



LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR
DARYL G. PURPERA, CPA, CFE

July 15, 2013

VILLAGE OF CREOLA

The Grant Parish Village of Creola failed to pay certain bills in a timely manner, including a court judgment, and lacks an overall written business and finance plan to improve its fiscal status, according to work conducted by Legislative Auditor Daryl Purpera's office.

The auditor publicly released a letter on Monday outlining 19 issues discovered after advisors reviewed village records and met with Creola staff and officials. The auditor's office went to the village after financial concerns were raised by private accountants in annual financial reports from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2012.

In the letter to Mayor Kelly Sommer and the Board of Aldermen of the village, Purpera said his office will be monitoring Creola's actions to see that it improves fiscal operations. A copy of the letter was also sent to the district attorney of the 35th Judicial District Court.

The auditor's letter stressed the need for Creola officials to work toward resolving the problems. Besides lacking overall written policies for financial operations, the auditor's staff said village officials did not have a plan developed and implemented for eliminating a fund balance deficit that was reported (in the June 30, 2012 annual financial report) to be about \$25,000.

The letter said that the village also has failed to provide the board of aldermen with monthly financial statements and has not reviewed and reconciled bank statements promptly, including researching which checks have not cleared bank accounts.

Also, the letter said that Creola has not enrolled its eligible police officers in the Municipal Police Employees' Retirement System as state law requires, and the village lacks data on the nature and disposition of delinquent traffic tickets and fines.

Furthermore, the auditor's office reported that non-authorized village officials appeared to have dismissed traffic tickets, reduced fines, and held court proceedings. Generally, only the prosecutor is authorized to dismiss tickets or reduce a traffic charge and only the magistrate can handle court proceedings.

Officials with the Village of Creola have indicated that they will work to resolve the issues pointed out by the auditor's office.

For more information, contact:

Daryl G. Purpera, CPA, CFE
Legislative Auditor
225-339-3800