

**Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana**

**Financial Statements With Auditor's Report**

**As of and For the Year Ended December 31, 2020**

Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
<b>Independent Auditors' Report</b>	1 – 2
<b>Required Supplementary Information</b> Management's Discussion and Analysis	3 – 8
<b>Basic Financial Statements:</b>	
Government-wide Financial Statements	
Statement of Net Position	9
Statement of Activities	10
Fund Financial Statements	
Balance Sheet – Governmental Fund	11
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance – Governmental Fund	12
Reconciliation of the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance of the Governmental Fund to the Statement of Activities	13
Notes to the Financial Statements	14 – 30
<b>Required Supplementary Information</b>	
Budgetary Comparison Schedule	31
Notes to Required Supplementary Information	32
Schedule of Contributions	33
Schedule of Proportionate Share of Net Pension Liability	34
<b>Other Supplementary Information</b>	
Schedule of Compensation, Benefits, and Other Payments to Agency Head	35
<b>Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With <i>Government Auditing Standards</i></b>	36 – 37
<b>Schedules For Louisiana Legislative Auditor</b>	
Summary Schedule of Prior Year Audit Findings	38
Corrective Action Plan For Current Year Audit Findings	38

# COOK & MOREHART

*Certified Public Accountants*

1215 HAWN AVENUE • SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA 71107 • P.O. BOX 78240 • SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA 71137-8240

TRAVIS H. MOREHART, CPA  
VICKIE D. CASE, CPA

TELEPHONE (318) 222-5415

FAX (318) 222-5441

MEMBER  
AMERICAN INSTITUTE  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

STUART L. REEKS, CPA  
J. PRESTON DELAUNE, CPA

SOCIETY OF LOUISIANA  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

## Independent Auditors' Report

Board of Commissioners  
Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana

### **Report on the Financial Statements**

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities and major fund of Benton Fire District No. 4, a component unit of the Bossier Parish Police Jury, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2020, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise Benton Fire District No. 4's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

### ***Management's Responsibility 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; this includes 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.

### ***Auditors' Responsibility***

Our responsibility is to express opinions on these financial statements based on our audit. 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. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements 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 entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

### ***Opinions***

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities and major fund of Benton Fire District No. 4 as of December 31, 2020, and the respective changes in financial position thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

## ***Other Matters***

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

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis and pages 3 – 8, budgetary comparison information on pages 31 – 32, the Schedule of Contributions on page 33, and the Schedule of Proportionate Share of Net Pension Liability on page 34, be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such 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 financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We 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 our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

### ***Other Information***

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise the Benton Fire District No. 4's basic financial statements. The accompanying other supplementary information listed in the table of contents as Schedule of Compensation, Benefits, and Other Payments to Agency Head and shown on pages 35 is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the basic financial statements. The information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the 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 financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is 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*, we have also issued our report dated June 29, 2021, on our consideration of Benton Fire District No. 4'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 solely 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 the effectiveness of Benton Fire District No. 4'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 Benton Fire District No. 4's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.



Cook & Morehart  
Certified Public Accountants  
June 29, 2021

## **BENTON FIRE DISTRICT NO. 4**

### **MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

Our discussion and analysis of Benton Fire District No. 4's financial performance provides an overview of the Benton Fire District No. 4's financial activities for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2020. Please read it in conjunction with the District's financial statements, which begin on page 9.

#### **FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS**

The Benton Fire District No. 4's net position decreased by (\$462,897) or (22%).

The Benton Fire District No. 4's total general revenues were \$3,833,569 in 2020 compared to \$3,687,405 in 2019.

During the year ended December 31, 2020, the Benton Fire District No. 4 had total expenses, excluding depreciation, of \$4,341,064, compared to \$4,233,024 for 2019.

#### **USING THIS ANNUAL REPORT**

This annual report consists of a series of financial statements. The Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities (on pages 9 and 10) provide information about the activities of the Benton Fire District No. 4 as a whole and present a longer-term view of the District's finances. Fund financial statements start on page 11. For governmental activities, these statements tell how these services were financed in the short term as well as what remains for future spending. Fund financial statements also report the Benton Fire District No. 4's operations in more detail than the government-wide statements by providing information about the Benton Fire District No. 4's most significant funds.

The Benton Fire District No. 4 was determined to be a component unit of the Bossier Parish Police Jury. The police jury is financially accountable for the district because it appoints or ratifies a voting majority of the board and has the ability to impose its will on them. The accompanying financial statements present information only on the funds maintained by the Benton Fire District No. 4.

#### **Reporting the Benton Fire District No. 4 as a Whole**

Our analysis of the Benton Fire District No. 4 as a whole begins on page 9. One of the most important questions asked about the Benton Fire District No. 4's finances is "Is the Benton Fire District No. 4 as a whole better off or worse off as a result of the year's activities?" The Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities report information about the funds maintained by the Benton Fire District No. 4 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 similar to the accounting used by most private-sector companies. Accrual of the current year's revenues and expenses are taken into account regardless of when cash is received or paid.

These two statements report the Benton Fire District No. 4's *net position* and changes in them. You can think of the Benton Fire District No. 4's net position – the difference between assets and liabilities – as one way to measure the Benton Fire District No. 4's financial health, or *financial position*. Over time, *increases* or *decreases* in the Benton Fire District No. 4's net position are one indicator of whether its *financial health* is improving or deteriorating. You will need to consider other non-financial factors, however, such as changes in the District's property tax base, to assess the overall health of the District.

In the Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities, we record the funds maintained by the Benton Fire District No. 4 as governmental activities:

Governmental activities – all of the expenses paid from the funds maintained by the Benton Fire District No. 4 are reported here, which consists primarily of personal services, materials and supplies, travel, repairs and maintenance and other program services. Ad valorem taxes finance most of these activities.

### **Reporting the District's Most Significant Funds**

Our analysis of the major funds maintained by the Benton Fire District No. 4 begins on page 11. The fund financial statements begin on page 11 and provide detailed information about the most significant funds maintained by the Benton Fire District No. 4 – not the Benton Fire District No. 4 as a whole. The Benton Fire District No. 4's *governmental funds* use the following accounting approaches:

Governmental funds – All of the Benton Fire District No. 4's basic services are reported in governmental funds, which focus on how money flows into and out of those funds and the balances left at year-end that are available for spending. These funds are reported using an accounting method called *modified accrual* accounting, which measures cash and all other financial assets that can readily be converted to cash. The governmental fund statements provide a detailed *short-term view* of the Benton Fire District No. 4's general government operations and the expenses paid from those funds.

Governmental fund information helps you determine whether there are more or fewer financial resources that can be spent in the near future to finance certain Benton Fire District No. 4 expenses. We describe the relationship (or differences) between governmental *activities* (reported in the Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities) and governmental *funds* in a reconciliation at the bottom of the fund financial statements.

## THE BENTON FIRE DISTRICT NO. 4 AS A WHOLE

The Benton Fire District No. 4's total net position changed from a year ago, decreasing from (\$2,110,928), to (\$2,573,825). Our analysis below will focus on key elements of the Governmental Activities for the December 31, 2020 and 2019 years.

**Table 1**  
**Net Position**

	Governmental Activities	
	2020	2019
Current and other assets	\$ 4,019,427	\$ 3,709,518
Capital assets	1,597,791	1,724,316
Total assets	<u>5,617,218</u>	<u>5,433,834</u>
Deferred Outflows of Resources	<u>2,143,811</u>	<u>1,764,620</u>
Current liabilities	148,488	104,683
Long term liabilities	<u>5,997,260</u>	<u>5,241,676</u>
Total liabilities	<u>6,145,748</u>	<u>5,346,359</u>
Deferred Inflows of Resources	<u>4,189,106</u>	<u>3,963,023</u>
Net Position		
Investment in capital assets	1,597,791	1,724,316
Unrestricted	<u>(4,171,616)</u>	<u>(3,835,244)</u>
Total net position	<u>\$ (2,573,825)</u>	<u>\$ (2,110,928)</u>

Net position of the Benton Fire District No. 4's governmental activities decreased by (\$462,897) or (22%), as shown above. Unrestricted net position, the part of net position that can be used to finance Benton Fire District No. 4 expenses without constraints or other legal requirements, decreased (\$336,372), from (\$3,835,244), in 2019 to (\$4,171,616) at December 31, 2020, as shown in the table above. This reduction is due in part to the recording of pension-related amounts in relation to GASB 68.

**Table 2**  
**Change in Net Position**

	Governmental Activities	
	2020	2019
Revenues		
Program revenue		
Charges for services	\$ 9,352	\$
Operating grants and contributions	242,412	224,399
Capital grants and contributions		
General revenues		
Ad valorem taxes	3,615,189	3,454,746
Intergovernmental	87,948	88,066
Insurance proceeds	61,453	
Miscellaneous	5,560	16,542
Interest and dividends	63,419	128,051
Total Revenues	4,085,333	3,911,804
Expenses		
Public Safety - fire protection	4,548,230	4,448,057
Decrease in net assets	\$ (462,897)	\$ (536,253)

Total expenses increased \$100,173 or 3% from total expenses in the year ended December 31, 2019 of \$4,448,057 to total expenses of \$4,548,230 in the year ended December 31, 2020.

The primary reason for this increase is due to an increase in Firefighter retirement expenses and other capital and operational expenses.

### **THE DISTRICT'S FUNDS**

As the District completed the year, its governmental funds (as presented in the balance sheet on page 11) reported a *combined* fund balance of \$102,896, which is higher than last year's fund balance of \$74,109.



## General Fund Budgetary Highlights

The District adopted a budget for its General Fund for the year ended December 31, 2020. There was one amendment to the budget during the year. The District's budgetary comparison is presented as required supplementary information and shown on page 31. Highlights for the year are as follows:

- Total actual expenditures were less than budgeted by approximately \$35,749.
- Total actual revenues were more than budgeted by approximately \$22,445.

The District's General Fund balance of \$102,896 reported on page 12 differs from the General Fund's *budgetary* fund balance of \$177,028 reported in the budgetary comparison schedule on page 31. This is primarily due to the District budgeting on the cash basis of accounting.

## CAPITAL ASSETS

At the end of December 31, 2020 and 2019, the Benton Fire District No. 4 had invested \$1,597,791 and \$1,724,316, in capital assets respectively. (see table 3 below)

**Table 3**  
**Capital Assets At Year End**  
**(Net of Depreciation)**

	Governmental Activities	
	2020	2019
Land	\$ 15,450	\$ 15,450
Idle assets	40,280	40,280
Constuction in progress	26,250	
Buildings	530,304	582,279
Equipment	84,659	58,979
Vehicle improvements	7,283	8,185
Apparatus	838,251	960,683
Leasehold improvements	55,314	58,460
Total	\$ 1,597,791	\$ 1,724,316

This year's major additions included

Construction in progress	\$ 26,250
Equipment	54,391
	\$ 80,641

More detailed information about the capital assets are presented in Note 4 to the financial statements.

**DEBT**

Long-term liabilities of Benton Fire District No. 4 are as follows:

**Table 4  
Outstanding Debt At Year End**

	Governmental Activities 2020	Governmental Activities 2019
	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
Net pension liability	<u>\$ 5,997,260</u>	<u>\$ 5,241,676</u>

More detailed information about the net pension liability can be found in Notes 8 and 9.

**ECONOMIC FACTORS AND NEXT YEAR’S BUDGETS**

The Benton Fire District No. 4’s management considered many factors when setting a fiscal year December 31, 2021 budget. Amounts available for appropriations in 2021 are expected remain substantially the same as 2020. It is anticipated that management will consider and monitor the economic uncertainties of COVID-19 and the impact on available financial resources.

**CONTACTING THE DISTRICT’S FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

This financial report is designed to provide our citizens and taxpayers with a general overview of the finances for those funds maintained by the Benton Fire District No. 4 and to show the Benton Fire District No. 4’s accountability for the money it receives. If you have questions about this report or need additional financial information, contact the Benton Fire District No. 4, at P.O. Box 521, Benton, Louisiana 71006.

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Statement of Net Position  
 December 31, 2020

	Governmental Activities
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 132,256
Investments	220,485
Accounts receivable	
Ad valorem taxes	3,666,686
Capital assets	
Depreciable (net)	1,515,811
Non-depreciable	81,980
Total assets	5,617,218
<b>DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>	
Pension related	2,143,811
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	
Accounts payable	5,570
Accrued expenses	142,918
Long-term liabilities:	
Due within more than one year	5,997,260
Total liabilities	6,145,748
<b>DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES</b>	
Unavailable revenue	
Ad valorem taxes	3,768,043
Pension related	421,063
Total deferred inflows of resources	4,189,106
<b>NET POSITION (DEFICIT)</b>	
Investment in capital assets	1,597,791
Unrestricted (deficit)	(4,171,616)
Total net position (deficit)	\$ (2,573,825)

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Statement of Activities  
 For the Year Ended December 31, 2020

	Governmental Activities
Expenses:	
General government	\$ 114,947
Public safety - fire protection	4,433,283
Total expenses	4,548,230
Program revenues:	
Charges for services	9,352
Operating grants and contributions	242,412
	251,764
Net program expenses	(4,296,466)
General revenues:	
Ad valorem taxes	3,615,189
Intergovernmental - fire insurance rebate	87,948
Interest and dividends	63,419
Insurance proceeds	61,453
Miscellaneous	5,560
Total general revenues	3,833,569
Change in net position	(462,897)
Net position (deficit) - beginning	(2,110,928)
Net position (deficit) - ending	\$ (2,573,825)

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Balance Sheet  
 Governmental Fund  
 December 31, 2020

	General Fund
<b>Assets</b>	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 132,256
Investments	220,485
Accounts receivable	
Ad valorem taxes	3,666,686
Total assets	\$ 4,019,427
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Accounts payable	\$ 5,570
Accrued expenses	142,918
Total liabilities	148,488
<b>Deferred inflows of resources</b>	
Unavailable revenue	
Ad valorem taxes	3,768,043
Total deferred inflows of resources	3,768,043
<b>Fund balance</b>	
Unassigned	102,896
Total fund balance	102,896
 Amounts reported for governmental activities in the statement of net position are different because:	
Capital assets used in governmental activities are not financial resources and therefore are not reported in the funds.	1,597,791
Other long-term assets and other amounts are not available to pay for current-period expenditures and therefore are not available in the governmental funds.	
Deferred outflows - pension related	2,143,811
Long-term liabilities and other amounts are not due and payable in the current period and therefore are not reported in the funds.	
Net pension liability	(5,997,260)
Deferred inflows - pension related	(421,063)
Net position (deficit) of governmental activities	\$ (2,573,825)

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance  
 Governmental Fund  
 For the Year Ended December 31, 2020

	General Fund
Revenues	
Ad valorem taxes	\$ 3,615,189
Intergovernmental-fire insurance rebate	87,948
Fees - charges for services	9,352
Interest and dividends	63,419
Miscellaneous	5,560
Total revenues	3,781,468
Expenditures	
Current:	
General government	114,956
Public Safety	3,618,537
Capital outlay	80,641
Total expenditures	3,814,134
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over (under) expenditures	(32,666)
Other financing sources	
Proceeds from insurance	61,453
Total other financing sources	61,453
Net change in fund balance	28,787
Fund balance at beginning of year	74,109
Fund balance at end of year	\$ 102,896

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Reconciliation of the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in  
 Fund Balance of the Governmental Fund to the Statement of Activities  
 For the Year Ended December 31, 2020

Net change in fund balance - total governmental funds	\$	28,787
<p>Amounts reported for governmental activities in the statement of activities are different because:</p>		
<p>Governmental funds report capital outlays as expenditures. However, in the statement of activities, the cost of those assets is allocated over their estimated useful lives and reported as depreciation expense. This is the amount by which depreciation (\$207,166) exceeded capital outlay (\$80,641) in the current period.</p>		
		(126,525)
<p>Revenues in the statement of activities that do not provide current financial resources are not reported as revenues in the funds.</p>		
Non-employer contributions to cost-sharing pension plan		242,412
<p>Some expenses reported in the statement of activities do not require the use of current financial resources and therefore are not reported as expenditures in the funds.</p>		
Pension expense		<u>(607,571)</u>
Change in net position of governmental activities	\$	<u><u>(462,897)</u></u>

See accompanying notes to the basic financial statements.

Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana  
Notes to Financial Statements  
December 31, 2020

INTRODUCTION

The Benton Fire District No. 4 (the District) was created by the Bossier Parish Police Jury, as authorized by Louisiana Revised Statute 40:1492, on November 10, 1987 by ordinance number 2096. The District is governed by a five member board of commissioners appointed by the Bossier Parish Police Jury, the Town of Benton, and by the commissioners themselves. The Board of Commissioners received no compensation during 2020. The District is responsible for maintaining and operating fire stations and equipment and providing fire protection within the boundaries of the district.

(1) Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The Benton Fire District No. 4's financial statements are prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is responsible for establishing GAAP for state and local governments through its pronouncements (Statements and Interpretations). The more significant accounting policies established in GAAP and used by the Benton Fire District No. 4 are discussed below.

A. Reporting Entity

The District is a component unit of the Bossier Parish Police Jury, the financial reporting entity. The police jury is financially accountable for the District because it appoints or ratifies a voting majority of the board and has the ability to impose its will on them.

The accompanying financial statements present information only on the funds maintained by the district and do not present information on the Bossier Parish Police Jury, the general government services provided by that governmental unit, or the other governmental units that comprise the financial reporting entity.

B. Basic Financial Statements – Government-Wide Statements

The Benton Fire District No. 4's basic financial statements include both government-wide (reporting the funds maintained by the Benton Fire District No. 4 as a whole) and fund financial statements (reporting the Benton Fire District No. 4's major funds). Both the government-wide and fund financial statements categorize primary activities as either governmental or business type. The Benton Fire District No. 4's general fund is classified as governmental activities. The Benton Fire District No. 4 does not have any business-type activities.

In the government-wide Statement of Net Position, the governmental activities column is presented on a consolidated basis and is reported on a full accrual, economic resource basis, which recognizes all long-term assets and receivables. The Benton Fire District No. 4's net position are reported in two parts – investment in capital assets (net of related debt), and unrestricted net position.

(Continued)



Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana  
Notes to Financial Statements  
December 31, 2020  
(Continued)

The government-wide Statement of Activities reports both the gross and net cost of each of the Benton Fire District No. 4's functions. The functions are supported by general government revenues. The Statement of Activities reduces gross expenses (including depreciation) by any related program revenues, which must be directly associated with the function. The District's program revenues consist of non-employer contributions to cost-sharing pension plan and fees-charges for services. The net costs (by function) are normally covered by general revenues.

This government-wide focus is more on the sustainability of the Benton Fire District No. 4 as an entity and the change in the Benton Fire District No. 4's net position resulting from the current year's activities.

C. Basic Financial Statements – Fund Financial Statements

The financial transactions of the Benton Fire District No. 4 are recorded in individual funds in the fund financial statements. Each fund is accounted for by providing a separate set of self-balancing accounts that comprises its assets, liabilities, reserves, fund equity, revenues and expenditures. The various funds are reported by generic classification within the financial statements.

The following fund types are used by the Benton Fire District No. 4:

Governmental Funds – the focus of the governmental funds' measurement (in the fund statements) is upon determination of financial position and changes in financial position (sources, uses, and balances of financial resources) rather than upon net income. The following is a description of the governmental fund of the Benton Fire District No. 4:

- a. General funds are the general operating funds of the Benton Fire District No. 4. They are used to account for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

The emphasis in fund financial statements is on the major funds in the governmental category. GASB sets forth minimum criteria (percentage of the assets, liabilities, revenues, or expenditures/expenses of either fund category or the governmental and enterprise combined) for the determination of major funds. The District's general fund was determined to be a major fund.

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana  
Notes to Financial Statements  
December 31, 2020  
(Continued)

D. Basis of Accounting

Basis of accounting refers to the point at which revenues or expenditures are recognized in the accounts and reported in the financial statements. It relates to the timing of the measurements made regardless of the measurement focus applied.

1. Accrual:

The governmental funds in the government-wide financial statements are presented on the accrual basis of accounting. Revenues are recognized when earned and expenses are recognized when incurred.

Revenues of the Benton Fire District No. 4 consist principally of property taxes, other intergovernmental revenues, donations, and interest income. Property taxes are recorded in the year for which the taxes are levied and budgeted. Property taxes are assessed on a calendar year basis, become due on November 15 of each year, and become delinquent on December 31. The taxes are generally collected in December of the current year and January and February of the ensuing year. The 2020 tax levy is intended to fund the 2021 fiscal year; therefore, the levy has been recorded as a receivable and deferred inflows of resources. Interest income is recorded when earned. Donations and other intergovernmental revenues are recorded when received in cash because they are generally not measurable until actually received.

2. Modified Accrual:

The governmental funds financial statements are presented on the modified accrual basis of accounting. Under modified accrual basis of accounting, revenues are recorded when susceptible to accrual: i.e., both measurable and available. "Available" means collectible within the current period or within 60 days after year end. Expenditures are generally recognized under the modified accrual basis of accounting when the related liability is incurred. The exception to this rule is that principal and interest on general obligation long-term debt, if any, is recognized when due. Depreciation is not recognized in the governmental fund financial statements.

E. Budgets

The District uses the following budget practices:

1. A preliminary budget for the ensuing year is prepared by the fire chief prior to December 31 of each year and is made available for public inspection at least fifteen days prior to the beginning of each fiscal year.
2. After completion of all action necessary to finalize and implement the budget, the budget is adopted through passage of a resolution.
3. All budgetary appropriations lapse at the end of each fiscal year.

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana  
Notes to Financial Statements  
December 31, 2020  
(Continued)

4. The budget is established and controlled by the board of commissioners at the object level of expenditure. All changes in the budget must be approved by the board.
5. The budget is adopted on a cash basis for all funds. The original budget was amended one time during 2020. The amendments are reflected in the budgetary comparisons included in the accompanying financial statements.

F. Cash, Cash Equivalents, and Investments

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

Investments are limited by Louisiana Revised Statute (R.S.) 33:2955. If the original maturities of investments exceed 90 days, they are classified as investments; however, if the original maturities are 90 days or less, they are classified as cash equivalents. Investments are carried at cost, which approximates market.

G. Capital Assets

Capital assets purchased or acquired with an original cost of \$5,000 or more are reported at historical cost or estimated historical cost. 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:

Apparatus	5 – 35 years
Buildings	20 – 40 years
Vehicle improvements	10 – 20 years
Equipment	5 – 25 years

H. Compensated Absences

The District follows leave policies set forth in Louisiana Revised Statutes 33:1995, et. al. After having served one year, firemen shall be entitled to an annual vacation of eighteen days with full pay. This vacation period shall be increased one day for each year of service over ten years, up to a maximum vacation period of thirty days, all of which shall be with full pay. Vacation pay not used by December 31 of each year is forfeited.

Firemen are entitled to full pay during sickness for a period of not less than fifty-two weeks per year.

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana  
Notes to Financial Statements  
December 31, 2020  
(Continued)

I. Use of Estimates

Management uses estimates and assumptions in preparing financial statements. Those estimates and assumptions affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities, and reported revenues and expenses. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

J. Deferred Inflows / Outflows of Resources

The District's governmental activities and governmental funds report a separate section for deferred inflows of resources. This separate financial statement element *deferred inflows of resources* represents an acquisition of net position that applies to a future period and so will not be recognized as an inflow of resources (revenue) until that time. On the fund balance sheet, the District reports unavailable revenue from property taxes. On the statement of net position, the District reports unavailable revenue from property taxes and pension-related amounts. These amounts are deferred and recognized as an inflow of resources in the period that the amounts become available or the period for which they are levied and budgeted.

In addition to assets, the statement of financial position will sometimes report a separate section for deferred outflows of resources. This separate financial statement element *deferred outflows of resources*, represents a consumption of net position that applies to a future period(s) and so will not be recognized as an outflow of resources (expense/expenditure) until then. The District has deferred outflows of resources related to pensions reported in the government-wide statement of net position.

K. Net Position

Government-wide net position is divided into two components: Net investment in capital assets consists 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 of resources less deferred inflows of resources related to those assets. All other net position is reported as unrestricted net position. When an expense is incurred that can be paid using either restricted or unrestricted resources (net position), the district's policy is to first apply the expense toward restricted resources and then toward unrestricted resources.

L. Fund Balance

In the governmental fund financial statements, fund balances are classified as follows:

1. Nonspendable - amounts that cannot be spent either because they are not in spendable form or because they are legally or contractually required to be maintained intact.
2. Restricted – amounts that can be spent only for specific purposes due to constraints placed on the use of resources that are either (a) externally imposed by creditors, grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments, or (b) imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana  
Notes to Financial Statements  
December 31, 2020  
(Continued)

3. Committed - amounts that can be used only for the specific purposes as a result of constraints imposed by the board of commissioners (the district's highest level of decision making authority). Committed amounts cannot be used for any other purpose unless the board of commissioners remove those constraints by taking the same type of action (i.e. legislation, resolution, ordinance).
4. Assigned - amounts that are constrained by the district's intent to be used for specific purposes, but are neither restricted nor committed.
5. Unassigned - all amounts not included in other spendable classifications

The district's policy is to apply expenditures against restricted fund balance and then to other, less-restrictive classifications – committed and then assigned fund balances before using unassigned fund balances.

The calculation of fund balance amounts begins with the determination of nonspendable fund balances. Then restricted fund balances for specific purposes are determined (not including non-spendable amounts). Then any remaining fund balance amounts for the non-general funds are classified as restricted fund balance. It is possible for the non-general funds to have negative unassigned fund balance when non-spendable amounts plus the restricted fund balances for specific purpose amounts exceeds the positive fund balance for the non-general fund.

M. Fair Value Measurements

Generally accepted accounting principles require disclosure to be made about fair value measurements, the level of fair value hierarchy, and valuation techniques. The fair value hierarchy categorizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value into three levels:

Level 1 inputs – The valuation is based on quoted market prices for identical assets or liabilities traded in active markets;

Level 2 inputs – The valuation is based on quoted market prices for similar instruments traded in active markets, quoted prices for identical or similar instruments in markets that are not active, and inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability;

Level 3 inputs – The valuation is determined by using the best information available under the circumstances and might include the government's own data but should adjust those data if (a) reasonably available information indicates that other market participants would use different data or (b) there is something particular to the government that is not available to other market participants.

The asset's or liability's fair value measurement level within the fair value hierarchy is based on lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Notes to Financial Statements  
 December 31, 2020  
 (Continued)

(2) Levied Taxes

The following is a summary of authorized and levied ad valorem taxes:

	<u>Authorized Millage</u>	<u>Levied Millage</u>	<u>Expiration Date</u>
Operating	20.00	20.00	2027

(3) Cash, Cash Equivalents and Investments

At December 31, 2020, the District had cash, cash equivalents, and investments (book balances) totaling \$352,741, as detailed below.

A. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents at December 31, 2020 (book balances) totaled \$132,256. 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.

B. Investments

At December 31, 2020, Benton Fire District #4 had investments consisting of certificate of deposit totaling \$220,485. The investments are presented in the financial statements at fair value using level 2 fair value measure.

The certificate of deposit had a maturity greater than 90 days. The certificate of deposit is carried at cost, which approximates market.

C. Credit Risk

Custodial credit risk is the risk that in the event of a bank failure, the government's deposits may not be returned to it. As of December 31, 2020, the District's bank balance of \$441,105 did not exceed the FDIC insured limits.

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Notes to the Financial Statements  
 December 31, 2020  
 (Continued)

(4) Capital Assets

Capital asset activity for the year ended December 31, 2020 was as follows:

	Balance at Jan. 1, 2020	Additions	Deletions	Balance at Dec. 31, 2020
<u>Governmental Activities:</u>				
Capital assets, not being depreciated:				
Land	\$ 15,450	\$	\$	\$ 15,450
Construction in progress		26,250		26,250
Idle	40,280			40,280
Total capital assets, not being depreciated, at historical cost	<u>55,730</u>	<u>26,250</u>		<u>81,980</u>
Capital assets, being depreciated:				
Buildings	1,105,542			1,105,542
Equipment	483,046	54,391		537,437
Vehicle improvements	36,656			36,656
Apparatus	3,012,684			3,012,684
Leasehold improvements	62,917			62,917
Total capital assets, being depreciated, at historical cost	<u>4,700,845</u>	<u>54,391</u>		<u>4,755,236</u>
Less accumulated depreciation:				
Buildings	(523,263)	(51,975)		(575,238)
Equipment	(424,067)	(28,711)		(452,778)
Vehicle improvements	(28,471)	(902)		(29,373)
Apparatus	(2,052,001)	(122,432)		(2,174,433)
Leasehold improvements	(4,457)	(3,146)		(7,603)
Total accumulated depreciation	<u>(3,032,259)</u>	<u>(207,166)</u>		<u>(3,239,425)</u>
Total capital assets, being depreciated, net	<u>1,668,586</u>	<u>(152,775)</u>		<u>1,515,811</u>
Governmental capital assets, net	<u>\$ 1,724,316</u>	<u>\$ (126,525)</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$ 1,597,791</u>

Depreciation expense for the year ended December 31, 2020, was \$207,166.

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Notes to Financial Statements  
 December 31, 2020  
 (Continued)

(5) Accrued Expenses

Accrued expenses at December 31, 2020 consisted of the following:

Accrued payroll	\$ 68,563
Payroll taxes and benefits	<u>74,355</u>
	<u>\$ 142,918</u>

(6) Risk Management

The District purchases commercial insurance to provide workers compensation and general liability and property insurance. There were no significant reductions in insurance coverages from the prior year.

(7) Leases

For the year ended December 31, 2020, the District had two operating leases on certain properties that are utilized by the district. Lease payments on these leases for the year ended December 31, 2020 were \$500. There were no minimum annual commitments under these leases.

(8) Long-term Liabilities

Long-term liability activity for the year ended December 31, 2020, was as follows:

	<u>Beginning</u> <u>Balance</u>	<u>Additions</u>	<u>Reductions</u>	<u>Ending</u> <u>Balance</u>	<u>Due Within</u> <u>One Year</u>
Net pension liability	\$ 5,241,676	\$ 755,584	\$ _____	\$ 5,997,260	\$ _____
Total long-term liabilities, governmental activities	<u>\$ 5,241,676</u>	<u>\$ 755,584</u>	<u>\$ _____</u>	<u>\$ 5,997,260</u>	<u>\$ _____</u>

(Continued)



Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana  
Notes to Financial Statements  
December 31, 2020  
(Continued)

(9) Pension Plan

The District participates in the State of Louisiana Firefighters' Retirement System (System), a cost-sharing multiple-employer defined benefit pension plan established by Act 434 of 1979 to provide retirement, disability and survivor benefits to firefighters in Louisiana.

**PLAN DESCRIPTION**

Benefit provisions are authorized within Act 434 of 1979 and amended by LRS 11:2251-11:2272. The following is a brief 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.

**Eligibility Requirements**

Any person who becomes an employee as defined in RS 11:2252 on and after January 1, 1980 shall become a member as a condition of employment. Members in the System consist full-time firefighters, eligible employees of the retirement system, or any person in a position as defined in the municipal fire and police civil service system that earns at least \$375 per month, excluding state supplemental pay, and is employed by a fire department of any municipality, parish, or fire district of the State of Louisiana, except for Orleans Parish and the City of Baton Rouge.

No person who has attained age fifty or over shall become a member of the System, unless the person becomes a member by reason of a merger or unless the System received an application for membership before the applicant attained the age of fifty. No person who has not attained the age of eighteen years shall become a member of the System.

Any person who has retired from service under any retirement system or pension fund maintained basically for public officers and employees of the state, its agencies or political subdivisions, and who is receiving retirement benefits therefrom may become a member of this System, provided the person meets all other requirements for membership. Service credit from the retirement system or pension plan from which the member is retired shall not be used for reciprocal recognition of service with this System, or for any other purpose in order to attain eligibility or increase the amount of service credit in this System.

**Retirement Benefits**

Employees with 20 or more years of service who have attained age 50, or employees who have 12 years of service who have attained age 55, or 25 years or service at any age are entitled to annual pension benefits equal to 3.333% of their average final compensation based on the 36 consecutive months of highest pay multiplied by their total years of service, not to exceed 100%. Employees may elect to receive their pension benefits in the form of a joint and survivor annuity.

If employees terminate before rendering 12 years of service, they forfeit the right to receive the portion of their accumulated plan benefits attributable to their employer's contributions.

Benefits are payable over the employees' lives in the form of a monthly annuity. An employee may elect an unreduced benefit or any of seven options at retirement.

See R.S. 11:2256(A) for additional details on retirement benefits.

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana  
Notes to Financial Statements  
December 31, 2020  
(Continued)

**Disability Benefits**

A member who acquires a disability, and who files for disability benefits while in service, and who upon medical examination and certification as provided for in Title 11, is found to have a total disability solely as the result of injuries sustained in the performance of his official duties, or for any cause, provided the member has at least five years of creditable service and provided that the disability was incurred while the member was an active contributing member in active service, shall be entitled to disability benefits under the provisions of R.S. 11:2258(B).

**Death Benefits**

Benefits shall be payable to the surviving eligible spouse or designated beneficiary of a deceased member as specified in R.S. 11:2256(B) and (C).

**Deferred Retirement Option Plan**

After completing 20 years of creditable service and attaining the age of 50 years, or 25 years at any age, a member may elect to participate in the deferred retirement option plan (DROP) for up to 36 months.

Upon commencement of participation in the deferred retirement option plan, employer and employee contributions to the System cease. The monthly retirement benefit that would have been payable is paid into the deferred retirement option plan account. Upon termination of employment, a participant in the program has several options to receive their DROP benefit. A member may (1) elect to roll over all or a portion of their DROP balance into another eligible qualified plan, (2) receive a lump-sum payment from the account, (3) receive single withdrawals at the discretion of the member, (4) receive monthly or annual withdrawals, or (5) receive an annuity based on the deferred retirement option plan account balance. These withdrawals are in addition to his regular monthly benefit.

If employment is not terminated at the end of the 36 months, the participant resumes regular contributions to the System. No withdrawals may be made from the deferred retirement option plan account until the participant retires.

**Initial Benefit Option Plan**

Effective June 16, 1999, 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. Such amounts may be withdrawn or remain in the IBO account earning interest at the same rate as the DROP account.

**Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs)**

Under the provisions of R.S. 11:246 and 11:2260(A)(7), the board of trustees is authorized to grant retired members and widows of members who have retired an annual cost of living increase of up to 3% of their current benefit, and all retired members and widows who are 65 years of age and older a 2% increase in their original benefit. In order for the board to grant either of these increases, the System must meet certain criteria detailed in the statute related to funding status and interest earnings (R.S. 11:243). In lieu of these COLAs, pursuant to R.S. 11:241, the board may also grant an increase based on a formula equal to up to \$1 times the total number of years of credited service accrued at retirement or at death of the member or retiree plus the number of years since retirement or since death of the member or retiree to the system's fiscal year end preceding they payment of

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana  
Notes to Financial Statements  
December 31, 2020  
(Continued)

the benefit increase. If there are not sufficient funds to fund the benefit at the rate of one dollar per year for such total number of years, then the rate shall be reduced in proportion to the amount of funds that are available to fund the cost-of-living adjustment.

**CONTRIBUTIONS**

Contribution requirements for employers, non-employer contributing entities, and employees are established and may be amended in accordance with Title 11 and Title 22 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes.

**Employer and Employee Contributions**

According to State statute, employer contributions are actuarially determined each year. For the year ended June 30, 2020, employer and employee contribution rates for members above the poverty line were 27.75% and 10.0%, respectively. The employer and employee contribution rates for those members below the poverty line were 28.50% and 8.0%, respectively. The District's contributions to the System for the years ended December 31, 2020, 2019, and 2018 were \$608,360, \$581,506, and \$525,604, respectively.

**Non-employer contributions**

According to state statute, the System receives insurance premium tax funds from the state of Louisiana. The tax is considered support from a non-employer contributing entity and appropriated by the legislature each year based on an actuarial study. Non-employer contributions are recognized as revenue during the year ended June 30, 2020 and were excluded from pension expense. Non-employer contributions received by the System and attributable to the District during the year ended December 31, 2020 were \$242,412.

**PENSION LIABILITIES, PENSION EXPENSE, AND DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES AND DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES RELATED TO PENSIONS**

At December 31, 2020, the District reported a liability of \$5,997,260 for its proportionate share of the net pension liability. The net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2020, and the total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of that date. The District's proportion of the net pension liability was based on the historical employer contributions. The employer's proportion was determined on a basis that is consistent with the manner in which contributions to the pension plan are determined. The allocation percentages were used in calculating each employer's proportionate share of the pension amounts.

The allocation method used in determining each employer's proportion was based on the combined contributions to the System during the year ended June 30, 2020 as compared to the total of all combined contributions to the System during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020. At June 30, 2020, the District's proportion was .865212%, which was an increase of .028139% from its proportion measured as of June 30, 2019.

For the year ended December 31, 2020, the District recognized pension expense of \$1,221,403, plus employer's amortization of change in proportionate share and the difference between employer contributions and proportionate share of contributions, \$5,472.

At December 31, 2020, the District reported deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions from the following sources:

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Notes to Financial Statements  
 December 31, 2020  
 (Continued)

	<u>Deferred Outflows of Resources</u>	<u>Deferred Inflows of Resources</u>
Differences between expected and actual experience	\$	\$ 383,704
Changes of assumptions	579,746	
Net difference between projected and actual earnings on pension plan investments	660,455	
Changes in proportion and differences between employer contributions and proportionate share of contributions	584,542	37,359
Employer contributions subsequent to the measurement date	319,068	
Total	<u>\$ 2,143,811</u>	<u>\$ 421,063</u>

The District reported a total of \$319,068 as deferred outflow of resources related to pension contributions made subsequent to the measurement period of June 30, 2020, which will be recognized as a reduction in net pension liability in the year ended December 31, 2021.

Other amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions will be recognized in pension expenses as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
2021	\$ 307,735
2022	457,525
2023	373,204
2024	175,217
2025	52,297
2026	37,702
Total	<u>\$ 1,403,680</u>

**ACTUARIAL METHODS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

The net pension liability was measured as the portion of the present value of projected benefit payments to be provided through the pension plan to current active and inactive employees that is attributed to those employees' past periods of service, less the amount of the pension plan's fiduciary net position.

For each year, the actuary determines the reasonable range of the actuarial valuation interest rate, an expected long-term portfolio rate of return and standard deviation based upon the System's target asset allocation and a thirty-year time horizon. These rates were based on an analysis of the System's portfolio along with expected long-term rates of return, standard deviations of return, and correlations between asset classes collected from a number of investment consulting firms in addition to the System's investment consultant, NEPC, L.L.C. Using these values and assuming that future portfolio returns are normally distributed, ten thousand trials of returns over the upcoming thirty years was performed. The results of these trials were organized into percentiles and a

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Notes to Financial Statements  
 December 31, 2020  
 (Continued)

reasonable range equal to the 40th through 60th percentiles was set. For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020, the reasonable range was set at 5.99% through 7.06% and the Board of Trustees elected to set the System's assumed rate of return at 7.00% for Fiscal 2020. For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019, the reasonable range was set at 6.20% through 7.15% and the Board of Trustees elected to set the System's assumed rate of return at 7.15% for Fiscal 2019. The actuarial valuation interest rates selected by the board, which were within the reasonable range, were 7.00% and 7.15% for fiscal years 2020 and 2019, respectively.

The remaining actuarial assumptions utilized for this report for fiscal year 2020 are based on the results of an actuarial experience study for the period July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2019, unless otherwise specified in this report. The assumptions in the report for fiscal year 2019 were based on the results of an actuarial experience study for the period July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2014. Additional details are given in the actuary's complete Experience Reports for each period. A summary of the actuarial methods and assumptions used in determining the total pension liability as of June 30, 2020, are as follows:

Valuation Date	June 30, 2020
Actuarial Cost Method	Entry Age Normal Cost
Estimated Remaining Service Life	7 years, closed period
Investment Rate of Return	7.00% per annum (net of investment expenses, including inflation) (decreased from 7.15% in 2019)
Inflation Rate	2.50% per annum
Salary increases	14.10% in the first two years of service and 5.20% with 3 or more years of service; includes inflation and merit increases (in 2019, salary increases ranged from 14.75% in the first two years of service to 4.50% with 25 or more years of service)
Cost of Living Adjustments	Only those previously granted

The mortality rate assumptions were updated in fiscal year 2020 to reflect changes from the recent experience study and rates set in the Pub-2010 Public Retirement Plans mortality tables, as compared to the RP-2000 Combined Healthy and Disabled Lives tables that were used for the previous valuation. For the June 30, 2020 valuation, assumptions for mortality rates were based on the following:

- For active members, mortality was set equal to the Pub-2010 Public Retirement Plans Mortality Table for Safety Below-Median Employees.
- For annuitants and beneficiaries, mortality was set equal to the Pub-2010 Public Retirement Plans Mortality Table for Safety Below-Median Healthy Retirees.
- For disabled retirees, mortality was set equal to the Pub-2010 Public Retirement Plans Mortality Table for Safety Disabled Retirees.

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Notes to Financial Statements  
 December 31, 2020  
 (Continued)

- In all cases the base table was multiplied by 105% for males and 115% for females, each with full generational projection using the appropriate MP2019 scale.

The estimated long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was determined by the System's actuary using the System's target asset allocation and the G.S. Curran & Company Consultant Average study for 2020. The consultants' average study included projected nominal rates of return, standard deviations of returns, and correlations of returns for a list of common asset classes collected from a number of investment consultants and investment management firms. Each consultant's response included nominal expected long term rates of return. In order to arrive at long term expected arithmetic real rates of return, the actuary normalized the data received from the consultant's responses in the following ways. Where nominal returns received were arithmetic, the actuary simply reduced the return assumption by the long term inflation assumption. Where nominal returns were geometric, the actuary converted the return to arithmetic by adjusting for the long term standard deviation and then reduced the assumption by the long term inflation assumption. Using the target asset allocation for the System and the average values for expected real rates of return, standard deviation of returns, and correlation of returns, an arithmetic expected nominal rate of return and standard deviation for the portfolio was determined. The System's long-term assumed rate of inflation of 2.50% was used in this process for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020.

The long-term expected real rate of return is an important input into the actuary's determination of the reasonable range for the discount rate which is used in determining the total pension liability. Prior year's financial reports presented the long-term expected real rate of return provided by the System's investment consultant, whereas this year's report presents this information for both fiscal years 2020 and 2019 from the System's actuary. The actuary's method incorporates information from multiple consultants and investments firms regarding future expected rates of return, variances, and correlation coefficients for each asset class. The actuary's method integrates data from multiple sources to produce average values thereby reducing reliance on a single data source.

Best estimates of arithmetic real rates of return for each major class included in the System's target asset allocation as of June 30, 2020, are summarized in the following table:

<u>Asset Class</u>	<u>Target Asset Allocation</u>	<u>Long-Term Expected Real Rates of Return</u>
Fixed income	31%	4.40%
Equity		
US Equity	26%	5.72%
Non-US Equity	12%	6.24%
Global Equity	10%	6.23%
Emerging Market Equity	6%	8.61%
Alternatives		
Real Estate	6%	4.20%
Private Equity	9%	10.29%
Total	<u>100%</u>	

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Notes to Financial Statements  
 December 31, 2020  
 (Continued)

The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 7.00%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumes that contributions from plan members will be made at the current contribution rates, and that contributions from participating employers and non-employer contributing entities will be made at the actuarially-determined rates approved by the Board of Trustees and by the Public Retirement Systems' Actuarial Committee taking into consideration the recommendation of the System's actuary. Based on these assumptions, the System'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 TO CHANGES IN DISCOUNT RATE**

The following presents the net pension liability of the participating employers calculated using the discount rate of 7.00%, as well as what the employers' net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage point lower 6.00% or one percentage point higher 8.00% than the current rate as of June 30, 2020.

	Changes in Discount Rate		
		Current	
	1%	Discount	1%
	Decrease	Rate	Increase
	6.00%	7.00%	8.00%
Net Pension Liability	\$ 8,662,982	\$ 5,997,260	\$ 3,772,168

**CHANGE IN NET PENSION LIABILITY**

The changes in the net pension liability for the year ended June 30, 2020 were recognized in the current reporting period as pension expense except as follows:

*Differences between Expected and Actual Experience:*

The differences between expected and actual experience with regard to economic or demographic factors in the measurement of the total pension liability were recognized as pension expense using the straight-line amortization method over a closed period equal to the average of the expected remaining service lives of all employees that are provided with pensions through the pension plan.

*Differences between Projected and Actual Investment Earnings:*

The differences between projected and actual investment earnings on pension plan investments were recognized in pension expense using the straight-line amortization method over a closed five-year period.

*Changes of Assumptions:*

The changes of assumptions about future economic or demographic factors were recognized in pension expense using the straight-line amortization method over a closed period equal to the average of the expected remaining service lives of all employees that are provided with pensions through the pension plan.

*Change in Proportion:*

Changes in the employer's proportionate shares of the collective net pension liability and collective deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources since the prior measurement date

(Continued)

Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana  
Notes to Financial Statements  
December 31, 2020  
(Continued)

were recognized in employer's pension expense (benefit) using the straight-line amortization method over a closed period equal to the average of the expected remaining service lives of all employees that are provided pensions through the pension plan.

**CONTRIBUTIONS - PROPORTIONATE SHARE**

Differences between contributions remitted to the System and the employer's proportionate share are recognized in pension expense using the straight-line amortization method over a closed period equal to the average of the expected remaining service lives of all employees that are provided with a pension through the pension plan. The resulting deferred inflow/outflow and amortization is not reflected in the schedule of employer amounts due to differences that could arise between contributions reported by the System and contributions reported by the participating employer.

**PLAN FIDUCIARY NET POSITION**

Plan fiduciary net position is a significant component of the System's collective net pension liability. The System's plan fiduciary net position was determined using the accrual basis of accounting. The System's assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses were recorded with the use of estimates and assumptions in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Such estimates primarily related to unsettled transactions and events as of the date of the financial statements and estimates over the determination of the fair market value of the System's investments. Accordingly, actual results may differ from estimated amounts. The Plan's fiduciary net position has been determined on the same basis as that used by the plan. Detailed information about the fiduciary net position is available in a stand-alone audit report on their financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2020. Access to these reports can be found on the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's website, [www.la.la.gov](http://www.la.la.gov).

**RETIREMENT SYSTEM AUDIT REPORT**

Firefighters' Retirement System issued a stand-alone audit report on its financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2020. Access to the audit report can be found on the System's website: [www.lafirefightersret.com](http://www.lafirefightersret.com) or on the Office of Louisiana Legislative Auditor's official website: [www.la.la.gov](http://www.la.la.gov).

(10) Uncertainty

As a result of the COVID-19 Coronavirus, economic uncertainties have arisen which are likely to negatively impact financial resources. While the duration on the economic impact is expected to be temporary, there is considerable uncertainty around the duration. The related financial impact and duration cannot be reasonably estimated at this time.

(11) Subsequent Events

Subsequent events have been evaluated through June 29, 2021, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.



Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances  
 Budget and Actual  
 General Fund  
 For the Year Ended December 31, 2020

	Budgeted Amounts		Actual Amounts (Budgetary Basis)	Variance with Final Budget Positive (Negative)
	Original	Final		
<b>Revenues</b>				
Ad valorem taxes	\$ 3,550,000	\$ 3,594,538	\$ 3,615,189	\$ 20,651
Intergovernmental-fire insurance rebate	88,000	87,948	87,948	
Interest income	2,500	2,114	63,419	61,305
Miscellaneous	55,000	135,875	76,364	(59,511)
<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>3,695,500</b>	<b>3,820,475</b>	<b>3,842,920</b>	<b>22,445</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>				
Current:				
General government	110,000	114,946	114,956	(10)
Public safety	3,577,800	3,645,073	3,589,128	55,945
Capital outlay	7,700	60,456	80,642	(20,186)
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>3,695,500</b>	<b>3,820,475</b>	<b>3,784,726</b>	<b>35,749</b>
Excess of revenues over expenditures			58,194	58,194
Fund balances at beginning of year			118,834	118,834
Fund balances at end of year	\$	\$	\$ 177,028	\$ 177,028

See accompanying note to required supplementary information.

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Notes to Required Supplementary Information  
 December 31, 2020

The District's budget is adopted on a cash basis for all funds, with the exception of certain payroll related payables which are recorded by the District, and ad valorem taxes, which are budgeted in the period for which the taxes are levied. There was one amendment to the 2020 budget. Budget comparison statements included in the accompanying financial statements include the original and adopted budgets. The schedule below reconciles excess (deficiency) of revenues and other sources over expenditures and other uses on the budget basis with GAAP basis:

	<u>General Fund</u>
Excess of revenues and other sources over expenditures and other uses (budget basis)	\$ 58,194
Adjustments:	
Revenue accruals – net	
Expenditure accruals – net	<u>( 29,407)</u>
Excess of revenues and other sources over expenditures and other uses (GAAP basis)	<u>\$ 28,787</u>

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Schedule of Contributions  
 For the Year Ended December 31, 2020

State of Louisiana Firefighters' Retirement System

<u>Year Ended December 31</u>	<u>Statutorily Required Contribution</u>	<u>Contributions in relation to the statutorily required contribution</u>	<u>Contribution Deficiency (Excess)</u>	<u>Agency's Covered-employee payroll</u>	<u>Contributions as a percentage of covered-employee payroll</u>
2020	\$ 608,360	\$ 608,360	\$	\$ 2,031,852	29.94%
2019	581,506	581,506		2,141,928	27.15%
2018	525,604	525,604		1,983,410	26.50%
2017	508,543	508,543		1,965,193	25.88%
2016	488,053	488,053		1,864,448	26.18%

\*Amounts presented were determined as of the end of the fiscal year (December 31).

Schedule is intended to show information for 10 years. Additional years will be displayed as they become available.

Benton Fire District No. 4  
 Benton, Louisiana  
 Schedule of Proportionate Share of Net Pension Liability  
 For the Year Ended December 31, 2020

State of Louisiana Firefighters' Retirement System

<u>Year Ended June 30</u>	<u>Agency's Proportion of the net pension liability</u>	<u>Agency's Proportionate share of the net pension liability</u>	<u>Agency's Covered-employee payroll</u>	<u>Agency's Proportionate share of the net pension liability as a percentage of its covered-employee payroll</u>	<u>Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total pension liability</u>
2020	0.865212%	\$ 5,997,260	\$ 2,154,041	278.42%	72.61%
2019	0.837073%	5,241,676	2,006,051	261.29%	73.96%
2018	0.842080%	4,843,721	1,989,102	243.51%	74.76%
2017	0.847604%	4,858,338	1,979,039	245.49%	73.55%
2016	0.712830%	4,662,559	1,606,726	290.19%	68.16%

\*Amounts presented were determined as of the measurement date (June 30).

Schedule is intended to show information for 10 years. Additional years will be displayed as they become available.

Benton Fire District No. 4  
Benton, Louisiana  
Schedule of Compensation, Benefits, and Other Payments to Agency Head  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2020

**Agency Head: J.T. Wallace, Fire Chief**

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Salary	\$ 125,190
State supplemental pay	6,000
Benefits-insurance	6,418
Benefits-retirement	22,849

# COOK & MOREHART

*Certified Public Accountants*

1215 HAWN AVENUE • SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA 71107 • P.O. BOX 78240 • SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA 71137-8240

TRAVIS H. MOREHART, CPA  
VICKIE D. CASE, CPA

TELEPHONE (318) 222-5415

FAX (318) 222-5441

STUART L. REEKS, CPA  
J. PRESTON DELAUNE, CPA

MEMBER  
AMERICAN INSTITUTE  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

SOCIETY OF LOUISIANA  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

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*

Independent Auditors' Report

Board of Commissioners  
Benton Fire District No. 4

We have audited, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to the financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the governmental activities and the major fund of Benton Fire District No. 4 as of and for the year ended December 31, 2020, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise Benton Fire District No. 4's basic financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated June 29, 2021.

### **Internal Control Over Financial Reporting**

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered Benton Fire District No. 4'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 Benton Fire District No. 4's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of Benton Fire District No. 4'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 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.

Our consideration of the 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. Given these limitations, 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.

### **Compliance and Other Matters**

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether Benton Fire District No. 4's financial statements are free from 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 financial statements. 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 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.



Cook & Morehart  
Certified Public Accountants  
June 29, 2021