added.) Good internal control requires procedures to ensure that all claims are authorized by the Board prior to payment and are adequately documented in the minutes of the meeting during which they are approved.

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

We recommend the Board implement procedures to ensure all claims are authorized by the Board prior to payment and are adequately documented in the minutes of the meeting during which they are approved.

**3. Job and Wage Publication**

The APA noted that the Village failed to publish its annual job and wage publication between July 15, 2025, and August 15, 2025, as required by State statute. No publication was made by the Village.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 19-1102 (Reissue 2022) states, in relevant part, the following:

*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.*

(Emphasis added.) The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) guidance “Tax Withholding for Government Workers” (last updated October 2, 2025), which appears on the IRS website, states the following, as is relevant:

*Internal Revenue Code section 3401(c) indicates that an “officer, employee, or elected official” of government is an employee for income tax withholding purposes.*

\* \* \* \*

*The courts generally define “public official” and “public officer” to mean anyone who exercises significant authority pursuant to public laws. This includes any official who administers or enforces public laws whether the public elected the individual or an office appointed them.*

(Emphasis added.) Good internal control requires procedures to ensure that the Village’s annual job and wage publication is completed between July 15 and August 15 annually, as required by law. Such newspaper publication, not posting, should include all Village positions, such as Clerk, Treasurer, and Board positions even if that position receives no compensation. Without such procedures, there is an increased risk of not only statutory noncompliance but also lack of transparency and loss or misuse of funds.

We recommend the Board implement procedures to ensure the Village’s annual job and wage publication is published between July 15 and August 15 annually, as required by law, and such newspaper publication, not posting, should include all Village positions, such as Clerk, Treasurer, and Board positions even if that position receives no compensation.

**4. Payment in Excess of Approved Amount**

During our comparison of the Village’s bank account details to claims approved by the Board, the APA identified one check in excess of the authorized amounts. The following table summarizes the overpayment:

Name	Claim Date	Approved Amount	Amount Paid	Overpayment
Wages WH	4/8/25	\$ 400.81	\$ 679.28	\$ 278.47

Good internal control requires procedures to ensure that all claims are made in the amounts approved by the Board.

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

We recommend the Village implement procedures to ensure payments are made in the amounts approved by the Board.

\* \* \* \* \*

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 offer 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,



Mark Avery, CPA  
Assistant Deputy Auditor