

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY

Hodge, Louisiana

Financial Statements

As of and for the Year Ended December 31, 2025

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY
Hodge, Louisiana
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As of and for the Year Ended December 31, 2025

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

**Board of Commissioners
Hodge Utility Operating Company
Hodge, Louisiana**

Opinions

We have audited the accompanying accrual basis financial statements of the enterprise fund of the **Hodge Utility Operating Company**, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2025, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Hodge Utility Operating Company's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the enterprise fund of the Hodge Utility Operating Company, as of December 31, 2025, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinions

We conducted our 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. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Hodge Utility Operating Company, and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Emphasis of Matter

As described in Note 1, the financial statements include a total column for financial analysis only and this is not in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. In addition, the total cost of the Combined Utility System of the Village of Hodge is underwritten by a publicly traded company, and depreciation is not reported on the financial statements. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

**Board of Commissioners
Hodge Utility Operating Company
Hodge, Louisiana**

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these 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 Hodge Utility Operating Company'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.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our 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 our 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, we:

- 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 Hodge Utility Operating Company's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

**Board of Commissioners
Hodge Utility Operating Company
Hodge, Louisiana**

- 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 our judgment, there are conditions or events considered in the aggregate that raise substantial doubt about the Hodge Utility Operating Company's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are 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 we identified during the audit.

Required Supplementary Information

Management has omitted the management's discussion and analysis that accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require to be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such missing information, 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 the financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. Our opinion on the basic financial statements is not affected by this missing information.

Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise the Hodge Utility Operating Company's basic financial statements. The Schedule of Compensation, Benefits, and Other Payments to Agency Head is presented for the purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the basic financial statements.

The Schedule of Compensation, Benefits, and Other Payments to Agency Head 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. Such 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 our opinion, the Schedule of Compensation, Benefits, and Other Payments to Agency Head is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the basic financial statements as a whole.

**Board of Commissioners
Hodge Utility Operating Company
Hodge, Louisiana**

Other Reporting Required by *Government Auditing Standards*

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued our report dated May 18, 2026, on our consideration of the Hodge Utility Operating Company's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on 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 Hodge Utility Operating Company's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Woodard & Associates

(A Professional Accounting Corporation)
Monroe, Louisiana

May 18, 2026

BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY

Hodge, Louisiana

Statement of Net Position

December 31, 2025

	Combined Utility System	Hodge Utility Operating Company	Total (Memorandum Only)
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Due from other funds	-	3,261,869	3,261,869
Total current assets	-	3,261,869	3,261,869
Restricted assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	32,149	-	32,149
Receivables - Hodge customers	26,450	-	26,450
Total restricted assets	58,599	-	58,599
Noncurrent assets			
Capital assets, net	186,235,244	-	186,235,244
Total noncurrent assets	186,235,244	-	186,235,244
Total assets	<u>\$ 186,293,843</u>	<u>\$ 3,261,869</u>	<u>\$ 189,555,712</u>
Liabilities			
Current liabilities (payable from current assets)			
Accounts payable	\$ -	\$ 3,261,869	\$ 3,261,869
Current liabilities (payable from restricted assets)			
Due to other funds	3,261,869	-	3,261,869
Total current liabilities	3,261,869	3,261,869	6,523,738
Total liabilities	<u>\$ 3,261,869</u>	<u>\$ 3,261,869</u>	<u>\$ 6,523,738</u>
Net position			
Net investment in capital assets	\$ 121,755,971	\$ -	\$ 121,755,971
Unrestricted	61,276,005	-	61,276,005
Total net position	<u>\$ 183,031,976</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 183,031,976</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY

Hodge, Louisiana

Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position

For the Year Ended December 31, 2025

	Combined Utility System	Hodge Utility Operating Company	Total (Memorandum Only)
Operating revenues			
Charges for services			
West Rock	\$ 44,105,558	\$ -	\$ 44,105,558
Hodge residents and sewer revenues	178,285	-	178,285
Hodge water and sewer revenues	2,550	-	2,550
Operating fees	-	35,338,527	35,338,527
Total operating revenues	44,286,393	35,338,527	79,624,920
Operating expenses			
Operating fees	35,338,527	-	35,338,527
Fuel	-	25,767,818	25,767,818
Purchased electricity	-	9,316,686	9,316,686
Purchased outside services	-	245,953	245,953
Miscellaneous	-	8,070	8,070
Total operating expenses	35,338,527	35,338,527	70,677,054
Operating income	8,947,866	-	8,947,866
Other income			
Non-operating income	84,101,678	-	84,101,678
Change in net position	93,049,544	-	93,049,544
Net position at beginning of year	89,982,432	-	89,982,432
Total net position at end of year	\$ 183,031,976	\$ -	\$ 183,031,976

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY

Hodge, Louisiana

Statement of Cash Flows

As of and for the Year Ended December 31, 2025

	Combined Utility System	Hodge Utility Operating Company	Total (Memorandum Only)
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net income from Operations	\$ 8,947,866	\$ -	\$ 8,947,866
Adjustments			
Net changes in assets and liabilities			
Receivables - Hodge customers	(2,754)	-	(2,754)
Due from Village of Hodge Combined Utility System	-	(496,402)	(496,402)
Account payable - special	-	496,402	496,402
Due to operating company	496,402	-	496,402
Net cash provided (used) by operating activities	9,441,513	-	9,441,514
Cash flows from capital and related financing activities			
Acquisition of capital assets	(10,115,361)	-	(10,115,361)
Disposition of capital assets	597,905	-	597,905
Net cash provided by (used for) capital and related financing activities	(9,517,456)	-	(9,517,456)
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(75,943)	-	(75,943)
Cash and cash equivalents - December 31, 2024	108,092	-	108,092
Cash and cash equivalents - December 31, 2025	<u>\$ 32,149</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 32,149</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY

Hodge, Louisiana

Notes to the Financial Statements

As of and for the year ended December 31, 2025

Organizational and Historical Background

The qualified electors of the Village of Hodge, Louisiana, and resident property taxpayers of said Village approved the issuance of \$65,000,000 in Combined Utility System Revenue Bonds under indenture of mortgage, dated March 1, 1972.

The Village entered into an Acquisition and Construction Agreement on March 1, 1972, with Continental Group, Inc., whereby the Village acquired the existing combined water, sewerage, and electric generating facilities, and agreed to purchase improvements made to the existing system by Continental Group, Inc. and to acquire or construct electric distribution facilities within the Village. The system, acquired and completed, is known as the "Combined Utility System." The Village entered into an agreement with the Hodge Utility Operating Company on March 1, 1972, whereby the Operating Company was to operate and manage the system upon terms and conditions as set forth in the contract.

Effective October 8, 1983, Continental Group, Inc. transferred to its successor, Stone Container Corporation, Chicago, Illinois, all of its obligations under the acquisition and construction agreement, utility contract, indenture of mortgage and operating agreement, each dated March 1, 1972.

On January 24, 1990, the Village issued \$93,000,000 of its Combined Utility System Revenue Bonds, Series 1990, under a bond indenture dated January 1, 1990, authorized by a resolution duly passed and approved by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Village. The bonds were issued for the principle purpose of financing the replacement of a recovery boiler and associated equipment. The bonds were secured by a security interest in revenues derived by the Village from operation of the Combined Utility System (subject to the pledge of the first lien on revenues created by the Indenture of Mortgage securing the series 1972 bonds) and other funds.

On May 10, 1998, Jefferson Smurfit Corporation, a Delaware Corporation, now known as Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation entered into an Agreement and Plan of Merger with JSC Acquisition Corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Company, and Stone Container Corporation. Pursuant to the terms of the Merger Agreement, JSC Acquisition was merged with and into Stone on November 18, 1998. On November 1, 2004, Jefferson Smurfit Corporation, a Delaware Corporation, entered into a merger agreement with Stone Container Corporation, under the name of Smurfit Stone Container Enterprises, Inc., a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Delaware.

On December 18, 2003, the Village of Hodge issued \$58,085,000 of the Village of Hodge Refunding Bonds Series 2003. The bonds were issued to refund the Series 1972 and 1990 bonds and to finance needed capital improvements.

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY

Hodge, Louisiana

Notes to the Financial Statements

As of and for the year ended December 31, 2025

After the 2009 Chapter 11 bankruptcy of Smurfit Stone Container Enterprises, and the subsequent default of the Hodge Utility Operating Company on interest payments for the 2003 Bonds, a Settlement Agreement was reached between the Village of Hodge, the Hodge Utility Operating Company, and the Bond Trustee and/or 2003 Bondholders. This agreement satisfied all obligations to the 2003 Bondholders and effectively removed the \$58,085,000 liability from the Village of Hodge, the Hodge Utility Operating Company and SSCE. The Village of Hodge and the Hodge Utility Operating Company entered into an amended and restated operating agreement that became effective June 30, 2010.

On May 27, 2011, at a Smurfit Stone Container Enterprises stockholder meeting, stockholders voted to approve a merger with Rock-Tenn Company, a Georgia corporation. Rock-Tenn agreed to purchase all outstanding SSCE's common stock. Under the amended and restated operating agreement, Rock-Tenn became the successor of SSCE and continued to operate per the June 30, 2010, operating agreement.

On July 1, 2015, Rock-Tenn completed a merger with MeadWestvaco, forming the company, WestRock. WestRock continues to operate under the amended and restated operating agreement that was put into effect on June 30, 2010.

On July 5, 2024, WestRock merged with Smurfit Kappa Group to form Smurfit Westrock PLC.

Note 1 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The accounting and reporting practices of the Combined Utility System, Village of Hodge, and the Hodge Utility Operating Company conformed to the requirements of the amended and restated operating agreement dated June 30, 2010, which do not necessarily conform to generally accepted accounting principles applied to governmental accounting.

A. Basis of Presentation

The Combined Utility System of the Village of Hodge and the Hodge Utility Operating Company is accounted for using the accrual basis of accounting. Revenues are recognized when they are earned and expenses are recognized when they are incurred. Receivables billed and not paid and accounts payable (expenses incurred) are recorded monthly. Operating revenues are those revenues generated from the primary operations of the fund. All other revenues are reported as non-operating revenues. Operating expenses are those expenses that are essential to the primary operations of the fund. All other expenses are reported as non-operating expenses.

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY

Hodge, Louisiana

Notes to the Financial Statements

As of and for the year ended December 31, 2025

B. Reporting Entity

This report includes two proprietary funds, the Combined Utility System, Village of Hodge, and the Hodge Utility Operating Company. The Combined Utility System is controlled by the Village executive and legislative branches (the Mayor and Board of Aldermen), whereas the Hodge Utility Operating Company is controlled by the Hodge Utility Operating Company Board of Directors. However, since the Hodge Utility Operating Company operates and manages the System upon the terms and conditions of the operating agreement, the Village of Hodge does not exercise significant oversight responsibility over the System. The specific elements of oversight responsibility considered in the decision to exclude the Combined Utility System were financial interdependency, the ability to significantly influence operations, and accountability for fiscal matters. Therefore, this report is not included as a component unit of the Village of Hodge, and there are no excluded component units in this report.

C. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash includes amounts in demand deposits, interest-bearing demand deposits, and time deposits. Cash equivalents include amounts in time deposits and those investments with original maturities of 90 days or less. Under state law, the Hodge Utility Operating Company may deposit funds in demand deposits, interest-bearing demand deposits, or time deposits with state banks organized under Louisiana law or any other state of the United States, or under the laws of the United States.

D. Fixed Assets and Long-Term Liabilities

The Utility System is accounted for on the economic resources measurement focus. This means that all assets and liabilities (whether current or noncurrent) associated with their activity are included on their balance sheet. The reported fund equity (net total position) is segregated into contributed capital and net position components.

Depreciation on all exhaustible fixed assets used by the proprietary fund should be charged as an expense against their operations in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Accumulated depreciation should also be reported on the proprietary fund Statement of Net Position.

Total cost of the Combined Utility System of the Village of Hodge is underwritten by Smurfit Westrock; therefore, depreciation, an operating cost not requiring cash outlay, is not reported on the financial statements of the Combined Utility System of the Village of Hodge.

E. Total Columns

Total Columns on the statements are captioned "Memorandum Only" to indicate that they are presented only to facilitate financial analysis. Data in these columns does not present financial

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY

Hodge, Louisiana

Notes to the Financial Statements

As of and for the year ended December 31, 2025

position in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. Neither is such data comparable to a consolidation. Interfund eliminations have not been made in the aggregation of this data.

Note 2 – Cash, Cash Equivalents, and Investments

On December 31, 2025, the Hodge Utility Operating Company had cash and cash equivalents (book balances) totaling \$32,149, all of which was in demand deposits. These deposits are stated at cost, which approximates market. Under state law, these deposits (or the 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 the amount on deposit with the fiscal agent.

On December 31, 2025, the Hodge Utility Operating Company had \$32,149 in deposits (collected bank balances). These deposits are secured from risk by \$250,000 federal deposit insurance.

Even though pledged securities are considered uncollateralized under the provisions of GASB Statement No. 40, Louisiana Revised Statute 30:1229 imposes a statutory requirement on the custodial bank to advertise and sell the pledged securities within 10 days of being notified that the fiscal agent has failed to pay deposited funds upon demand. Louisiana R.S. 39:1224 requires bonds, or other such instruments furnished as security, to be deposited with the depositing authority or with an unaffiliated bank or trust company, Federal Reserve Bank, or any Federal Home Loan Bank or its successor. This security is deemed to be under the control and in the possession of the public entity and deemed to be held in its name. The Hodge Utility Operating Company was not required to have pledged securities because the cash balance of all accounts was below the federal depository insurance coverage.

Cash and investments are categorized to give an indication of the level of risk assumed by the Combined Utility System on December 31, 2025. Deposits are considered to be exposed to custodial credit risk if they are not covered by depository insurance and the deposits are (a) uncollateralized, (b) collateralized with securities held by the pledging financial institution, or (c) collateralized with securities held by the pledging financial institution's trust department or agent but not in the depositor-government's name. The Hodge Utility Operating Company's cash and cash equivalents balances were completely covered by \$250,000 of federal depository insurance. The HUOC did not have a custodial credit risk policy.

On December 31, 2025, the Hodge Utility Operating Company had no investments.

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY

Hodge, Louisiana

Notes to the Financial Statements

As of and for the year ended December 31, 2025

Note 3 – Receivables

The receivables of \$26,450 on December 31, 2025, were for charges for services.

Note 4 – Changes in Plant, Property, and Equipment

A summary of changes in plant, property, and equipment for the year ended December 31, 2025, is below. Plant, property, and equipment are not depreciated as indicated in Note 1. Smurfit WestRock underwrites the cost of all capital additions that involve cash.

The 2024 merger of WestRock with Smurfit Kappa Group to form Smurfit WestRock plc resulted in a revaluation of capital assets held by the Hodge Utility Operating Company. At the time of the merger in 2024 the asset values were adjusted based on initial estimates at that time. This revaluation resulted in a net impairment of \$133,520,404. In 2025, these assets were appraised, and this valuation resulted in a net gain of \$84,101,678. No cash was expended as a result of these revaluations.

	Balance, January 1, 2025	Additions	Disposals	Revaluation	Balance, December 31, 2025
Property, Plant, & Equipment	\$92,616,111	\$10,115,361	\$597,905	\$84,101,678	\$186,235,244

Note 5 – Interfund Receivables and Payables

Interfund receivables and payables at December 31, 2025, are as follows:

	Receivable	Payable
Village of Hodge Combined Utility Company	\$ 3,261,869	
Hodge Utility Operating Company		\$ 3,261,869
Total	<u>\$ 3,261,869</u>	<u>\$ 3,261,869</u>

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY

Hodge, Louisiana

Notes to the Financial Statements

As of and for the year ended December 31, 2025

Note 6 – Employees' Retirement

Neither the Combined Utility System nor the Hodge Utility Operating Company has employees receiving pay directly. No retirement system exists. All employees and related retirement benefits are carried by WestRock.

Note 7 – Related Party Transactions

Serving on the Board of Directors of the Hodge Utility Operating Company ("Operating Company") is the Mayor of the Village of Hodge, Louisiana. The Village of Hodge is considered to be a related party. During the year ended December 31, 2025, revenues received by the Operating Company from the Village of Hodge for water and sewer usage were \$2,550. Expenses paid to the Village of Hodge were \$245,953.

Note 8 – Subsequent Events

Management has evaluated subsequent events through the date that the financial statements were available to be issued, May 18, 2026, and determined that no events occurred that require disclosure. No subsequent events occurring after this date have been evaluated for inclusion in these financial statements.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY

Hodge, Louisiana

**Schedule of Compensation, Benefits, and
Other Payments to Agency Head**

For the Year Ended December 31, 2025

The Hodge Utility Operating Company does not provide compensation, reimbursements, or benefits to the Agency Head.

REPORTS REQUIRED BY *GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS*



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**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' 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***

**Board of Commissioners
Hodge Utility Operating Company
Hodge, Louisiana**

We 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 basic financial statements of the enterprise fund of the **Hodge Utility Operating Company**, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2025, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Hodge Utility Operating Company's basic financial statements and have issued our report thereon dated May 18, 2026.

Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the Hodge Utility Operating Company'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 our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Hodge Utility Operating Company's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Hodge Utility Operating Company'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 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.

Our consideration of internal control over financial reporting 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. Given these limitations,

**Board of Commissioners
Hodge Utility Operating Company
Hodge, Louisiana**

during our audit, we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

Report on Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Hodge Utility Operating Company's financial statements are free of material misstatement, we 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 determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the result 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 Hodge Utility Operating Company's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

Woodard & Associates

(A Professional Accounting Corporation)
Monroe, Louisiana

May 18, 2026

HODGE UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY

Hodge, Louisiana

Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs

For the Year Ended December 31, 2025

We have audited the basic financial statements of the Hodge Utility Operating Company as of and for the year ended December 31, 2025, and have issued our report thereon dated May 18, 2026. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Governmental Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Our audit of the financial statements as of December 31, 2025, resulted in an unqualified opinion.

Schedule I – Summary of Auditor’s Report

Report to Internal Control and Compliance Material to Financial Statements:

Internal Control

Material Weakness ___Yes XNo

Significant Deficiencies ___Yes XNo

Compliance

Compliance Material to Financial Statements ___Yes XNo

Schedule II – Findings – Financial Statements Audit

Current Year

No current year findings.

Prior Year

No prior year findings.

STATEWIDE AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES



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INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES

**To the Hodge Utility Operating Company's Board of Directors
and the Louisiana Legislative Auditor**

We 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 January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025. **Hodge Utility Operating Company's** management is responsible for those C/C areas identified in the SAUPs.

Hodge Utility Operating Company 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 January through December 31, 2025. Additionally, the 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.
 - 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.
 - iii. **Disbursements**, including processing, reviewing, and approving.
 - 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).

- 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.
- 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.
- vii. ***Travel and Expense Reimbursement***, including (1) allowable expenses, (2) dollar thresholds by category of expense, (3) documentation requirements, and (4) required approvers.
- 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).
- 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.
- x. ***Debt Service***, including (1) debt issuance approval, (2) continuing disclosure/EMMA reporting requirements, (3) debt reserve requirements, and (4) debt service requirements.
- 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.
- 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.

Result: We noted no exceptions.

2) Board or Finance Committee

- 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 meets with a quorum at least monthly, or on a frequency in accordance with the board's enabling legislation, charter, bylaws, or other equivalent document.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Result: We noted no exceptions.

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);
 - 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 (e.g., initialed and dated, electronically logged); and
 - iii. Management has documentation reflecting it has researched reconciling items that have been outstanding for more than 12 months from the statement closing date, if applicable.

Result: We noted no exceptions.

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).
- 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 and procedures relating to employee job duties (if there are no written policies or procedures,

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.
 - ii. Each employee responsible for collecting cash is also not responsible for preparing/making bank deposits, unless another employee/official is responsible for reconciling collection documentation (e.g., pre-numbered receipts) to the deposit.
 - 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
 - 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/official verifies the reconciliation.
- 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 in force during the fiscal period.
- 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.
 - ii. Trace sequentially pre-numbered receipts, system reports, and other related collection documentation to the deposit slip.
 - iii. Trace the deposit slip total to the actual deposit per the bank statement.
 - 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).
 - v. Trace the actual deposit per the bank statement to the general ledger.

Result: We noted no exceptions.

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).
- 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.
 - ii. At least two employees are involved in processing and approving payments to vendors.
 - 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.
 - 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
 - v. Only employees/officials are 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.
- C. For each location selected under procedure #5A above, obtain the entity's non-payroll disbursement transaction 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
 - 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.
- 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.

Result: We noted no exceptions.

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.
- 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 (those instances requiring such approval that may constrain the legal authority of certain public officials, such as the mayor of a Lawrason Act municipality, should not be reported); and
 - ii. Observe that finance charges and late fees were not assessed on the selected statements.
- C. Using the monthly statements or combined statements selected under procedure #6B 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 a “missing receipt statement” that is subject to increased scrutiny.

Result: We noted no exceptions.

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);
 - ii. If reimbursed using actual costs, observe that the reimbursement is supported by an original itemized receipt that identifies precisely what was purchased.
 - 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
 - iv. Observe that each reimbursement was reviewed and approved, in writing, by someone other than the person receiving reimbursement.

Result: We noted no exceptions.

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. 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.
 - 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).
 - 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
 - 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.

Result: We noted no exceptions.

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.
- 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).
 - ii. Observe whether supervisors approved the attendance and leave of the selected employees or officials.
 - iii. Observe that any leave accrued or taken during the pay period is reflected in the entity's cumulative leave records; and
 - iv. Observe the rate paid to the employees or officials agrees to the authorized salary/pay rate found within the personnel file.

- C. Obtain a listing of those employees or officials that received termination payments during the fiscal period and management's representation that the list is complete. Randomly select two employees or officials and obtain related documentation of the hours and pay rates used in management's termination payment calculations and the entity's 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.
- 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, workers' compensation premiums, etc.) have been paid, and any associated forms have been filed by required deadlines.

Result: We noted no exceptions.

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

Result: We noted no exceptions.

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.
- 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).

Result: We noted no exceptions.

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.
- 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.

Result: We noted no exceptions.

13) Information Technology Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity

Perform the following procedures:

- A. Obtain and inspect the entity's most recent documentation that it has backed up its critical data (if there is no written documentation, then 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.
- B. 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.
- C. 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.
- D. 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.
- E. Using the 5 randomly selected employees/officials from #9A, obtain cybersecurity training documentation from management, and observe that the documentation demonstrates that the following employees/officials with access to the agency's information technology assets have completed the cybersecurity training as required by R.S. 42:1267²⁸. The requirements are as follows:

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

Result: We performed the procedure and discussed 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.
- 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).
- 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.
 - ii. Number of sexual harassment complaints received by the agency.
 - iii. Number of complaints which resulted in a finding that sexual harassment occurred.
 - iv. Number of complaints in which the finding of sexual harassment resulted in discipline or corrective action; and
 - v. The amount of time it took to resolve each complaint.

Result: We noted no exceptions.

We were engaged by HUOC to perform this agreed-upon procedures engagement and conducted our engagement in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and applicable standards of *Government Auditing Standards*. We were 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 identifies in the SAUP's. Accordingly, we do not express such as opinion or conclusion, Had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you.

We are required to be independent of HUOC and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements related to our 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.

Woodland & Associates

(A Professional Accounting Corporation)
Monroe, Louisiana

May 18, 2026