
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL REPORT

DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Board of Directors
Ascension Economic Development Corporation
Ascension Economic Development Foundation
Gonzales, Louisiana

Report on the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying consolidated financial statements of Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation (nonprofit organizations), which comprise the consolidated statements of financial position as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, and the related consolidated statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, and the consolidated changes in its consolidated net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

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 Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation 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.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these consolidated 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 consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the consolidated financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the consolidated financials are available to be issued.

Auditors' Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated 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 opinion. 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 consolidated 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 consolidated 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 Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the consolidated financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation'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.

Report on Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the consolidated financial statements as a whole. The accompanying consolidating statement of financial position, consolidating statement of activities and changes in net assets and schedule of compensation, benefits, and other payments to the chief executive officer are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the consolidated financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the consolidated financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audits of the consolidated financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the consolidated financial statements or the consolidated 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 consolidated 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 May 8, 2024, on our consideration of Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation'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 Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation'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 Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Diez, Dupuy & Ruiz

Gonzales, Louisiana

May 8, 2024

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

<u>ASSETS</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 978,205	\$ 1,054,801
Prepaid expenses	7,401	-
Total current assets	985,606	1,054,801
<u>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</u>		
Nondepreciable capital assets	35,000	35,000
Property and equipment, net	273,573	286,450
Right-to-use asset, net	1,245	2,489
Total non-current assets	309,818	323,939
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 1,295,424	\$ 1,378,740
<u>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</u>		
<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>		
Accounts payable	\$ -	\$ 21,136
Accrued expenses	26,178	21,516
Current portion of lease payable	1,253	19,256
Total current liabilities	27,431	61,908
<u>LONG TERM LIABILITIES</u>		
Note payable, less current portion	-	103,940
Lease payable, less current portion	-	1,253
Total long term liabilities	-	105,193
TOTAL LIABILITIES	27,431	167,101
<u>NET ASSETS</u>		
Without donor restrictions	1,267,993	1,211,639
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 1,295,424	\$ 1,378,740

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

	<u>Without Donor Restrictions 2023</u>	<u>Without Donor Restrictions 2022</u>
<u>REVENUES</u>		
Grants and contributions	\$ 530,293	\$ 623,518
Interest income	3,061	1,260
Other income	3,539	-
Total revenues	536,893	624,778
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Supporting Services:		
Economic services	364,291	504,769
Management and General	116,248	110,586
Total expenses	480,539	615,355
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	56,354	9,423
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	1,211,639	1,202,216
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$ 1,267,993	\$ 1,211,639

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

2023

	Economic Development	Management and General	Total Expenses
Salaries	\$ 206,479	\$ 74,897	\$ 281,376
Payroll taxes and benefits	52,664	18,394	71,058
Travel and entertainment	16,389	5,945	22,334
Legal and professional fees	5,540	2,010	7,550
Office	21,022	7,626	28,648
Depreciation/Amortization	10,362	3,759	14,121
Insurance and utilities	2,605	945	3,550
Marketing and research	34,618	-	34,618
Incentive study	7,245	-	7,245
Interest expense	2,276	825	3,101
Other	5,091	1,847	6,938
Totals	<u>\$ 364,291</u>	<u>\$ 116,248</u>	<u>\$ 480,539</u>

2022

	Economic Development	Management and General	Total Expenses
Salaries	\$ 193,181	\$ 67,750	\$ 260,931
Payroll taxes and benefits	51,120	17,928	69,048
Travel and entertainment	6,154	2,158	8,312
Legal and professional fees	9,197	3,225	12,422
Office	22,653	7,944	30,597
Depreciation/Amortization	10,455	3,666	14,121
Insurance and utilities	4,961	1,740	6,701
Marketing and research	85,413	-	85,413
Incentive study	104,026	-	104,026
Interest expense	5,388	1,889	7,277
Other	12,221	4,286	16,507
Totals	<u>\$ 504,769</u>	<u>\$ 110,586</u>	<u>\$ 615,355</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

	2023	2022
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Change in net assets	\$ 56,354	\$ 9,423
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation/Amortization	14,121	14,121
Increase in prepaid expenses	(7,401)	-
Increase (Decrease) in accounts payable	(21,136)	21,136
Increase (Decrease) in accrued expenses	4,662	4,024
Net cash provided by operating activities	46,600	48,704
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of property & equipment	-	-
Net cash used in investing activities	-	-
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Payments on long term debt	(123,196)	(29,750)
Net cash used in financing activities	(123,196)	(29,750)
NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	(76,596)	18,954
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		
Beginning of Year	1,054,801	1,035,847
End of Year	\$ 978,205	\$ 1,054,801
Interest paid on loan	\$ 3,101	\$ 7,277

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. Significant Accounting Policies and Presentations

Organization and Purpose

The Ascension Economic Development Corporation (the Corporation) is a non-profit corporation which was organized to promote economic development for the Parish of Ascension and is funded by the Parish of Ascension, the City of Gonzales, and the Industrial Development Board.

The Corporation's board of directors are appointed by the Parish of Ascension, the Ascension Chamber of Commerce, the City of Gonzales, and the President of the Parish of Ascension.

The Ascension Economic Development Foundation (the Foundation) is a non-profit corporation which was organized to support the Corporation through charitable donations.

Basis of presentation – The financial statements of The Corporation and Foundation have been prepared in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles ("US GAAP"), which require The Corporation and Foundation to report information regarding its financial position and activities according to the following net asset classifications:

Net assets without donor restrictions: Net assets that are not subject to donor-imposed restrictions and may be expended for any purpose in performing the primary objectives of the organization. These net assets may be used at the discretion of The Corporation and Foundation's management and the board of directors.

Net assets with donor restrictions: Net assets subject to stipulations imposed by donors, and grantors. Some donor restrictions are temporary in nature; those restrictions will be met by actions of the Corporation and Foundation or by the passage of time. Other donor restrictions are perpetual in nature, where by the donor has stipulated the funds be maintained in perpetuity.

Donor restricted contributions are reported as increases in net assets with donor restrictions. When a restriction expires, net assets are reclassified from net assets with donor restrictions to net assets without donor restrictions in the statements of activities.

Revenue Recognition – The Corporation recognizes contributions when cash, securities or other assets; an unconditional promise to give; or a notification of a beneficial interest is received. Conditional promises to give – that is, those with measurable performance or other barrier and a right of return – are not recognized until the conditions on which they depend have been met. There were not any conditional promises to give as of December 31, 2023 and 2022.

Measure of operations – The statements of activities reports all changes in net assets, including changes in net assets from operating and nonoperating activities. Operating activities consist of those items attributable to the Corporation and Foundation's ongoing economic development and interest earned on cash. Nonoperating activities are limited to resources from activities considered to be of a more unusual or nonrecurring nature.

Cash and cash equivalents – The Corporation and Foundation's cash consists of cash on deposit with banks. Cash equivalents represent money market funds or short-term investments with original maturities of three months or less from the date of purchase, except for those amounts that are held in the investment portfolio which are invested for long-term purposes.

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. Significant Accounting Policies and Presentations (continued)

Concentrations of credit risk – Financial instruments that potentially subject the Corporation and Foundation to concentrations of credit risk consist principally of cash and cash equivalents and investments. The Corporation and Foundation maintains its cash and cash equivalents in various bank accounts that, at times, may exceed federally insured limits. The Corporation and Foundation's cash and cash equivalent accounts have been placed with high credit quality financial institutions. The Corporation and Foundation has not experienced, nor does it anticipate, any losses with respect to such accounts.

Contributions receivable – Unconditional promises to give that are expected to be collected within one year are recorded at net realizable value. Unconditional promises to give that are expected to be collected in future years are recorded at the present value of their estimated future cash flows. The discounts on those amounts are computed using risk-adjusted interest rates applicable to the years in which the promises are received. Discount amortization is included in contribution revenue. Conditional promises to give are not included as support until the conditions are met.

Property and equipment, net – Property and equipment are stated at cost at the date of purchase or, for donated assets, at fair value at the date of donation, less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is calculated using the straight-line method over the lesser of the estimated useful lives of the assets or lease term. The useful lives range from three to thirty nine years. The Corporation and Foundation's policy is to capitalize renewals and betterments acquired for greater than \$500 and expense normal repairs and maintenance as incurred. The Corporation and Foundation's management periodically evaluates whether events or circumstances have occurred indicating that the carrying amount of long-lived assets may not be recovered.

Leases – The Corporation and Foundation implemented FASB ASU 2016-02, Leases. This accounting standard requires all lessees to recognize assets and liabilities and all lessors to recognize lease receivables related to lease arrangements longer than twelve months on the balance sheet, as well as additional disclosures.

The Corporation and Foundation has a lease for office equipment. The Corporation and Foundation determine if an arrangement is a lease at inception. For leases with terms greater than twelve months, right-to-use asset and lease liabilities are recognized at the contract commencement date based on the present value of lease payments over the lease term. Right-to-use assets represents the Corporation and Foundation's right to use the underlying asset for the lease term. Lease liabilities present the Corporation and Foundation's obligation to make lease payments arising from these contracts. The Corporation and Foundation uses a risk-free rate, which is derived from information available at the lease commencement date, in determining the present value of lease payments. Lease terms may include options to extend or terminate the lease when it is reasonably certain that such options will be exercised.

Use of estimates – The preparation of financial statements in conformity with US GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts and disclosures. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. Significant Accounting Policies and Presentations (continued)

Compensated Absences – Employees accrue 4.5 hours of leave for each pay period worked. On December 31 of each year, employees may carry forward a maximum of twenty-seven hours of accrued leave into the new calendar year. Any accrued leave in excess of twenty-seven hours will be credited to a banked medical leave account. Accrued leave is not compensable upon the separation of the employee except upon retirement. Employees may accrue up to a maximum of 216 hours of banked medical leave, which is not compensable under any circumstances.

Employees earn from 10 to 20 days of annual vacation leave per year depending on length of service. Accrued vacation is capped at a maximum of twice the employee's annual allotment. At the time of separation of employment or retirement, accrued vacation time will be paid.

Contributions – Contributions received are recorded as net assets without donor restrictions or net assets with donor restrictions, depending on the existence and/or nature of any donor-imposed restrictions. Contributions that are restricted by the donor are reported as an increase in net assets without donor restrictions if the restriction expires in the reporting period in which the contribution is recognized. All other donor restricted contributions are reported as an increase in net assets with donor restrictions, depending on the nature of restriction. When a restriction expires (that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished), net assets with donor restrictions are reclassified to net assets without donor restrictions and reported in the statements of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

Contributed property and equipment are recorded at fair value at the date of donation. Contributions with donor-imposed stipulations regarding how long the contributed assets must be used are recorded as net assets with donor restrictions; otherwise, the contributions are recorded as net assets without donor restrictions.

Functional expenses – The costs of providing program and other activities have been summarized on a functional basis in the statements of activities. Accordingly, certain costs have been allocated among economic development and supporting services benefited. Such allocations are determined by management on an equitable basis. All expenses were allocated based on time and effort.

Income Taxes

The Corporation is exempt from income tax under Section 501(c) (6). The Foundation is exempt from income taxes under Code Section 501(c) (3), though it is subject to tax on income unrelated to its exempt purpose, unless that income is otherwise excluded by the Code. The Corporation and Foundation have processes presently in place to ensure the maintenance of its tax-exempt status; to identify and report unrelated income; to determine its filing and tax obligations in jurisdictions for which it has nexus; and to identify and evaluate other matters that may be considered tax positions. The Corporation and Foundation has determined that there are no material uncertain tax positions that require recognition or disclosure in the financial statements.

Reclassification

Certain accounts in the prior year financial statements have been reclassified for comparative purposes to conform to the presentation in the current year financial statements.

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2. Availability and Liquidity

The following represents the Corporation and Foundation's financial assets at December 31, 2023 and 2022:

Financial assets at year-end:	2023	2022
Cash	\$ 978,205	\$ 1,054,801
Less amounts not available to be used within one year:		
Board Designations:		
Strategic Initiatives	312,904	309,963
Financial assets available to meet cash needs for general expenditures within one year	\$ 665,301	\$ 744,838

3. Property and Equipment

Major classifications of property and equipment as of December 31, 2023 and 2022 are summarized as follows:

	2023	2022
Property and equipment		
Furniture and equipment	\$ 34,703	\$ 34,703
Building and improvements	282,013	282,013
Land	35,000	35,000
	351,716	351,716
Less: accumulated depreciation	(43,143)	(30,266)
Property and equipment, net	\$ 308,573	\$ 321,450
 Right-to-use asset		
Leased equipment	\$ 4,977	\$ 4,977
Less: accumulated depreciation	(3,732)	(2,488)
Right-to-use asset, net	\$ 1,245	\$ 2,489

Depreciation expense related to the property and equipment in service was \$12,877 for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022, respectively.

Amortization expense for right-to-use asset was \$1,244 for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022, respectively.

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

4. Compensated Absences

As of December 31, 2023 and 2022, accumulated vacation and personal/sick leave accrual was \$25,470 and \$20,062 respectively, which is included in accrued expenses.

5. Retirement Plan

The Corporation has a 401(k)-profit sharing plan for all full-time employees. Participants may make voluntary contributions to the plan up to a maximum of \$22,500 and \$20,500 for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022. Participants are 100% vested in their contributions. The Corporation provides a 5% match of an electing participant's deferral and may make discretionary profit-sharing contributions. Participants vest in the Organization's contributions at the rate of 20% per year of service beginning with the participant's first full year of service. The Corporation's contributions to the plan were \$13,333 and \$12,615 for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022, respectively.

6. Concentrations

The Corporation received approximately 100% of its revenue from governmental sources during the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022. Furthermore, the Parish of Ascension provided \$416,960 and \$516,268 during the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022, respectively, as such, the Corporation is economically dependent on the Parish of Ascension.

7. Net Assets

Net assets without donor restrictions were as follows for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022:

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Undesignated	\$ 955,089	\$ 901,676
Strategic Initiatives	<u>312,904</u>	<u>309,963</u>
	<u>\$ 1,276,993</u>	<u>\$ 1,211,639</u>

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

8. Long-term Debt

The Corporation's long-term debt consists of the following for the years ending December 31:

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Note payable to a Bank, due in June 2025, payable in monthly installments of \$1,967, with interest at 5%, secured by a building.	\$ -	\$ 121,892
	\$ -	\$ 121,892

Note obligation was paid off during the year ended December 31, 2023.

9. Leases

The Corporation has entered into an agreement to lease office equipment. The lease agreement qualifies as an other than short-term lease and; therefore, has been recorded at the present value of the future minimum lease payments as of the date of inception.

The Corporation leases a copy machine under a lease expiring in 4 years. The agreement was executed on December 1, 2020 and requires 48 monthly payments of \$116.82. There are no variable payment components of the lease. The lease liability is measured at an incremental borrowing rate of 5%.

The future minimum lease obligation and net present value of the minimum lease payment as of December 31, 2023 is as follows:

2024	\$	1,285
Total minimum lease payments		1,285
Less amount representing interest		32
	\$	1,253

10. Subsequent Events

Management has evaluated subsequent events through the date the financial statements were available to be issued, May 8, 2024, and determined that there were no events that require additional disclosure. No events occurring after this date have been evaluated for inclusion in these financial statements.



**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 Directors
Ascension Economic Development Corporation
Ascension Economic Development Foundation
Gonzales, Louisiana

We have audited, 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, the consolidated financial statements of Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation (nonprofit organizations), which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, and the related consolidated statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated May 8, 2024.

Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the consolidated financial statements, we considered Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the consolidated financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation'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 consolidated 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 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 or significant deficiencies may exist that have not been identified.

Report on Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation's consolidated 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 consolidated 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 organization'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 organization's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.



Gonzales, Louisiana
May 8, 2024

**ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AND
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION**

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

SUMMARY OF AUDIT RESULTS

1. The independent auditors' report expresses an unmodified opinion on whether the consolidated financial statements of Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation were prepared in accordance with GAAP.
2. No significant deficiencies or material weaknesses relating to the audit of the consolidated financial statements are reported on the 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*.
3. No instances of noncompliance material to the consolidated financial statements of Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation which would be required to be reported in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, were disclosed during the audit.

FINDINGS – FINANCIAL STATEMENT AUDIT

NONE NOTED

FINDINGS – COMPLIANCE

NONE NOTED

**ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AND
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION**

SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

FINDINGS – FINANCIAL STATEMENT AUDIT

NONE NOTED

FINDINGS – COMPLIANCE

NONE NOTED

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

CONSOLIDATING STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 2023

ASSETS

	<u>Corporation</u>	<u>Foundation</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 940,577	\$ 37,628	\$ 978,205
Prepaid expenses	7,401	-	7,401
Total current assets	947,978	37,628	985,606
<u>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</u>			
Nondepreciable capital assets	35,000	-	35,000
Property and equipment, net	273,573	-	273,573
Right-to-use asset, net	1,245	-	1,245
Total non-current assets	309,818	-	309,818
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 1,257,796	\$ 37,628	\$ 1,295,424

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>			
Accrued expenses	\$ 26,178	\$ -	\$ 26,178
Current portion of long term debt	1,253	-	1,253
Total current liabilities	27,431	-	27,431
<u>LONG TERM LIABILITIES</u>			
Lease payable, less current portion	-	-	-
Total long term liabilities	-	-	-
TOTAL LIABILITIES	27,431	-	27,431
<u>NET ASSETS</u>			
Without donor restrictions	1,230,365	37,628	1,267,993
TOTAL NET ASSETS	1,230,365	37,628	1,267,993
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 1,257,796	\$ 37,628	\$ 1,295,424

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

CONSOLIDATING STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	<u>Without Donor Restrictions Corporation</u>	<u>Without Donor Restrictions Foundation</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>REVENUES</u>			
Grants and contributions	\$ 530,293	\$ -	\$ 530,293
Interest income	3,061	-	3,061
Other income	3,539	-	3,539
Total revenues	<u>536,893</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>536,893</u>
<u>EXPENSES</u>			
Salaries	281,376	-	281,376
Payroll taxes and benefits	71,058	-	71,058
Travel and entertainment	22,334	-	22,334
Legal and professional fees	6,950	600	7,550
Office	28,648	-	28,648
Depreciation/Amortization	14,121	-	14,121
Insurance	3,550	-	3,550
Marketing and research	34,618	-	34,618
Incentive study	7,245	-	7,245
Interest expense	3,101	-	3,101
Other	6,928	10	6,938
Total expenses	<u>479,929</u>	<u>610</u>	<u>480,539</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	56,964	(610)	56,354
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>1,173,401</u>	<u>38,238</u>	<u>1,211,639</u>
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 1,230,365</u>	<u>\$ 37,628</u>	<u>\$ 1,267,993</u>

ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ASCENSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

SCHEDULE OF COMPENSATION, BENEFITS, AND
OTHER PAYMENTS TO CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Kate MacArthur, President/CEO

Salary	\$	149,864
Benefits-insurance		10,271
Benefits-retirement		7,493
Car allowance		5,400
Cell Phone allowance		900
Dues		2,145
Conferences		10,340
Conference Travel		9,288
	\$	<u>195,701</u>

Kate MacArthur provides oversight to the Ascension Economic Development Foundation. She does not receive any compensation, benefits, or other payments from the Foundation.



INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES

To the Board of Directors of Ascension Economic Development Corporation
and the Ascension Economic Development Foundation, 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, 2023 through December 31, 2023. Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation's management is responsible for those C/C areas identified in the SAUPs.

Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation 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 LLA's SAUPs for the fiscal period January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023. Additionally, LLA has agreed to and acknowledged that the procedures performed are appropriate for its purposes. This report may not be suitable for any other purpose. The procedures performed may not address all the items of interest to a user of this report and may not meet the needs of all users of this report and, as such, users are responsible for determining whether the procedures performed are appropriate for their purposes.

The procedures and associated findings are as follows:

1) Written Policies and Procedures

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

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

Written policies and procedures were obtained and address the functions noted above.

- 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.

Written policies and procedures were obtained and address the functions noted above with the exception of how vendors are added to the vendor list.

Management's response: We do not deem maintaining a vendor list necessary since the volume of transactions is low and President/CEO approves all invoices and signs all checks for disbursements.

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

Written policies and procedures were obtained and address the functions noted above.

- 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).

Written policies and procedures were obtained and address the functions noted above except for determining the completeness of all collections.

Management's response: We receive revenue from four sources that consists of 20 ACH/checks received for the year. Our review of the financial statements would note any errors in receipts.

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

Written policies and procedures were obtained and address the functions noted above.

- 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.

Written policies and procedures were obtained and address the functions noted above with the exception of standard terms and legal review.

Management's response: We do not issue many contracts and our contracts vary by type. Therefore, it would be difficult to develop a list of standard terms. The Board approves all expenses over \$10,000.

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

Written policies and procedures were obtained and address the functions noted above.

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

Written policies and procedures were obtained and address the functions noted above.

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

This section is not applicable to a non-profit organization.

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

This section is not applicable to a non-profit organization.

- 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.

Written policies and procedures were obtained and address the functions noted above.

- 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.

This section is not applicable to a non-profit organization.

2) Board (or Finance Committee, if applicable)

- A. Obtain and inspect the board/finance committee minutes for the fiscal period, as well as the board's enabling legislation, charter, bylaws, or equivalent document in effect during the fiscal period, and:
- i. Observe that the board/finance committee met with a quorum at least monthly, or on a frequency in accordance with the board's enabling legislation, charter, bylaws or other equivalent document.
The Board met with a quorum as required.
 - ii. For those entities reporting on the governmental accounting model, observe that 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. *Alternately, for those entities reporting on the nonprofit accounting model, observe that the minutes referenced or included financial activity relating to public funds if those public funds comprised more than 10% of the entity's collections during the fiscal period.*
The minutes documented the Board's review of financial activity of the entity.
 - iii. For governmental entities, obtain the prior year audit report and observe the unassigned fund balance in the general fund. If the general fund had a negative ending unassigned fund balance in the prior year audit report, observe that the minutes for at least one meeting during the fiscal period referenced or included a formal plan to eliminate the negative unassigned fund balance in the general fund.
Not applicable.
 - iv. Observe whether the board/finance committee received written updates of the progress of resolving audit finding(s), according to management's corrective action plan at each meeting until the findings are considered fully resolved.
No audit findings in the prior year.

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:
- Obtained listing of client bank accounts for the fiscal period from management and management's representation that listing is complete.*
- i. Bank reconciliations include evidence that they were prepared within 2 months of the related statement closing date (e.g., initialed and dated, electronically logged);
No exceptions noted.
 - ii. Bank reconciliations include written evidence that a member of management or a board member who does not handle cash, post ledgers, or issue checks has reviewed each bank reconciliation within 1 month of the date of reconciliation was prepared (e.g., initialed and dated, electronically logged); and
The accounts selected were reviewed by a member of management or board member but the date of review was not noted.

Management's response: Management will include date of review on bank reconciliations.

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

No exceptions noted.

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).

Obtained a listing of deposit sites and management's representation that listing is complete.

- B. For each deposit site selected, obtain a listing of collection locations and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select one collection location for each deposit site (i.e. 5 collection locations for 5 deposit sites), obtain and inspect written policies and procedures relating to employee job duties (if no written policies or procedures, 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:

Obtained a listing of collection locations and management's representation that listing is complete.

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

No exceptions noted.

- ii. Each employee responsible for collecting cash is 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;

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted.

- 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 responsible for collecting cash, unless another employee verifies the reconciliation.

No exceptions noted.

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

The Corporation does not receive cash payments; therefore, there is no policy for theft or bond coverage.

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). *Alternately, the practitioner may use a source document other than bank statements when selecting the deposit dates for testing, such as a cash collection log, daily revenue report, receipt book, etc.* Obtain supporting documentation for each of the 10 deposits and:

i. Observe that receipts are sequentially pre-numbered.

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted.

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).

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted.

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).

Obtained listing of locations that process payments and management's representation that listing is complete.

B. For each location selected under procedure #5A above, obtain a listing of those employees involved with non-payroll purchasing and payment functions. Obtain written policies and procedures relating to employee job duties (if the agency has no written policies and procedures, 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/making the purchase;

We were unable to perform the above prescribed procedure because the entity does not have the resources available to separate duties for the initiation and approval of transactions. However, we noted that invoices and/or adequate supporting documentation was present for the each of the transactions, matched the associated payments, and checks were signed by authorized signor.

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

No exceptions noted.

- 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;

The person responsible for processing payments is not prohibited from adding/modifying vendor files and there is no evidence that another employee is responsible for periodically reviewing changes to vendor files.

Management's response: Due to the limited amount of staff available, we are not able to segregate these functions.

- 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

The employee who mails the checks also processes them.

Management's response: Due to the limited amount of staff available, we are not able to segregate these functions.

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

No exceptions noted.

- 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

No exception noted.

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

The disbursement documentation included evidence of segregation of duties tested under #5B with the exception of 5B(i), 5B(iii), and 5B(iv) as noted above.

Management's response: Due to the limited amount of staff available, we are not able to segregate these functions.

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

One of the items selected did not have documentation that the electronic disbursement was approved by an authorized signer.

Management's Response: Management will implement procedures to ensure there is documentation supporting the proper approval of electronic disbursements.

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.

Obtained listing of the credit cards and management's representation that listing is complete.

- B. Using the listing prepared by management, randomly select 5 cards (or all 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

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted.

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

Obtained listing of travel and related expense reimbursements and management's representation that listing is complete.

- 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);

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted.

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. *Alternately, the practitioner may use an equivalent selection source, such as an active vendor list.* Obtain management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select 5 contracts (or all contracts if less than 5) from the listing, excluding the practitioner's contract, and

Obtained listing of contracts initiated or renewed during the fiscal period and management's representation that listing is complete.

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

No exceptions noted

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

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted

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

No exceptions noted.

9) Payroll and Personnel

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

No exceptions noted.

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

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

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted.

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

No exceptions noted.

- 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, 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.

No employees or officials terminated during the fiscal period.

- 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.

No exceptions noted.

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 each employee/official completed one hour of ethics training during the calendar year as required by R.S. 42:1170; and

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

11) Debt Service

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

12) Fraud Notice

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

Management asserted that the entity did not have any misappropriations of public funds or assets.

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

No exceptions noted.

13) Information Technology Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity

- A. Perform the following procedures, **verbally discuss the results with management, and report “We performed the procedure and discussed the results with management.”**

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

We performed the procedure and discussed the results with management.

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

We performed the procedure and discussed the results with management.

- 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.

We performed the procedure and discussed the results with management.

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

No employees or officials terminated during the fiscal period.

- C. Using 5 randomly selected employees/officials from Payroll and Personnel procedure #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 cybersecurity training as required by R.S. 42:1267.

Not applicable.

14) Sexual Harassment

- A. Using the 5 randomly selected employees/officials from Payroll and Personnel procedure #9A above, 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.

Not applicable.

- 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).

Not applicable.

- 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;

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

We were engaged by Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation 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 identified in the SAUPs. Accordingly, we do not express such an 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 Ascension Economic Development Corporation and Ascension Economic Development Foundation 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.

Diez, Dupuy & Ruiz

Gonzales, Louisiana
May 8, 2024