

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

**FINANCIAL REPORT  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **FINANCIAL REPORT SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

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**DON M. MCGEHEE**

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**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT**

Honorable Danny Tatum  
Ruston City Judge's Office  
P.O. Box 1821  
Ruston, LA 71273-1821

**Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements**

***Opinions***

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Ruston City Judge's Office, a component unit of the City of Ruston, Louisiana, as of and for the year ended September 30, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Ruston City Judge's Office's basic financial statements, as listed in the table of contents.

In my opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Ruston City Judge's Office as of September 30, 2024, and the respective changes in financial position for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

***Basis for Opinions***

I conducted my audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of my report. I am required to be independent of the Ruston City Judge's Office, and to meet my other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to my audit. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinions.

***Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements***

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Ruston City Judge's Office's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

### ***Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements***

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards*, I:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Ruston City Judge's Office's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in my judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Ruston City Judge's Office's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

I am required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that I identified during the audit.

### ***Required Supplementary Information***

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis, budgetary comparison information, and the required schedules related to pension plans on the pages indicated in the table of contents be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. I have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to my inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge I obtained during my audit of the basic financial statements. I do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide me with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

**Supplementary Information**

My audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise the Ruston City Judge's Office's basic financial statements. The accompanying supplemental schedule of compensation, benefits, and other payments, schedule of justice system funding - receiving and schedule of justice system funding - collecting/disbursing are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements or to the basic financial statements themselves and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In my opinion, the supplemental schedule of compensation, benefits and other payments, schedule of justice system funding - receiving and schedule of justice system funding - collecting/disbursing are fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the basic financial statements as a whole.

**Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards**

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, I have also issued my report dated March 29, 2025, on my consideration of the Ruston City Judge's Office's internal control over financial reporting and on my tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of my testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Ruston City Judge's Office's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Ruston City Judge's Office's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.



Don M. McGehee  
Certified Public Accountant  
March 29, 2025

**REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**  
**Management's Discussion and Analysis**



## RUSTON CITY COURT

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### MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

The discussion and analysis of the performance of the Ruston City Judge's Office provides an overview of the financial activities for the year ended September 30, 2024. It is based upon currently known facts, decisions, and conditions. Please read it in conjunction with the financial statements which begin on page 9.

#### **Basic Financial Statements**

The basic financial statements include government-wide and fund financial statements. The government-wide statements consist of a Statement of Net Position and a Statement of Activities and provide information about the financial activities of the Office as a whole. The government-wide statements present a long-term view of the finances. Fund financial statements consist of the respective fund's balance sheet and the fund's statement of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance, if applicable. The fund statements tell how services were financed in the short-term and what remains for future spending. The primary difference between the fund and government-wide statement presentation methods is that expenditures for capital assets are expensed in the fund financial statements but capitalized and depreciated in the government-wide statements.

The Judge's Office reports all of its financial operating activity as a single governmental activity (i.e., general fund), and uses a combined approach in presenting the fund financial statements and the government-wide statements by reconciling, through an adjustment column, the fund statement amounts to the government-wide statement amounts. The Judge's Office also reports information about monies being held by them as an agent for others in the fiduciary fund. The Judge's Office is responsible for ensuring that all assets held for others are distributed as ordered by the court and cannot use the assets held for others to finance its operations.

#### **Statement of Net Position and Statement of Activities**

The Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities report information about the funds maintained by the Judge's Office as a whole and about its activities in a way that helps answer one of the most important questions asked, "Is the Judge's Office, as a whole, better off or worse off as a result of the year's activities?" These statements report information about the Judge's Office as a whole and about its activities in a way that helps answer this question. These statements include all assets and liabilities using the accrual basis of accounting, which is a method similar to accounting used by most private-sector companies. All revenues and expenses of the current year are reported under this method regardless of when cash is received or disbursed.

These two statements report the Judge's Office net position and changes in the net position. You can think of net position - the difference between assets and liabilities - as one way to measure the financial health, or financial position, of the Judge's Office. Increases or decreases in net position can be an indicator of whether financial health is improving or deteriorating. The financial activity of all services provided by Judge's Office are reported in the Statement of Net Position and Statement of Activities. Expenses primarily include salaries and related benefits, and office expenses. Court costs and fees received from defendants and plaintiffs involved in cases before the court plus the on-behalf payments received from the City of Ruston and the State of Louisiana finance most of these activities.

### Government-Wide Financial Analysis

As noted above, net position may serve as a useful indicator of an entity's financial position. The net position of the Judge's Office increased \$266,094 in the current year. Our analysis below focuses on the net position (Table 1) and changes in net position (Table 2) of the governmental activities of the Judge's Office to help explain this increase.

Table 1 Net Position				
	2024	2023	Increase (Decrease)	
			Amount	Percent
Current Assets	\$ 2,419,857	\$ 2,133,953	\$ 285,904	13 %
Capital Assets	246,067	281,430	(35,363)	(13)%
Total Assets	2,665,924	2,415,383	250,541	10 %
Total Deferred Outflows	15,920	23,319	(7,399)	(32)%
Long-Term Liabilities	233,191	292,039	(58,848)	(20)%
Other Liabilities	23,391	13,639	9,752	72 %
Total Liabilities	256,582	305,678	(49,096)	(16)%
Total Deferred Inflows	39,888	13,744	26,144	190 %
Net Position:				
Investment in Capital Assets	246,067	281,430	(35,363)	(13)%
Unrestricted	2,139,307	1,837,850	301,457	16 %
Total Net Position	\$ 2,385,374	\$ 2,119,280	\$ 266,094	13 %

About 90% (\$2,139,307 of \$2,385,374) of total net position is unrestricted in 2024 compared to 87% (\$1,837,850 of \$2,119,280) in 2023. Unrestricted net position can be used to finance the day-to-day operations of the Judge's Office without constraints.



Table 2  
Change in Net Position

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>Increase (Decrease)</u>	
			<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Program Revenues:				
Court Costs and Fees	\$ 402,777	\$ 356,224	\$ 46,553	13 %
On-Behalf Revenue	557,745	557,335	410	0.07 %
Other Program Revenues	6,209	5,907	302	5 %
General Revenues:				
Miscellaneous	12	168	(156)	100 %
Expense Recovery	0	1,829	(1,829)	100 %
Interest Income	138,892	29,013	109,879	379 %
Total Revenues	<u>1,105,635</u>	<u>950,476</u>	<u>155,159</u>	16 %
Program Expenses				
General Government-Judiciary	281,796	282,952	(1,156)	(0.41)%
On-Behalf Expenses	557,745	557,335	410	0.07 %
Total Expenses	<u>839,541</u>	<u>840,287</u>	<u>(746)</u>	(0.09)%
Change in Net Position	<u>\$ 266,094</u>	<u>\$ 110,189</u>	<u>\$ 155,905</u>	141 %

Court costs and fees revenues increased about 13% (\$402,777 compared to \$356,224) from the prior year. Interest income increased 379% (\$138,892 compared to \$29,013) from the prior year primarily due to an increase in interest rates. General government expenses decreased by 0.41% (\$281,796 compared to \$282,952) from the prior year. The net effect of the differences resulted in a \$266,094 increase in net position for the year ended September 30, 2024 versus the \$110,189 increase in net position in the previous year.

### Fund Financial Statements

As of September 30, 2024, the general fund reported a fund balance of \$2,396,466, which is about 13% (\$2,396,466 compared to \$2,120,314) more than last year's fund balance. Less than 1% of current year fund balance is considered unspendable, that portion having been used for prepaid items (\$1,142). The remaining \$2,395,324 is unassigned. During the year ended September 30, 2024, court costs and fees revenue increased, and interest income increased, as described above. On-behalf revenues increased 0.07% (\$557,745 compared to \$557,335). Expenditures, excluding the on-behalf amounts, increased about 22% (\$271,738 compared to \$223,186) from the prior year, primarily due to an increase in salaries of \$20,184, an increase in retirement of \$5,614, an increase in office expense of \$4,441, and an increase in miscellaneous expense of \$20,292.

### General Fund Budgetary Highlights

The Judge's Office amends its budget when there are unexpected differences between actual and anticipated revenues and/or expenditures. The final amended budget was adopted just prior to year end. The differences between the original and final amended budget was an increase of 20% (\$180,361) in revenues and a 1% (\$6,870) increase in expenditures. The change in budgeted revenues was primarily the result of a \$46,000 increase in court costs and fees, representing a 12% change, and a \$136,461 increase in interest revenue, representing a change over 100%. The change in budgeted expenses was primarily the result of an adjustment decreasing capital outlay expenses by \$26,000, decreasing travel by \$4,200, decreasing accounting fees by \$9,000, increasing salaries by \$43,000, decreasing repairs and maintenance \$3,800, decreasing office expense \$2,000, and increasing pension expense \$7,500. There were no other significant budget adjustments.

### **Capital Assets**

In 2024, the Judge's Office did not purchase any capital assets. For the upcoming year ending September 30, 2025, the Judge's Office plans to purchase office equipment. These purchases are included in the fiscal year 2025 budgeted capital expenditures line item for \$26,000. There are no plans to issue debt to finance the planned capital outlay for 2025 or any other future project.

### **Currently Known Facts, Decisions, or Conditions**

We are not aware of any other facts, decisions, or conditions that are expected to have a significant impact on the financial position or results of operations after the reporting date.

### **Contacting the Judge's Office**

This financial report is designed to provide citizens and taxpayers with a general overview of the finances of the Judge's Office and to show accountability for the money it receives. If you have questions about this report or need additional financial information, contact the Ruston City Judge's Office at 401 N. Trenton Street, Ruston, LA 71270.

## **BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## GOVERNMENTAL FUND BALANCE SHEET AND STATEMENT OF NET POSITION SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Adjustments (Note 5)</u>	<u>Statement of Net Position</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>			
Cash	\$ 2,401,660	\$	\$ 2,401,660
Due from Governmental Units	17,055		17,055
Prepaid Expenses	1,142		1,142
Capital Assets, Net	<u>0</u>	<u>246,067</u>	<u>246,067</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>\$ 2,419,857</u></b>	<b><u>246,067</u></b>	<b><u>2,665,924</u></b>
<b>DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>		<u>15,920</u>	<u>15,920</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
Accounts Payable	\$ 14,804		14,804
Accrued Liabilities	8,587		8,587
Long-Term Liabilities			
Pension Liability	<u>0</u>	<u>233,191</u>	<u>233,191</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b><u>23,391</u></b>	<b><u>233,191</u></b>	<b><u>256,582</u></b>
<b>DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>		<u>39,888</u>	<u>39,888</u>
<b>FUND BALANCE/NET POSITION</b>			
<b>FUND BALANCE:</b>			
Nonspendable-Prepaid	1,142	(1,142)	0
Unassigned	<u>2,395,324</u>	<u>(2,395,324)</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>TOTAL FUND BALANCE</b>	<b><u>2,396,466</u></b>	<b><u>(2,396,466)</u></b>	<b><u>0</u></b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</b>	<b><u>\$ 2,419,857</u></b>		
<b>NET POSITION:</b>			
Investment in Capital Assets		246,067	246,067
Unrestricted		<u>2,139,307</u>	<u>2,139,307</u>
<b>TOTAL NET POSITION</b>		<b><u>\$ 2,385,374</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 2,385,374</u></b>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENTAL FUND REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE AND STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Adjustments (Note 6)</u>	<u>Statement of Activities</u>
<b>EXPENDITURES/EXPENSES</b>			
General Government--Judiciary			
Audit and Accounting Fees	\$ 19,152	\$	\$ 19,152
Continuing Education	2,478		2,478
Contract Services	4,216		4,216
Depreciation	0	35,363	35,363
Dues and Subscriptions	1,952		1,952
Insurance	51,816		51,816
Judge Ad Hoc	1,000		1,000
Library Expense	12,587		12,587
Miscellaneous	22,455		22,455
Office Expense	43,946		43,946
Pension Expense	165,781	(25,305)	140,476
Repairs and Maintenance	161		161
Salaries	479,194		479,194
Taxes	14,013		14,013
Travel	10,732		10,732
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>829,483</u>	<u>10,058</u>	<u>839,541</u>
<b>PROGRAM REVENUES</b>			
Charges for Services			
Court Costs and Fees	402,777		402,777
Contributions			
City of Ruston	6,209		6,209
On-Behalf Revenue	557,745		557,745
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>966,731</u>		<u>966,731</u>
<b>NET PROGRAM REVENUES</b>	<u>137,248</u>	<u>(10,058)</u>	<u>127,190</u>
<b>GENERAL REVENUES</b>			
Miscellaneous Income	12		12
Interest Income	138,892		138,892
<b>TOTAL GENERAL REVENUES</b>	<u>138,904</u>		<u>138,904</u>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES</b>	276,152	(276,152)	
<b>CHANGE IN NET POSITION</b>		266,094	266,094
<b>FUND BALANCE/NET POSITION</b>			
BEGINNING OF THE YEAR	<u>2,120,314</u>	<u>(1,034)</u>	<u>2,119,280</u>
END OF THE YEAR	<u>\$ 2,396,466</u>	<u>\$ (11,092)</u>	<u>\$ 2,385,374</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **STATEMENT OF FIDUCIARY NET POSITION FIDUCIARY FUND SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

	<u>Custodial Fund</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Restricted Cash	\$ <u>1,652,132</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	\$ <u>1,652,132</u>
<b>NET POSITION</b>	
Restricted	
Held for Others	\$ <u>1,652,132</u>
<b>TOTAL NET POSITION</b>	\$ <u>1,652,132</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FIDUCIARY NET POSITION FIDUCIARY FUND FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

	<u>Custodial Fund</u>
<b>ADDITIONS</b>	
Contributions:	
Advance Court Costs Deposited	\$ <u>364,401</u>
Total Additions	<u>364,401</u>
<b>DEDUCTIONS</b>	
Civil Fees Paid	<u>286,474</u>
Total Deductions	<u>286,474</u>
<b>CHANGE IN NET POSITION</b>	77,927
Net Position, Beginning	<u>1,574,205</u>
Net Position, Ending	<u>\$1,652,132</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

The Ruston City Judge's Office was created on July 8, 1926, under the provisions of Act 157 of the Louisiana Legislature Summer Session. It has territorial jurisdiction extending throughout all of Lincoln Parish, Louisiana. There is one elected judge. The Judge's Office receives court costs and fees for services rendered on civil and criminal cases, in accordance with state law.

The accompanying basic financial statements of the Ruston City Judge's Office are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is responsible for establishing generally accepted accounting principles for state and local governments through its pronouncements (Statements of Interpretations).

The more significant accounting policies used by the Judge's Office are discussed below:

### **NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

#### **A. Reporting Entity**

The Ruston City Judge's Office is fiscally dependent on the City of Ruston for office space, courtrooms, related utility costs, storage and preservation of records, and providing the primary funding of salary and benefit costs. Because the Judge's Office is fiscally dependent on the City, the Judge's Office was determined to be a component unit of the City of Ruston. For the purposes of this financial report this component unit serves as the nucleus for its own financial reporting entity and issues separate financial statements.

#### **B. Basic Financial Statements**

The basic financial statements of the Ruston City Judge's Office include both government-wide (reporting the Judge's Office as a whole) and fund financial statements (reporting each individual fund of the Judge's Office). Since the Judge's Office is engaged in a single government program the government-wide and fund financial statements have been presented in a combined format using an adjustment column to reconcile the fund statements to the government-wide statements. Both the government-wide and fund financial statements categorize primary activities as either governmental or business type. All activities of the Ruston City Judge's Office are classified as governmental activities.

#### **C. Fund Accounting**

The Judge's Office uses the fund accounting method to maintain its financial records. Fund accounting is designed to demonstrate legal compliance and to aid management by segregating transactions related to certain court functions and activities. A fund is defined as a separate fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. The following funds are used by the Judge's Office:

##### **Governmental Funds**

Governmental funds account for all or most of the court's general activities. These funds focus on the sources, uses, and balances of current financial resources. Expendable assets are assigned to the various governmental funds according to the purposes for which they may be used. Current liabilities are assigned to the fund from which they will be paid. The difference between a governmental fund's assets and liabilities is reported as fund balance. In general, fund balance represents the accumulated expendable resources which may be used to finance future period programs or operations of the Ruston City Judge's Office.

The Judge's Office uses one fund, the **General Fund**, to account for all financial resources, except those required to be accounted for in other funds. The General Fund resources are available for any purpose provided they are expended or transferred in accordance with state and federal laws and according to the policy of the Judge's Office.



# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)** **SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

### **NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

#### **Fiduciary Funds**

##### **Custodial Fund**

Custodial funds are used to account for assets held by the Judge's Office as a custodian for individuals, private organizations, or other governments outside the primary government that are not held in a trust. The custodial fund reports assets being held for others, accounts payable for disbursements that are scheduled within three months, and any excess of assets over liabilities are reported as net fiduciary position. The only fund accounted for in this category by the Judge's Office is the civil fees fund. Advance court costs and statutory court fees are deposited, various fees are paid out as they are earned, and any excess deposit is refunded as the civil suit is processed.

The reporting focus is on net position and changes in net position and are reported using the accrual basis of accounting. Since these assets are being held for third parties, these funds are not incorporated into the government-wide statements.

#### **D. Measurement Focus/Basis of Accounting**

##### **Fund Financial Statements**

The amounts reflected in the general fund financial statements and agency fund statement are presented using a current financial resources measurement focus. With this measurement focus, only current assets and current liabilities are generally included on the balance sheet. The statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balances reports the sources and uses of current financial resources. This approach is then reconciled, through adjustment, to a government-wide view of operations.

The amounts reflected in the general fund financial statements and agency fund statement use the modified accrual basis of accounting. Under the modified accrual basis of accounting, revenues are recognized when susceptible to accrual (i.e., when they become measurable and available). Measurable means the amount of the transaction can be determined and available means the amount of the transaction is collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to pay liabilities of the current period. The Judge's Office considers all revenues available if they are collected within sixty days after the fiscal year end. Expenditures are recorded when the related fund liability is incurred.

##### **Government-Wide Financial Statements**

The column labeled Statement of Net Position and the column labeled Statement of Activities display information about the Judge's Office as a whole. These statements include all the financial activities of the Judge's Office. Information contained in these columns reflect the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. Revenues, expenses, gains, losses, assets, and liabilities resulting from exchange or exchange-like transactions are recognized when the exchange occurs (regardless of when cash is received or disbursed). Revenues, expenses, gains, losses, assets, and liabilities resulting from nonexchange transactions are recognized in accordance with the requirements of GASB Statement No. 33, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Nonexchange Transactions*.

**Program Revenues** - Program revenues included in the column labeled Statement of Activities are derived directly from court defendants and plaintiffs as a fee for services and from on-behalf payments made by other governmental units for salaries and benefits of employees of the Judge's Office; program revenues reduce the net cost of the function to be financed from other sources of the court's general revenues.

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

### **NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

#### **E. Government-Wide Net Position**

Government-wide net position is divided into three components:

Net Investment in Capital Assets - consist of the historical cost of capital assets less accumulated depreciation and less any debt that remains outstanding that was used to finance those assets plus deferred outflows or resources less deferred inflows of resources related to those assets.

Restricted Net Position - consist of assets that are restricted by creditors of the Judge's Office, by state enabling legislation, by grantors, and other contributors.

Unrestricted - all other net position is reported in this category.

#### **F. Governmental Fund Balance**

In the governmental fund financial statements, fund balances are classified to describe the relative strength of the spending constraints placed on the purposes for which resources can be used. These classifications are as follows:

Nonspendable Fund Balance - amounts that cannot be spent either because they are in a non-spendable form (such as prepaids) or because they are legally or contractually required to be maintained intact.

Restricted Fund Balance - amounts that can be spent only for specific purposes because of local, state or federal laws, or externally imposed conditions by grantors or creditors.

Committed Fund Balance - amounts that can be used only for specific purposes determined by formal action from the Judge.

Assigned Fund Balance - amounts that are designated by the Judge for a particular purpose.

Unassigned Fund Balance - all amounts not included in other spendable classifications.

#### **G. Use of Restricted Resources**

When an expense is incurred that can be paid using either restricted or unrestricted resources (net position), the policy used by the Judge's Office is to first apply the expense toward restricted resources and then toward unrestricted resources. In governmental funds, the policy used by the Judge's Office is to first apply the expenditure toward restricted fund balance and then to other, less-restrictive classifications--committed and then assigned fund balances before using unassigned fund balances.

#### **H. Budgetary Practices**

The Judge's Office prepares an operating budget on its General Fund for its years ended September 30. Budgetary data is prepared based on prior year actual operating revenues and expenditures and expected differences between actual and anticipated revenues and expenditures. It is monitored by management and amended throughout the year as necessary. Appropriations lapse at year-end and must be reappropriated for the following year to be expended. The Judge's Office performs only a custodial function in the case of agency funds and therefore a budget for these funds is not appropriate.

The 2024 general fund budget was authorized by the Judge, made available for public inspection at the Judge's Office, and adopted by the Judge on September 19, 2023. The budget was legally amended prior to year end by the Judge.

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

### **NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

#### **I. Cash**

Cash on hand, demand deposits, and time deposits with original maturities of three months or less from the date of acquisition are reported as cash. Time deposits with original maturities in excess of three months from the date of acquisition are reported as certificates of deposit. Bank deposits (or resulting bank balances) must be secured by federal deposit insurance or the pledge of securities owned by the fiscal agent bank. The market value of the pledged securities plus the federal deposit insurance must at all times equal or exceed the amount on deposit with the fiscal agent. Pledged securities are held in the name of the pledging fiscal agent bank in a holding or custodial bank that is mutually acceptable to both parties. Cash and certificates of deposit are carried at cost which approximates market value.

#### **J. Deferred Outflows of Resources and Deferred Inflows of Resources**

In some instances, the GASB requires a government to delay recognition of decreases in net position as expenditures until a future period. In other instances, governments are required to delay recognition of increases in net position as revenues until a future period. In these circumstances, deferred outflows of resources result from the delayed recognition of expenditures or revenues, respectively.

#### **K. Prepaid Expenses**

Payments made for expenses that will benefit periods beyond the fiscal period incurred are recorded as prepaid items in the asset section of the balance sheet and expensed as the related benefit is realized.

#### **L. Capital Assets - Governmental-Wide Financial Statements**

Capital assets, with an original cost of \$500 or more, are capitalized at cost. Salvage value is estimated to be 5% of historical cost on some assets. Contributed assets are reported at acquisition value as of the date received. Additions, improvements, and other capital outlays that significantly extend the useful life of an asset are capitalized. Other costs incurred for repairs and maintenance are expensed as incurred. Depreciation on all assets is provided on the straight-line basis over the following estimated useful lives:

Furniture, Equipment, and Software	5-10 years
Buildings and Improvements	20-25 years

#### **M. Vacation and Sick Leave**

Vacation and sick leave are noncumulative. There are no accumulated and vested benefits relating to vacation and sick leave that require accrual or disclosure at year end.

#### **N. Pensions**

For purposes of measuring the net pension liability, deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pension, and pension expenses, information about the fiduciary net position of the Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System (LASERS), and additions to/deductions from LASERS' fiduciary net position have been determined on the same basis as they are reported by LASERS. For this purpose, benefit payments (including refunds of employee contributions) are recognized when due and payable in accordance with the benefit terms. Investments are reported at fair value.

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

### NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

#### O. Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

### NOTE 2 - CASH

At September 30, 2024, the Judge's Office has under its control general fund cash and fiduciary fund cash totaling \$4,053,792 (book balances). The Judge's collected balances with financial institutions at September 30, 2024, is \$4,080,547. These deposits were secured from risk by \$1,000,000 of federal deposit insurance and \$3,080,547 of pledged securities.

The pledged securities are held by the custodial bank in the name of the fiscal agent bank. They meet the deposit collateralization requirements of LSA-R.S. 39:1229, which require the custodial bank to advertise and sell the pledged securities within 10 days of being notified by the Judge's Office that the fiscal agent has failed to pay deposited funds upon demand. However, the deposits are considered uncollateralized under the provisions of GASB Statement 3.

### NOTE 3 - DUE FROM OTHER GOVERNMENTAL UNITS

Amounts due from other governmental units at September 30, 2024, consisted of the following:

Fines and Court Costs Due from the Ruston Ward Marshal	\$ 10,467
Bonds from the Lincoln Parish Sheriff's Office	66
Reimbursement from City of Ruston	6,209
Reinstatement Fees from the Louisiana Dept. of Public Safety	313
Total	<u>\$ 17,055</u>

### NOTE 4 - CAPITAL ASSETS

Capital assets and depreciation activity as of and for the year ended September 30, 2024, are as follows:

	Balance 10/01/23	Additions	Deletions	Balance 09/30/24
Capital Assets, being depreciated:				
Furniture, Equipment, and Software	\$ 595,768	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 595,768
Building and Improvements	464,079	0	0	464,079
Totals	1,059,847	0	0	1,059,847
Less Accumulated Depreciation:				
Furniture, Equipment, and Software	567,290	12,981	0	580,271
Building and Improvements	211,127	22,382	0	233,509
Totals	778,417	35,363	0	813,780
Net Capital Assets	<u>\$ 281,430</u>	<u>\$ (35,363)</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 246,067</u>

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)** **SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

### **NOTE 5 - RECONCILIATION OF THE GOVERNMENTAL FUND BALANCE SHEET TO THE GOVERNMENTAL-WIDE STATEMENT OF NET POSITION**

At September 30, 2024, assets reported as available for government activities in the Statement of Net Position are different from the General Fund Balance Sheet as follows:

Fund Balance - General Fund	\$ 2,396,466
Adjustment for Capital Assets - Capital assets used in governmental activities are not financial resources and therefore are not reported in the general fund balance sheet nor reflected in fund balance for the general fund.	246,067
The deferred outflows of expenditures for pension obligations are not a use of current resources, and therefore, are not reported in the fund financial statements.	15,920
The deferred inflows of contributions for pension obligations are not available resources, and therefore, are not reported in the fund financial statements.	(39,888)
Adjustment for Long-Term Liabilities - Long-term pension liabilities are not due and payable in the current period and therefore are not reported in the general fund balance sheet nor reflected in fund balance for the general fund.	<u>(233,191)</u>
Total Net Position of Governmental Activities	<u>\$ 2,385,374</u>

### **NOTE 6 - RECONCILIATION OF THE STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENTAL FUND REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT-WIDE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES**

At September 30, 2024, amounts reported for government activities in the Statement of Activities are different from the General Fund Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance as follows:

Net Change in Fund Balance - General Fund	\$ 276,152
Adjustment for Difference in Capital Outlays and Depreciation - Governmental funds report capital outlays as expenditures while in the Statement of Activities, the costs of those assets are allocated over their estimated useful lives as depreciation expense. An adjustment is required for depreciation expense of \$35,363 in the current period.	(35,363)
Adjustment for Difference in Pension Expense - Governmental funds report pension expenditures based on required contributions, while in the Statement of Activities pension expense is reported based on the change in net pension liability and amortization of deferred inflows and outflows.	<u>25,305</u>
Change in Net Position of Governmental Activities	<u>\$ 266,094</u>

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)** **SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

### **NOTE 7 - PENSION PLAN**

The Ruston City Judge's Office provides retirement benefits to some court employees through a cost sharing multiple-employer defined benefit pension plan administered by the Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System (LASERS). Section 401 of Title 11 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes (La. R.S. 11:401) grants to LASERS Board of Trustees and the Louisiana Legislature the authority to review administration, benefit terms, investments, and funding of the plan. The retirement system issues a publicly available financial report. That report may be obtained by writing to Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System, 8401 United Plaza Boulevard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809, by calling 1-800-256-3000, or at [www.lasersonline.org](http://www.lasersonline.org).

#### **General Information about the Pension Plan**

##### ***Benefits Provided***

The following is a description of the plan and its benefits and is provided for general information purposes only. Participants should refer to the appropriate statutes for more complete information.

##### ***1. Retirement Benefits***

The age and years of creditable service required in order for a member to retire with full benefits are established by statute, and vary depending on the member's hire date, employer, and job classification. The majority of LASERS rank and file members hired prior to July 1, 2006, may either retire with full benefits at any age upon completing 30 years of creditable service, at age 55 upon completing 25 years of creditable service, and at age 60 upon completing ten years of creditable service depending on their plan. Those members hired between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2015, may retire at age 60 upon completing five years of creditable service and those hired on or after July 1, 2015 may retire at age 62 upon completing five years of creditable service. The basic annual retirement benefit for members is equal to 2.5% to 3.5% of average compensation multiplied by the number of years of creditable service. Additionally, members may choose to retire with 20 years of service at any age, with an actuarially reduced benefit.

Average compensation is defined as the member's average annual earned compensation for the highest 36 consecutive months of employment for members employed prior to July 1, 2006. For members hired July 1, 2006 or later, average compensation is based on the member's average annual earned compensation for the highest 60 consecutive months of employment. The maximum annual retirement benefit cannot exceed the lesser of 100% of average compensation or a certain specified dollar amount of actuarially determined monetary limits, which vary depending upon the member's age at retirement. Judges, court officers, and certain elected officials receive an additional annual retirement benefit equal to 1.0% of average compensation multiplied by the number of years of creditable service in their respective capacity. As an alternative to the basic retirement benefits, a member may elect to receive their retirement throughout their life, with certain benefits being paid to their designated beneficiary after their death.

Act 992 of the 2010 Louisiana Regular Legislative Session, changed the benefit structure for LASERS members hired on or after January 1, 2011. This resulted in three new plans: regular, hazardous duty, and judges. The new regular plan includes regular members and those members who were formerly eligible to participate in specialty plans, excluding hazardous duty and judges. Regular members and judges are eligible to retire at age 60 after five years of creditable service and, may also retire at any age, with a reduced benefit, after 20 years of creditable service. Hazardous duty members are eligible to retire with twelve years of creditable service at age 55, 25 years of creditable service at any age or with a reduced benefit after 20 years of creditable service. Average compensation will be based on the member's average annual earned compensation for the highest 60 consecutive months of employment for all three new plans.

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)** **SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

### **NOTE 7 - PENSION PLAN (CONTINUED)**

Members in the regular plan will receive a 2.5% accrual rate, hazardous duty plan a 3.33% accrual rate, and judges a 3.5% accrual rate. The extra 1.0% accrual rate for each year of service for court officers, the governor, lieutenant governor, legislators, House clerk, sergeants at arms, or Senate secretary, employed after January 1, 2011, was eliminated by Act 992. Specialty plan and regular members, hired prior to January 1, 2011, who are hazardous duty employees have the option to transition to the new hazardous duty plan.

Act 226 of the 2014 Louisiana Regular Legislative Session established new retirement eligibility for members of LASERS hired on or after July 1, 2015, excluding hazardous duty plan members. Regular members and judges under the new plan are eligible to retire at age 62 after five years of creditable service and, may also retire at any age, with a reduced benefit, after 20 years of creditable service. Average compensation will be based on the member's average annual earned compensation for the highest 60 consecutive months of employment. Members in the regular plan will receive a 2.5% accrual rate, and judges a 3.5% accrual rate, with the extra 1.0% accrual rate based on all years of service as a judge.

A member leaving employment before attaining minimum retirement age, but after completing certain minimum service requirements, becomes eligible for a benefit provided the member lives to the minimum service retirement age, and does not withdraw their accumulated contributions. The minimum service requirement for benefits varies depending upon the member's employer and service classification.

#### **2. *Deferred Benefits***

The State Legislature authorized LASERS to establish a Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP). When a member enters DROP, their status changes from active member to retiree even though they continue to work and draw their salary for a period of up to three years. The election is irrevocable once participation begins. During DROP participation, accumulated retirement benefits that would have been paid to each retiree are separately tracked. For members who entered DROP prior to January 1, 2004, interest at a rate of one-half percent less than the System's realized return on its portfolio (not to be less than zero) will be credited to the retiree after participation ends. At that time, the member must choose among available alternatives for the distribution of benefits that have accumulated in the DROP account. Members who enter DROP on or after January 1, 2004, are required to participate in LASERS Self-Directed Plan (SDP) which is administered by a third-party provider. The SDP allows DROP participants to choose from a menu of investment options for the allocation of their DROP balances. Participants may diversify their investments by choosing from an approved list of mutual funds with different holdings, management styles, and risk factors.

Members eligible to retire and who do not choose to participate in DROP may elect to receive at the time of retirement an initial benefit option (IBO) in an amount up to 36 months of benefits, with an actuarial reduction of their future benefits. For members who selected the IBO option prior to January 1, 2004, such amount may be withdrawn or remain in the IBO account earning interest at a rate of one-half percent less than the System's realized return on its portfolio (not to be less than zero). Those members who select the IBO on or after January 1, 2004, are required to enter the SDP as described above.

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)** **SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

### **NOTE 7 - PENSION PLAN (CONTINUED)**

#### **3. Disability Benefits**

Generally, active members with ten or more years of credited service who become disabled may receive a maximum disability retirement benefit equivalent to the regular retirement formula without reduction by reason of age.

Upon reaching retirement age, the disability retiree may receive a regular retirement benefit by making application to the Board of Trustees.

For injuries sustained in the line of duty, hazardous duty personnel in the Hazardous Duty Services Plan will receive a disability benefit equal to 75% of final average compensation or 100% of final average compensation, if the injury was the result of an intentional act of violence.

#### **4. Survivor's Benefits**

Certain eligible surviving dependents receive benefits based on the deceased member's compensation and their relationship to the deceased. The deceased regular member hired before January 1, 2011 who was in state service at the time of death must have a minimum of five years of service credit, at least two of which were earned immediately prior to death, or who had a minimum of twenty years of service credit regardless of when earned in order for a benefit to be paid to a minor or handicapped child. Benefits are payable to an unmarried child until age 18, or age 23 if the child remains a full-time student. The aforementioned minimum service credit requirement is ten years for a surviving spouse with no minor children, and benefits are to be paid for life to the spouse or qualified handicapped child.

The deceased regular member hired on or after January 1, 2011, must have a minimum of five years of service credit regardless of when earned in order for a benefit to be paid to a minor child. The aforementioned minimum service credit requirements for a surviving spouse are 10 years, 2 years being earned immediately prior to death, and active state service at the time of death, or a minimum of 20 years of service credit regardless of when earned. A deceased member's spouse must have been married for at least one year before death.

#### **5. Cost-of-Living Adjustments**

As fully described in Title 11 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes, the System allows for the payment of cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), that are funded through investment earnings when recommended by the Board of Trustees and approved by the State Legislature.

#### **Contributions**

Contribution requirements of active employees are governed by Section 401 of Title 11 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes (La. R.S. 11:401) and may be amended by the Louisiana Legislature. Employer contributions and employee contributions deducted from a member's salary are remitted to LASERS by participating employers. The rates in effect during the year ended June 30, 2024 for the various plans follow:



# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

### NOTE 7 - PENSION PLAN (CONTINUED)

Plan	Plan Status	Employee Rate	Employer Rate
Appellate Law Clerks	Closed	7.50 %	41.30 %
Appellate Law Clerks hired on or after 7/1/06	Closed	8.00 %	41.30 %
Alcohol Tobacco Control	Closed	9.00 %	42.60 %
Bridge Police	Closed	8.50 %	40.30 %
Bridge Police hired on or after 7/01/06	Closed	8.50 %	40.30 %
Corrections Primary	Closed	9.00 %	39.90 %
Corrections Secondary	Closed	9.00 %	44.60 %
Harbor Police	Closed	9.00 %	47.30 %
Hazardous Duty	Open	9.50 %	47.00 %
Judges hired before 1/01/11	Closed	11.50 %	45.80 %
Judges hired after 12/31/10	Closed	13.00 %	44.70 %
Judges hired on or after 7/1/15	Open	13.00 %	44.70 %
Legislators	Closed	11.50 %	37.00 %
Optional Retirement Plan before 7/1/06	Closed	7.50 %	41.30 %
Optional Retirement Plan on or after 7/1/06	Closed	8.00 %	41.30 %
Peace Officers	Closed	9.00 %	43.00 %
Regular Employees hired before 7/01/06	Closed	7.50 %	41.30 %
Regular Employees hired on or after 7/01/06	Closed	8.00 %	41.30 %
Regular Employees hired on or after 1/01/11	Closed	8.00 %	41.30 %
Regular Employees hired on or after 7/01/15	Open	8.00 %	41.30 %
Special Legislative Employees	Closed	9.50 %	39.00 %
Wildlife Agents	Closed	9.50 %	53.10 %

The Ruston City Judge's Office's contractually required composite contribution rate for the pension plan year ended June 30, 2025 and 2024 was 40.17% and 45.8%, respectively, of annual covered payroll, actuarially determined as an amount that, when combined with employee contributions, is expected to finance the costs of benefits earned by employees during the year, with an additional amount to finance any Unfunded Actuarial Accrued Liability. Contributions to the pension plan from the the Ruston City Judge's Office were \$43,659 for the year ended September 30, 2024.

#### **Pension Liabilities, Pension Expense, and Deferred Outflows of Resources and Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to Pensions**

At September 30, 2024, the Employer reported a liability of \$233,191 for its proportionate share of the Net Pension Liability. The Net Pension Liability was measured as of June 30, 2024 and the total pension liability used to calculate the Net Pension Liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of that date. The Ruston City Judge's Office's proportion of the Net Pension Liability was based on a projection of the Judge's Office's long-term share of contributions to the pension plan relative to the projected contributions of all participating employers, actuarially determined. At June 30, 2024, the Ruston City Judge's Office's proportion was 0.00429%, which was a decrease of 0.00007% from its proportion measured as of June 30, 2023.

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

### NOTE 7 - PENSION PLAN (CONTINUED)

For the year ended September 30, 2024, the the Ruston City Judge's Office recognized pension expense of \$23,956 less employer's amortization of change in proportionate share and differences between employer contributions and proportionate share of contributions of \$5,602.

At September 30, 2024, the Ruston City Judge's Office reported deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions from the following sources:

	Deferred Outflows of Resources	Deferred Inflows of Resources
Differences between expected and actual experience	\$ 0	\$ 1,031
Changes of assumptions	1,630	0
Net difference between projected and actual earnings on pension plan investments	0	27,803
Change in proportion and differences between Employer contributions and proportionate share of contributions	1,305	11,054
Employer contributions subsequent to the measurement date	12,985	0
Total	\$ <u>15,920</u>	\$ <u>39,888</u>

The Ruston City Judge's Office is reporting \$12,985 as deferred outflows of resources related to pensions resulting from their contributions subsequent to the measurement date which will be recognized as a reduction of the Net Pension Liability in the year ended September 30, 2025. Other amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions will be recognized in pension expense as follows:

#### Year Ended September 30:

2025	\$ (24,141)
2026	\$ 4,857
2027	\$ (10,716)
2028	\$ (6,953)

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

### NOTE 7 - PENSION PLAN (CONTINUED)

#### **Actuarial Assumptions**

A summary of the actuarial methods and assumptions used in determining the total pension liability as of June 30, 2024 are as follows:

<b>Valuation Date</b>	June 30, 2024
<b>Actuarial Cost Method</b>	Entry Age Normal
<b>Actuarial Assumptions:</b>	
<b>Expected Remaining Service Lives</b>	2 years
<b>Investment Rate of Return</b>	7.25% per annum, net of investment expenses*
<b>Inflation Rate</b>	2.4% per annum
<b>Mortality</b>	<b>Non-disabled members</b> - The PubG-2010 Healthy Retiree on a fully generational basis by Mortality Improvement Scale MP-2021.  <b>Disabled members</b> - Mortality rates based on the RP-2000 Disabled Retiree Mortality Table, with no projection for mortality improvement.
<b>Termination, Disability, and Retirement</b>	Termination, disability, and retirement assumptions were projected based on a five-year (2019-2023) experience study of the System's members.
<b>Salary Increases</b>	Salary increases were projected based on a 2019-2023 experience study of the System's members. The salary increase ranges for specific types of members are:

<u>Member Type</u>	<u>Lower Range</u>	<u>Upper Range</u>
Regular	3.3 %	14.0 %
Judges	2.4 %	4.8 %
Corrections	4.4 %	15.3 %
Hazardous Duty	4.4 %	15.3 %
Wildlife	4.4 %	15.3 %

#### **Cost of Living Adjustments**

The present value of future retirement benefits is based on benefits currently being paid by the System and includes previously granted cost of living increases. The projected benefit payments do not include provisions for potential future increases not yet authorized by the Board of Trustees as they were deemed not to be substantively automatic.

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

### NOTE 7 - PENSION PLAN (CONTINUED)

The long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was determined using a building-block method in which best-estimate ranges of expected future real rates of return (expected returns, net of pension plan investment expense and inflation) are developed for each major asset class. These ranges are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and by adding expected inflation of 2.4% and an adjustment for the effect of rebalancing/diversification. The resulting expected long-term rate of return is 8.15% for 2024. Best estimates of geometric real rates of return for each major asset class included in the pension plan's target asset allocation as of June 30, 2024 are summarized in the following table:

Asset Class	Target Allocation <sup>1</sup>	Expected Long Term Real Rates of Return <sup>1</sup>
Cash	0 %	0.76 %
Domestic equity	34 %	4.29 %
International equity	17 %	5.22 %
Domestic Fixed Income	3 %	2.04 %
International Fixed Income	19 %	5.24 %
Alternative Investments	27 %	8.19 %
Risk Parity	0 %	N/A %
Total Fund	100 %	5.61 %

<sup>1</sup> For reference only: Target Allocation presented in LASERS 2024 ACFR, page 54, and Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return, page 30.

#### **Discount Rate**

The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 7.25%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that employee contributions will be made at the current contribution rate and that contributions from participating employers will be made at actuarially determined rates approved by PRSAC, taking into consideration the recommendation of the pension plan's actuary. Based on those assumptions, the pension plan's fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments of current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability.

#### **Sensitivity of the Employer's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate**

The following presents the Employer's proportionate share of the Net Pension Liability using the discount rate of 7.25%, as well as what the Employer's proportionate share of the Net Pension Liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage-point lower (6.25%) or one percentage-point higher (8.25%) than the current rate:

	1.0% Decrease (6.25%)	Current Discount Rate (7.25%)	1.0% Increase (8.25%)
Employer's proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 322,030	\$ 233,191	\$ 157,698

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)** **SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

### **NOTE 7 - PENSION PLAN (CONTINUED)**

#### ***Pension Plan Fiduciary Net Position***

Detailed information about the pension plan's fiduciary net position is available in the separately issued current LASERS Comprehensive Annual Financial Report at [www.lasersonline.org](http://www.lasersonline.org).

#### **Payables to the Pension Plan**

As of September 30, 2024, the Ruston City Judge's Office recorded a payable to LASERS of \$3,845 for the required monthly contribution that was made after year end.

### **NOTE 8 - ON-BEHALF PAYMENTS**

Employees of the Ruston City Judge's Office received salaries and fringe benefits from the City of Ruston and the State of Louisiana. The following is a summary of these on-behalf payments:

Salaries	\$ 381,998
Fringe Benefits	<u>175,747</u>
Totals	<u>\$ 557,745</u>

Fringe benefits paid by the City of Ruston and the State of Louisiana include pension plan contributions to the Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System. The City of Ruston also makes pension plan contributions to the Municipal Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana.

**REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**  
**Budgetary Analysis**

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## SCHEDULE OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES-- BUDGET (GAAP BASIS) AND ACTUAL--GENERAL FUND FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

	Budgeted Amounts (GAAP Basis)		Actual (GAAP Basis)	Variance with Final Budget Favorable (Unfavorable)
	Original	Final	Amounts	
<b>REVENUES</b>				
Court Costs and Fees	\$ 380,000	\$ 426,000	\$ 402,777	\$ (23,223)
On-Behalf Revenue	499,800	499,800	557,745	57,945
Miscellaneous	8,800	6,700	6,221	(479)
Interest Income	6,000	142,461	138,892	(3,569)
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<u>894,600</u>	<u>1,074,961</u>	<u>1,105,635</u>	<u>30,674</u>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
Capital Outlay--Equipment	26,000	0	0	0
Accounting Fees	30,000	21,000	19,152	1,848
Auto Expense	300	0	0	0
Continuing Education	3,000	2,500	2,478	22
Contract Services	5,000	4,300	4,216	84
Dues and Subscriptions	2,400	2,000	1,952	48
Insurance	4,000	3,700	3,328	372
Judge Ad Hoc	1,000	1,000	1,000	0
Library Expense	13,000	13,700	12,587	1,113
Miscellaneous	1,700	2,170	22,455	(20,285)
Office Expense	45,500	43,500	43,946	(446)
On-Behalf Expenses	499,800	499,800	557,745	(57,945)
Pension Expense	38,000	45,500	43,659	1,841
Repairs and Maintenance	3,100	0	161	(161)
Salaries	79,000	122,000	97,196	24,804
Taxes	7,200	8,900	8,876	24
Travel	15,000	10,800	10,732	68
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<u>774,000</u>	<u>780,870</u>	<u>829,483</u>	<u>(48,613)</u>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES</b>	120,600	294,091	276,152	(17,939)
<b>FUND BALANCE--BEGINNING</b>	<u>2,104,284</u>	<u>1,967,616</u>	<u>2,120,314</u>	<u>152,698</u>
<b>FUND BALANCE--ENDING</b>	<u>\$ 2,224,884</u>	<u>\$ 2,261,707</u>	<u>\$ 2,396,466</u>	<u>\$ 134,759</u>

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

## SCHEDULE OF EMPLOYER'S PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE NET PENSION LIABILITY

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Employer's Proportion of the Net Pension Liability</u>	<u>Employer's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability</u>	<u>Employer's Covered Payroll</u>	<u>Employer's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability as a Percentage of its Covered Payroll</u>	<u>Plan Fiduciary Net Position as a Percentage of the Total Pension Liability</u>
Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System					
2024	0.00429 %	\$ 233,191	\$ 89,300	261.13 %	74.60 %
2023	0.00436 %	292,039	82,800	352.70 %	68.40 %
2022	0.00432 %	326,278	78,037	418.11 %	63.70 %
2021	0.00421 %	231,607	73,564	314.84 %	72.80 %
2020	0.00375 %	309,902	74,538	415.76 %	58.00 %
2019	0.00392 %	284,290	70,574	402.83 %	62.90 %
2018	0.00390 %	265,773	71,022	374.21 %	64.30 %
2017	0.00387 %	272,332	69,321	392.86 %	62.50 %
2016	0.00385 %	302,245	68,184	443.28 %	57.70 %
2015	0.00357 %	242,610	66,369	365.55 %	62.70 %

**Notes:**

The amounts presented for each fiscal year were determined as of a June 30th measurement date prior to the fiscal year end.



# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

## SCHEDULE OF EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS TO PENSION PLANS

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Contractually Required Contribution</u>	<u>Contributions in Relation to Contractually Required Contribution</u>	<u>Contribution Deficiency (Excess)</u>	<u>Employer's Covered Payroll</u>	<u>Contributions as a % of Covered Payroll</u>
Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System					
2024	\$ 43,659	\$ 43,659	\$ 0	\$ 99,300	43.97 %
2023	38,046	38,046	0	84,425	45.06 %
2022	34,592	34,592	0	78,637	43.99 %
2021	32,169	32,169	0	75,124	42.82 %
2020	31,543	31,543	0	74,349	42.43 %
2019	29,095	29,095	0	71,483	40.70 %
2018	28,583	28,583	0	71,280	40.10 %
2017	26,907	26,907	0	69,837	38.53 %
2016	25,961	25,961	0	68,184	38.07 %
2015	27,095	27,095	0	66,687	40.88 %

**Notes:**

The amounts presented were determined as of the end of the fiscal year end.

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **NOTES TO REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FOR PENSIONS FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

### **Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System**

#### **1. Schedule of Employer's Share of Net Pension Liability**

This schedule reflects the participation of Ruston City Judge's Office employees in LASERS and its proportionate share of the net pension liability as a percentage of its covered employee payroll, and the plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total pension liability.

#### **2. Schedule of Employer's Contributions**

This schedule represents the employer contributions subsequent to the measurement date and recognized as a reduction of the net pension liability in future years.

#### **3. Changes in Benefits Terms**

Act 656 of 2022 for 2022

Act 37 of 2021 for 2021

Act 224 and 595 of 2018 for 2019 and 2018

Act 648 of 2014 for 2016

#### **4. Changes in Actuarial Assumptions for Net Pension Liability**

The following is a list of changes in actuarial assumptions:

Investment Rate of Return	7.25% per annum for 2024, 2023, and 2022
	7.40% per annum for 2021
	7.55% per annum for 2020
	7.60% per annum for 2019
	7.65% per annum for 2018
	7.70% per annum for 2017
	7.75% per annum for 2016 and 2015
Inflation Rate	2.40% per annum for 2024
	2.30% per annum for 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020
	2.50% per annum for 2019
	2.75% per annum for 2018 and 2017
	3.00% per annum for 2016 and 2015
Mortality/Disability	2019-2023 Experience Study for 2024
	2014-2018 Experience Study for 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020 and 2019
	2009-2013 Experience Study for 2018, 2017, 2016, and 2015

## **OTHER REPORTS AND SCHEDULES**

**DON M. MCGEHEE**

*(A Professional Accounting Corporation)*

P.O. Box 1344

205 E. Reynolds Dr., Suite A  
Ruston, Louisiana 71273-1344

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER  
FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS  
BASED ON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS**

Honorable Danny Tatum  
Ruston City Judge's Office  
P.O. Box 1821  
Ruston, LA 71273-1821

I have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Ruston City Judge's Office, a component unit of the City of Ruston, as of and for the year ended September 30, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Ruston City Judge's Office's basic financial statements and have issued my report thereon dated March 29, 2025.

**Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting**

In planning and performing my audit of the financial statements, I considered the Ruston City Judge's Office's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing my opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Ruston City Judge's Office's internal control. Accordingly, I do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Ruston City Judge's Office's internal control.

*A deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. *A material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented or detected and corrected on a timely basis. *A significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

My consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. I identified certain deficiencies in internal control, described in the accompanying schedule of findings and questioned costs as #2024-1 that I consider to be a material weakness.

### **Report on Compliance and Other Matters**

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Ruston City Judge's Office's financial statements are free from material misstatement, I performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of my audit and, accordingly, I do not express such an opinion. The results of my tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matter required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards.

### **Ruston City Judge's Office's Response to Findings**

*Government Auditing Standards* requires the auditor to perform limited procedures on the Ruston City Judge's Office's response to the findings identified in my audit and described in the accompanying schedule of findings and questioned costs. The Ruston City Judge's Office's response was not subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and, accordingly, I express no opinion on the response.

### **Purpose of this Report**

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of my testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.



Don M. McGehee  
Certified Public Accountant  
March 29, 2025

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

I have audited the financial statements of the Ruston City Judge's Office as of and for the year ended September 30, 2024, and have issued my report thereon dated March 29, 2025. I conducted my audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. My audit of the financial statements, as of September 30, 2024, resulted in an unqualified opinion.

### Section I Summary of Auditor's Reports

#### Report on Internal Control and Compliance Material to the Financial Statements

##### Internal Control

Material Weaknesses ☒ Yes ☐ No      Significant Deficiencies ☐ Yes ☒ No

##### Compliance

Compliance Material to Financial Statements ☐ Yes ☒ No

Was a management letter issued? ☐ Yes ☒ No

### Section II Financial Statement Findings

**Finding #2024-1. Segregation of Duties.** The Ruston City Judge's Office has too few personnel involved in the accounting system to have adequate segregation of duties for internal control.

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **MANAGEMENT'S CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

### **SECTION I INTERNAL CONTROL AND COMPLIANCE MATERIAL TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

**Finding #2024-1. Segregation of Duties.** The Judge's Office is required to design internal controls with proper segregation of duties to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements in the accounting system. The Judge's Office has inadequate segregation of duties, because there are too few personnel involved in the accounting system. The financial statements could have a misstatement that would not be prevented, or detected and corrected. Recommend that the Judge's Office involve more personnel in the accounting system to allow for adequate segregation of duties.

**Response:** *The Judge's Office has an accounting workload that can be easily managed by one employee. Hiring or involving additional employees in the accounting system to provide enhanced internal control does not appear as a practical and best use of current resources.*

### **SECTION II MANAGEMENT LETTER**

No management letter issued.

# **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

## **SCHEDULE OF PRIOR YEAR FINDINGS FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

### **SECTION I INTERNAL CONTROL AND COMPLIANCE MATERIAL TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

**Finding #2023-1. Segregation of Duties.** Too few personnel involved in the accounting system to have adequate segregation of duties for internal control.

**Status:** Unresolved. See Finding #2024-1.



## **RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

### **SCHEDULE OF COMPENSATION, BENEFITS AND OTHER PAYMENTS TO THE RUSTON CITY COURT JUDGE FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

#### **Ruston City Court Judge Danny Tatum:**

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Salary paid by Civil Fees	\$ 99,300
Salary paid On-Behalf	90,820
Benefits-Retirement	38,046
Benefits-Retirement paid On-Behalf	40,664
Travel-Per Diem Allowance	665
Travel-Mileage	928
Travel-Lodging	3,898
Continuing Professional Education Fees	1,600
Dues	750

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## SCHEDULE OF JUSTICE SYSTEM FUNDING - RECEIVING FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

As Required by Act 87 of the 2020 Regular Legislative Session

	First Six Month Period <u>Ended 03/31/24</u>	Second Six Month Period <u>Ended 9/30/24</u>
<b>Receipts From:</b>		
Ruston City Marshal, Criminal Court Costs/Fees	\$ 74,280	\$ 64,861
Louisiana Department of Public Safety, Criminal Court Costs/Fees	1,225	1,200
Lincoln Parish Sheriff, Bond Fees	<u>530</u>	<u>602</u>
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$ <u>76,035</u></b>	<b>\$ <u>66,663</u></b>
 <b>Ending Balance of Amounts Assessed but Not Received</b>	 <b>\$ <u>0</u></b>	 <b>\$ <u>3,727</u></b>

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## SCHEDULE OF JUSTICE SYSTEM FUNDING - COLLECTING/DISBURSING FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

As Required by Act 87 of the 2020 Regular Legislative Session

	First Six Month Period <u>Ended 03/31/24</u>	Second Six Month Period <u>Ended 09/30/24</u>
<b>Beginning Balance of Amounts Collected</b>	\$1,609,749	\$1,705,479
<b>Add: Collections</b>		
Civil Fees	197,798	166,603
Criminal Fees - Contempt	63,575	60,600
Probation/Parole/Supervision Fees	63,433	35,978
Interest Earnings on Collected Balances	33,894	33,929
Other	<u>2,500</u>	<u>2,750</u>
<b>Subtotal Collections</b>	<u>361,200</u>	<u>299,860</u>
<b>Less: Disbursements to Governments and Nonprofits</b>		
Ruston City Marshal, Civil Fees	44,408	44,343
Louisiana State Treasurer, Civil Fees	17,582	14,106
Louisiana Attorney General, Civil Fees	45	30
Louisiana Supreme Court, Civil Fees	298	235
Bienville Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	259	466
Bossier Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	180	321
Bossier City Marshal, Civil Fees	0	110
Caddo Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	409	90
Calcasieu Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	0	20
Claiborne Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	281	569
East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	927	2,589
Franklin Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	42	0
Grant Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	50	0
Jackson Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	369	965
Lasalle Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	0	77
Livingston Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	43	0
Morehouse Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	60	30
Natchitoches Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	0	39
Orleans Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	0	60
Ouachita Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	1,256	1,298
Rapides Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	31	34
Richland Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	0	42
St. Mary Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	0	66
St. Tammany Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	36	71
Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	0	31
Terrebonne Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	0	81
Union Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	718	1,082
West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	35	0
Winn Parish Sheriff, Civil Fees	0	50

# RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE

## SCHEDULE OF JUSTICE SYSTEM FUNDING - COLLECTING/DISBURSING FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024 (CONTINUED)

As Required by Act 87 of the 2020 Regular Legislative Session

	First Six Month Period <u>Ended 03/31/24</u>	Second Six Month Period <u>Ended 09/30/24</u>
<b>Less: Amounts Retained by Collecting Agency</b>		
Collection Fee for Collecting/Disbursing to Others Based on Percentage of Collections	0	0
Collection Fee for Collecting/Disbursing to Others Based on Fixed Amounts	0	0
Amounts "Self-Disbursed" to Collecting Agency		
Civil Fees	56,242	66,716
Criminal Court Costs Fees	129,508	99,328
Other	57	0
<b>Less: Disbursements to Individuals/3rd Party Collection or Processing Agencies</b>		
Civil Fee Refunds	12,634	27,342
Other Disbursements to Individuals	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Subtotal Disbursements/Retainage</b>	<u>265,470</u>	<u>260,191</u>
<b>Total: Ending Balance of Amounts Collected but not Disbursed/Retained</b>	<u>\$1,705,479</u>	<u>\$1,745,148</u>
<b>Ending Balance of "Partial Payments" Collected but not Disbursed</b>	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>

### Other Information:

Ending Balance of Total Amounts Assessed but not yet Collected	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>
Total Waivers During the Fiscal Period	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>

**RUSTON CITY JUDGE'S OFFICE**

**STATEWIDE AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES**

**SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

# DON M. MCGEHEE

(A Professional Accounting Corporation)

P.O. Box 1344

205 E. Reynolds Dr., Suite A

Ruston, Louisiana 71273-1344

## INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES

Honorable Danny Tatum of the  
Ruston City Judge's Office  
and the Louisiana Legislative Auditor:

I have performed the procedures enumerated below on the control and compliance (C/C) areas identified in the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's (LLA's) Statewide Agreed-Upon Procedures (SAUPs) for the fiscal period October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024. The Ruston City Judge's Office's management is responsible for those C/C areas identified in the SAUPs.

The Ruston City Judge's Office has agreed to and acknowledged that the procedures performed are appropriate to meet the intended purpose of the engagement, which is to perform specified procedures on the C/C areas identified in the LLA's SAUPs for the fiscal period October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024. Additionally, LLA has agreed to and acknowledged that the procedures performed are appropriate for its purposes. This report may not be suitable for any other purpose. The procedures performed may not address all the items of interest to a user of this report and may not meet the needs of all users of this report and, as such, users are responsible for determining whether the procedures performed are appropriate for their purposes.

The procedures and associated findings are as follows:

### **1) Written Policies and Procedures**

A. Obtain and inspect the entity's written policies and procedures and observe whether they address each of the following categories and subcategories if applicable to public funds and the entity's operations:

- i. **Budgeting**, including preparing, adopting, monitoring, and amending the budget:

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- ii. **Purchasing**, including (1) how purchases are initiated, (2) how vendors are added to the vendor list, (3) the preparation and approval process of purchase requisitions and purchase orders, (4) controls to ensure compliance with the Public Bid Law, and (5) documentation required to be maintained for all bids and price quotes.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iii. **Disbursements**, including processing, reviewing, and approving.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iv. **Receipts/Collections**, including receiving, recording, and preparing deposits. Also, policies and procedures should include management's actions to determine the completeness of all collections for each type of revenue or agency fund additions (e.g., periodic confirmation with outside parties, reconciliation to utility billing after cutoff procedures, reconciliation of traffic ticket number sequences, agency fund forfeiture monies confirmation).

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- v. **Payroll/Personnel**, including (1) payroll processing, (2) reviewing and approving time and attendance records, including leave and overtime worked, and (3) approval process for employee rates of pay or approval and maintenance of pay rate schedules.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- vi. **Contracting**, including (1) types of services requiring written contracts, (2) standard terms and conditions, (3) legal review, (4) approval process, and (5) monitoring process.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- vii. **Travel and Expense Reimbursement**, including (1) allowable expenses, (2) dollar thresholds by category of expense, (3) documentation requirements, and (4) required approvers.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- viii. **Credit Cards (and debit cards, fuel cards, purchase cards, if applicable)**, including (1) how cards are to be controlled, (2) allowable business uses, (3) documentation requirements, (4) required approvers of statements, and (5) monitoring card usage (e.g., determining the reasonableness of fuel card purchases).

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- ix. **Ethics**, including (1) the prohibitions as defined in Louisiana Revised Statute (R.S.) 42:1111-1121, (2) actions to be taken if an ethics violation takes place, (3) system to monitor possible ethics violations, and (4) a requirement that documentation is maintained to demonstrate that all employees and officials were notified of any changes to the entity's ethics policy.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- x. **Debt Service**, including (1) debt issuance approval, (2) continuing disclosure/EMMA reporting requirements, (3) debt reserve requirements, and (4) debt service requirements.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- xi. **Information Technology Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity**, including (1) identification of critical data and frequency of data backups, (2) storage of backups in a separate physical location isolated from the network, (3) periodic testing/verification that backups can be restored, (4) use of antivirus software on all systems, (5) timely application of all available system and software patches/updates, and (6) identification of personnel, processes, and tools needed to recover operations after a critical event.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- xii. **Prevention of Sexual Harassment**, including R.S. 42:342-344 requirements for (1) agency responsibilities and prohibitions, (2) annual employee training, and (3) annual reporting.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

## **2) Board (or Finance Committee, if applicable)**

- A. Obtain and inspect the board/finance committee minutes for the fiscal period, as well as the board's enabling legislation, charter, bylaws, or equivalent document in effect during the fiscal period, and:

- i. Observe that the board/finance committee met with a quorum at least monthly, or on a frequency in accordance with the board's enabling legislation, charter, bylaws, or other equivalent document.

*Not applicable.*

- ii. For those entities reporting on the governmental accounting model, observe whether the minutes referenced or included monthly budget-to-actual comparisons on the general fund, quarterly budget-to-actual, at a minimum, on proprietary funds, and semi-annual budget-to-actual, at a minimum, on all special revenue funds.

*Not applicable.*

- iii. For governmental entities, obtain the prior year audit report and observe the unassigned fund balance in the general fund. If the general fund had a negative ending unassigned fund balance in the prior year audit report, observe that the minutes for at least one meeting during the fiscal period referenced or included a formal plan to eliminate the negative unassigned fund balance in the general fund.

*Not applicable.*

- iv. Observe whether the board/finance committee received written updates of the progress of resolving audit finding(s), according to management's corrective action plan at each meeting until the findings are considered fully resolved.

*Not applicable.*

### **3) Bank Reconciliations**

- A. Obtain a listing of entity bank accounts for the fiscal period from management and management's representation that the listing is complete. Ask management to identify the entity's main operating account. Select the entity's main operating account and randomly select 4 additional accounts (or all accounts if less than 5). Randomly select one month from the fiscal period, obtain and inspect the corresponding bank statement and reconciliation for each selected account, and observe that:

- i. Bank reconciliations include evidence that they were prepared within 2 months of the related statement closing date (e.g., initialed and dated or electronically logged);

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- ii. Bank reconciliations include written evidence that a member of management or a board member who does not handle cash, post ledgers, or issue checks has reviewed each bank reconciliation within one month of the date the reconciliation was prepared (e.g., initialed and dated, or electronically logged); and

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iii. Management has documentation reflecting that it has researched reconciling items that have been outstanding for more than 12 months from the statement closing date, if applicable.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

### **4) Collections (excluding electronic funds transfers)**

- A. Obtain a listing of deposit sites for the fiscal period where deposits for cash/checks/money orders (cash) are prepared and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select 5 deposit sites (or all deposit sites if less than 5).

*Management provided us with the required list and representation that it is complete.*



- B. For each deposit site selected, obtain a listing of collection locations and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select one collection location for each deposit site (e.g., 5 collection locations for 5 deposit sites), obtain and inspect written policies then inquire of employees about their job duties at each collection location, and observe that job duties are properly segregated at each collection location such that:

- i. Employees responsible for cash collections do not share cash drawers/registers;

*Everyone shares the same cash register or drawer with other employees.*

*Management's Response: Ruston City Judge's Office only has a very limited number of employees involved with cash collections each day. One cash drawer is used with each transaction supported by pre-numbered receipts. At least two employees reconcile the receipts and the cash drawer each day.*

- ii. Each employee responsible for collecting cash is not also responsible for preparing/making bank deposits, unless another employee/official is responsible for reconciling collection documentation (e.g., pre-numbered receipts) to the deposit;

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iii. Each employee responsible for collecting cash is not also responsible for posting collection entries to the general ledger or subsidiary ledgers, unless another employee/official is responsible for reconciling ledger postings to each other and to the deposit; and

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iv. The employee(s) responsible for reconciling cash collections to the general ledger and/or subsidiary ledgers, by revenue source and/or agency fund additions, is (are) not also responsible for collecting cash, unless another employee verifies the reconciliation.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- C. Obtain from management a copy of the bond or insurance policy for theft covering all employees who have access to cash. Observe that the bond or insurance policy for theft was enforced during the fiscal period.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- D. Randomly select two deposit dates for each of the 5 bank accounts selected for Bank Reconciliations procedure #3A (select the next deposit date chronologically if no deposits were made on the dates randomly selected and randomly select a deposit if multiple deposits are made on the same day). Obtain supporting documentation for each of the 10 deposits and:

- i. Observe that receipts are sequentially pre-numbered.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedures.*

- ii. Trace sequentially pre-numbered receipts, system reports, and other related collection documentation to the deposit slip.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iii. Trace the deposit slip total to the actual deposit per the bank statement.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iv. Observe that the deposit was made within one business day of receipt at the collection location (within one week if the depository is more than 10 miles from the collection location or the deposit is less than \$100 and the cash is stored securely in a locked safe or drawer).

*All of the deposits were made within one business day of receipt except three. These three were made within two business days of receipt.*

*Management's Response: The employee that usually makes the daily deposits was off from work the day the deposit was to be made, but made the deposit upon their return to work the next day.*

- v. Trace the actual deposit per the bank statement to the general ledger.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

**5) Non-Payroll Disbursements (excluding card purchases, travel reimbursements, and petty cash purchases)**

- A. Obtain a listing of locations that process payments for the fiscal period and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select 5 locations (or all locations if less than 5).

*Management provided us with the required list and representation that it is complete.*

- B. For each location selected under procedure #5A above, obtain a listing of those employees involved with non-payroll purchasing and payment functions. Obtain written policies and procedures relating to employee job duties (if the agency has no written policies and procedures, then inquire of employees about their job duties), and observe that job duties are properly segregated such that

- i. At least two employees are involved in initiating a purchase request, approving a purchase, and placing an order or making the purchase;

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- ii. At least two employees are involved in processing and approving payments to vendors;

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iii. The employee responsible for processing payments is prohibited from adding/modifying vendor files, unless another employee is responsible for periodically reviewing changes to vendor files;

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iv. Either the employee/official responsible for signing checks mails the payment or gives the signed checks to an employee to mail who is not responsible for processing payments; and

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- v. Only employees/officials authorized to sign checks approve the electronic disbursement (release) of funds, whether through automated clearinghouse (ACH), electronic funds transfer (EFT), wire transfer, or some other electronic means.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- C. For each location selected under procedure #5A above, obtain the entity's non-payroll disbursement transactions population (excluding cards and travel reimbursements) and obtain management's representation that the population is complete. Randomly select 5 disbursements for each location, obtain supporting documentation for each transaction and:

- i. Observe whether the disbursement, whether by paper or electronic means, matched the related original itemized invoice and supporting documentation indicates that deliverables included on the invoice were received by the entity, and

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- ii. Observe whether the disbursement documentation included evidence (e.g., initial/date, electronic logging) of segregation of duties tested under procedure #5B above, as applicable.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- D. Using the entity's main operating account and the month selected in Bank Reconciliations procedure #3A, randomly select 5 non-payroll-related electronic disbursements (or all electronic disbursements if less than 5) and observe that each electronic disbursement was (a) approved by only those persons authorized to disburse funds (e.g., sign checks) per the entity's policy, and (b) approved by the required number of authorized signers per the entity's policy. Note: If no electronic payments were made from the main operating account during the month selected the practitioner should select an alternative month and/or account for testing that does include electronic disbursements.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

#### **6) Credit Cards/Debit Cards/Fuel Cards/Purchase Cards (Cards)**

- A. Obtain from management a listing of all active credit cards, bank debit cards, fuel cards, and purchase cards (cards) for the fiscal period, including the card numbers and the names of the persons who maintained possession of the cards. Obtain management's representation that the listing is complete.

*Management provided us with the required list and representation that it is complete.*

- B. Using the listing prepared by management, randomly select 5 cards (or all cards if less than 5) that were used during the fiscal period. Randomly select one monthly statement or combined statement for each card (for a debit card, randomly select one monthly bank statement), obtain supporting documentation, and:

- i. Observe whether there is evidence that the monthly statement or combined statement and supporting documentation (e.g., original receipts for credit/debit card purchases, exception reports for excessive fuel card usage) were reviewed and approved, in writing (or electronically approved) by someone other than the authorized card holder; and

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- ii. Observe that finance charges and late fees were not assessed on the selected statements.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- C. Using the monthly statements or combined statements selected under procedure #7B above; excluding fuel cards, randomly select 10 transactions (or all transactions if less than 10) from each statement, and obtain supporting documentation for the transactions (e.g., each card should have 10 transactions subject to inspection). For each transaction, observe that it is supported by (1) an original itemized receipt that identifies precisely what was purchased, (2) written documentation of the business/public purpose, and (3) documentation of the individuals participating in meals (for meal charges only). For missing receipts, the practitioner should describe the nature of the transaction and observe whether management had a compensating control to address missing receipts, such as "missing receipt statement" that is subject to increased scrutiny.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

**7) Travel and Travel-Related Expense Reimbursements (excluding card transactions)**

A. Obtain from management a listing of all travel and travel-related expense reimbursements during the fiscal period and management's representation that the listing or general ledger is complete. Randomly select 5 reimbursements and obtain the related expense reimbursement forms/prepaid expense documentation of each selected reimbursement, as well as the supporting documentation. For each of the 5 reimbursements selected:

- i. If reimbursed using a per diem, observe that the approved reimbursement rate is no more than those rates established either by the State of Louisiana or the U.S. General Services Administration ([www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov));

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- ii. If reimbursed using actual costs, observe that the reimbursement is supported by an original itemized receipt that identifies precisely what was purchased;

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iii. Observe that each reimbursement is supported by documentation of the business/public purpose (for meal charges, observe that the documentation includes the names of those individuals participating) and other documentation required by Written Policies and Procedures procedure #1A(vii); and

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iv. Observe that each reimbursement was reviewed and approved, in writing, by someone other than the person receiving reimbursement.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

**8) Contracts**

A. Obtain from management a listing of all agreements/contracts for professional services, materials and supplies, leases, and construction activities that were initiated or renewed during the fiscal period. *Alternatively, the practitioner may use an equivalent selection source, such as an active vendor list.* Obtain management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select 5 contracts (or all contracts if less than 5) from the listing, excluding the practitioner's contract, and:

- i. Observe whether the contract was bid in accordance with the Louisiana Public Bid Law (e.g., solicited quotes or bids, advertised), if required by law;

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- ii. Observe whether the contract was approved by the governing body/board, if required by policy or law (e.g., Lawrason Act, Home Rule Charter);

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iii. If the contract was amended (e.g., change order), observe that the original contract terms provided for such an amendment and that amendments were made in compliance with the contract terms (e.g., if approval is required for any amendment, the documented approval); and

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iv. Randomly select one payment from the fiscal period for each of the 5 contracts, obtain the supporting invoice, agree the invoice to the contract terms, and observe that the invoice and related payment agreed to the terms and conditions of the contract.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

**9) Payroll and Personnel**

- A. Obtain a listing of employees and officials employed during the fiscal period and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select 5 employees or officials, obtain related paid salaries and personnel files, and agree paid salaries to authorized salaries/pay rates in the personnel files.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- B. Randomly select one pay period during the fiscal period. For the 5 employees or officials selected under procedure #9A above, obtain attendance records and leave documentation for the pay period, and:

- i. Observe that all selected employees or officials documented their daily attendance and leave (e.g., vacation, sick, compensatory);

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- ii. Observe whether supervisors approved the attendance and leave of the selected employee or officials;

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iii. Observe that any leave accrued or taken during the pay period is reflected in the entity's cumulative leave records; and

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iv. Observe that the rate paid to the employees or officials agree to the authorized salary/pay rate found within the personnel file.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- C. Obtain a listing of those employees/officials that received termination payments during the fiscal period and management's representation that the list is complete. Randomly select two employees or officials, obtain related documentation of the hours and pay rates used in management's termination payment calculations and the entity policy on termination payments. Agree the hours to the employee's or official's cumulative leave records, agree the pay rates to the employee's or official's authorized pay rates in the employee's or official's personnel files, and agree the termination payment to entity policy.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- D. Obtain management's representation that employer and employee portions of third-party payroll related amounts (e.g. payroll taxes, retirement contributions, health insurance premiums, garnishments, and workers' compensation premiums, etc.) have been paid, and any associated forms have been filed, by required deadlines.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

**10) Ethics**

A. Using the 5 randomly selected employees/officials from Payroll and Personnel procedure #9A, obtain ethics documentation from management, and

- i. Observe whether the documentation demonstrates that each employee/official completed one hour of ethics training during the calendar year as required by R.S. 42:1170; and

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- ii. Observe whether the entity maintains documentation which demonstrates that each employee and official were notified of any changes to the entity's ethics policy during the fiscal period, as applicable.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

B. Inquire and/or observe whether the agency has appointed an ethics designee as required by R.S. 42:1170.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

**11) Debt Service**

A. Obtain a listing of bonds/notes and other debt instruments issued during the fiscal period and management's representation that the listing is complete. Select all debt instruments on the listing, obtain supporting documentation, and observe that State Bond Commission approval was obtained for each debt instrument issued as required by Article VII, Section 8 of the Louisiana Constitution.

*Not applicable.*

B. Obtain a listing of bonds/notes outstanding at the end of the fiscal period and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select one bond/note, inspect debt covenants, obtain supporting documentation for the reserve balance and payments, and agree actual reserve balances and payments to those required by debt covenants (including contingency funds, short-lived asset funds, or other funds required by the debt covenants).

*Not applicable.*

**12) Fraud Notice**

A. Obtain a listing of misappropriations of public funds and assets during the fiscal period and management's representation that the listing is complete. Select all misappropriations on the listing, obtain supporting documentation, and observe that the entity reported the misappropriation(s) to the legislative auditor and the district attorney of the parish in which the entity is domiciled as required by R.S. 24:523.

*Not applicable.*

B. Observe that the entity has posted on its premises and website, the notice required by R.S. 24:523.1 concerning the reporting of misappropriation, fraud, waste, or abuse of public funds.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

**13) Information Technology Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity**

A. Perform the following procedures, verbally discuss the results with management, and report "We performed the procedure and discussed the results with management."

- i. Obtain and inspect the entity's most recent documentation that it has backed up its critical data (if no written documentation, inquire of personnel responsible for backing up critical data) and observe evidence that such backup (a) occurred within the past week, (b) was not stored on the government's local server or network, and (c) was encrypted.

*We performed the procedures and discussed the results with management.*

- ii. Obtain and inspect the entity's most recent documentation that it has tested/verified that its backups can be restored (if there is no written documentation, then inquire of personnel responsible for testing/verifying backup restoration) and observe evidence that the test/verification was successfully performed within the past 3 months.

*We performed the procedures and discussed the results with management.*

- iii. Obtain a listing of the entity's computers currently in use, and their related locations, and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select 5 computers and observe while management demonstrates that the selected computers have current and active antivirus software and that the operating system and accounting system software in use are currently supported by the vendor.

*We performed the procedures and discussed the results with management.*

B. Randomly select 5 terminated employees (or all terminated employees if less than 5) using the list of terminated employees obtained in procedure #9C. Observe evidence that the selected terminated employees have been removed or disabled from the network.

*We performed the procedures and discussed the results with management.*

C. Using the 5 randomly selected employees/officials from Payroll and Personnel procedure #9A, obtain cybersecurity training documentation from management, and observe the documentation demonstrates that the following employees/officials with access to the agency's information technology assets have completed cybersecurity training as required by R.S. 42:1267. The requirements are as follows:

- Hired before June 9, 2020 -- completed the training; and
- Hired on or after June 9, 2020 -- completed the training within 30 days of initial service or employment.

*We performed the procedures and discussed the results with management.*

**14) Prevention of Sexual Harassment**

A. Using the 5 randomly selected employees/officials from Payroll and Personnel procedure #9A, obtain sexual harassment training documentation from management, and observe that the documentation demonstrates each employee/official completed at least one hour of sexual harassment training during the calendar year as required by R.S. 42:343.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

B. Observe that the entity has posted its sexual harassment policy and complaint procedure on its website (or in a conspicuous location on the entity's premises if the entity does not have a website.)

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

C. Obtain the entity's annual sexual harassment report for the current fiscal period, observe that the report was dated on or before February 1, and observe that the report includes the applicable requirements of R.S. 42:344:

- i. Number and percentage of public servants in the agency who have completed the training requirements;

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- ii. Number of sexual harassment complaints received by the agency;

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iii. Number of complaints which resulted in a finding that sexual harassment occurred;

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- iv. Number of complaints in which the finding of sexual harassment resulted in discipline or corrective action; and

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

- v. Amount of time it took to resolve each complaint.

*No exceptions were found as a result of this procedure.*

I was engaged by the Ruston City Judge's Office to perform this agreed-upon procedures engagement and conducted my engagement in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and applicable standards of *Government Auditing Standards*. I was not engaged to and did not conduct an examination or review engagement, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion or conclusion, respectively, on those C/C areas identified in the SAUPs. Accordingly, I do not express such an opinion or conclusion. Had I performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to my attention that would have been reported to you.

I am required to be independent of the Ruston City Judge's Office and to meet my other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements related to my agreed-upon procedures engagement,

This report is intended solely to describe the scope of testing performed on those C/C areas identified in the SAUPs, and the result of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on control or compliance. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose. Under Louisiana Revised Statute 24:513, this report is distributed by the LLA as a public document.

  
Don M. McGehee  
Certified Public Accountant  
March 29, 2025