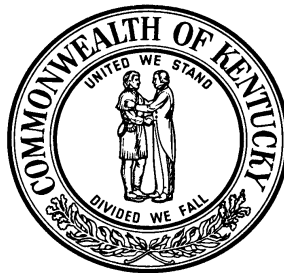


**REPORT OF THE AUDIT OF THE
MERCER COUNTY
CLERK**

**For The Year Ended
December 31, 2015**



**MIKE HARMON
AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**AUDIT OF THE
MERCER COUNTY CLERK**

**For The Year Ended
December 31, 2015**

The Auditor of Public Accounts has completed the Mercer County Clerk's audit for the year ended December 31, 2015. Based upon the audit work performed, the financial statement presents fairly in all material respects, the receipts, disbursements, and excess fees in conformity with the regulatory basis of accounting.

Financial Condition:

Excess fees decreased by \$1,347 from the prior year, resulting in excess fees of \$89,032 as of December 31, 2015. Receipts increased by \$40,175 from the prior year and disbursements increased by \$41,522.

Debt Obligations:

The Mercer County Clerk's office was committed to the following lease agreements as of December 31, 2015:

<u>Item Purchased</u>	<u>Monthly Payment</u>	<u>Term Of Agreement</u>	<u>Ending Date</u>	<u>Principal Balance December 31, 2015</u>
Copier	\$ 578	60 months	3/1/2017	\$ 7,510
Hardware/Software	\$ 4,174	60 months	9/23/2017	\$ 94,076

Deposits:

The county clerk's deposits were insured and collateralized by bank securities.

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MIKE HARMON
AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

The Honorable Milward Dedman, Mercer County Judge/Executive
The Honorable Chris Horn, Mercer County Clerk
Members of the Mercer County Fiscal Court

Independent Auditor's Report

Report on the Financial Statement

We have audited the accompanying Statement of Receipts, Disbursements, and Excess Fees - Regulatory Basis of the County Clerk of Mercer County, Kentucky, for the year ended December 31, 2015, and the related notes to the financial statement.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statement

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of this financial statement in accordance with accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the laws of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting as described in Note 1. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of a financial statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on this financial statement based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the *Audit Guide for County Fee Officials* issued by the Auditor of Public Accounts, Commonwealth of Kentucky. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statement is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statement. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statement, 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 statement 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 statement.

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



The Honorable Milward Dedman, Mercer County Judge/Executive
The Honorable Chris Horn, Mercer County Clerk
Members of the Mercer County Fiscal Court

Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

As described in Note 1 of the financial statement, the financial statement is prepared by the Mercer County Clerk on the basis of the accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the laws of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

The effects on the financial statement of the variances between the regulatory basis of accounting described in Note 1 and accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, although not reasonably determinable, are presumed to be material.

Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

In our opinion, because of the significance of the matter discussed in the Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles paragraph, the financial statement referred to above does not present fairly, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial position of each fund of the Mercer County Clerk, as of December 31, 2015, or changes in financial position or cash flows thereof for the year then ended.

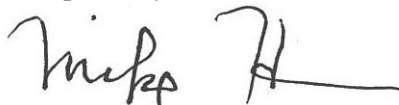
Opinion on Regulatory Basis of Accounting

In our opinion, the financial statement referred to above presents fairly, in all material respects, the receipts, disbursements, and excess fees of the Mercer County Clerk for the year ended December 31, 2015, in accordance with the basis of accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the Commonwealth of Kentucky as described in Note 1.

Other Reporting Required by *Government Auditing Standards*

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated July 18, 2016 on our consideration of the Mercer County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements, and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control over financial reporting and compliance

Respectfully submitted,



Mike Harmon
Auditor of Public Accounts

July 18, 2016

MERCER COUNTY
CHRIS HORN, COUNTY CLERK
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES - REGULATORY BASIS

For The Year Ended December 31, 2015

Receipts

State Fees For Services		\$ 6,711
Fiscal Court		4,532
Licenses and Taxes:		
Motor Vehicle-		
Licenses and Transfers	\$ 709,842	
Usage Tax	1,794,972	
Tangible Personal Property Tax	1,904,481	
Other-		
Marriage Licenses	4,686	
Deed Transfer Tax	73,026	
Delinquent Tax	394,644	4,881,651
Fees Collected for Services:		
Recordings-		
Deeds, Easements, and Contracts	11,743	
Real Estate Mortgages	34,465	
Chattel Mortgages and Financing Statements	56,822	
Powers of Attorney	3,056	
Affordable Housing Trust	26,712	
Lien Fees	14,832	
All Other Recordings	24,814	
Charges for Other Services-		
Candidate Filing Fees	100	
Copywork	9,359	
Postage	50	181,953
Other:		
Miscellaneous		8,737
Interest Earned		187
Total Receipts		5,083,771

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this financial statement.

MERCER COUNTY
CHRIS HORN, COUNTY CLERK
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES - REGULATORY BASIS
For The Year Ended December 31, 2015
(Continued)

Disbursements

Payments to State:

Motor Vehicle-		
Licenses and Transfers	\$ 492,811	
Usage Tax	1,741,104	
Tangible Personal Property Tax	684,839	
Licenses, Taxes, and Fees-		
Delinquent Tax	33,594	
Legal Process Tax	19,701	
Affordable Housing Trust	26,712	\$ 2,998,761

Payments to Fiscal Court:

Tangible Personal Property Tax	126,289	
Delinquent Tax	28,820	
Deed Transfer Tax	69,374	224,483

Payments to Other Districts:

Tangible Personal Property Tax	1,017,174	
Delinquent Tax	211,186	1,228,360

Payments to Sheriff 32,862

Payments to County Attorney 51,295

Tax Bill Preparation 3,166

Operating Disbursements:

Personnel Services-		
Deputies' Salaries	265,828	
Contracted Services-		
Office Equipment	7,820	
Accounting Services	967	
Microfilming and Indexing Records	50,088	
Materials and Supplies-		
Office Supplies	14,148	
Other Charges-		
Dues	1,605	
Postage	8,316	
Refunds	7,395	
Miscellaneous	3,441	359,608

Total Disbursements \$ 4,898,535

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this financial statement.

MERCER COUNTY
CHRIS HORN, COUNTY CLERK
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES - REGULATORY BASIS
For The Year Ended December 31, 2015
(Continued)

Net Receipts		\$ 185,236
Less: Statutory Maximum		<u>88,663</u>
Excess Fees		96,573
Less: Expense Allowance	\$ 3,600	
Training Incentive Benefit	<u>3,941</u>	<u>7,541</u>
Excess Fees Due County for 2015		89,032
Payment to Fiscal Court - March 8, 2016		<u>87,000</u>
Balance Due Fiscal Court at Completion of Audit		<u><u>\$ 2,032</u></u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this financial statement.

MERCER COUNTY
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT

December 31, 2015

Note 1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

A. Fund Accounting

A fee official uses a fund to report on the results of operations. A fund is a separate accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. Fund accounting is designed to demonstrate legal compliance and to aid financial management by segregating transactions related to certain government functions or activities.

A fee official uses a fund for fees to account for activities for which the government desires periodic determination of the excess of receipts over disbursements to facilitate management control, accountability, and compliance with laws.

B. Basis of Accounting

KRS 64.820 directs the fiscal court to collect any amount, including excess fees, due from the county clerk as determined by the audit. KRS 64.152 requires the county clerk to settle excess fees with the fiscal court by March 15 each year.

The financial statement has been prepared on a regulatory basis of accounting, which demonstrates compliance with the laws of Kentucky and is a special purpose framework. Under this regulatory basis of accounting, receipts and disbursements are generally recognized when cash is received or disbursed with the exception of accrual of the following items (not all-inclusive), at December 31 that may be included in the excess fees calculation:

- Interest receivable
- Collection on accounts due from others for 2015 services
- Reimbursements for 2015 activities
- Payments due other governmental entities for December tax and fee collections and payroll
- Payments due vendors for goods or services provided in 2015

The measurement focus of a fee official is upon excess fees. Remittance of excess fees is due to the county treasurer in the subsequent year.

C. Cash and Investments

KRS 66.480 authorizes the county clerk's office to invest in the following, including but not limited to, obligations of the United States and of its agencies and instrumentalities, obligations and contracts for future delivery or purchase of obligations backed by the full faith and credit of the United States, obligations of any corporation of the United States government, bonds or certificates of indebtedness of this state, and certificates of deposit issued by or other interest-bearing accounts of any bank or savings and loan institution which are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) or which are collateralized, to the extent uninsured, by any obligation permitted by KRS 41.240(4).

MERCER COUNTY
 NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT
 December 31, 2015
 (Continued)

Note 2. Employee Retirement System and Other Post-Employment Benefits

The county official and employees have elected to participate in the County Employees Retirement System (CERS), pursuant to KRS 78.530 administered by the Board of Trustees of the Kentucky Retirement Systems. This is a cost sharing, multiple employer defined benefit pension plan, which covers all eligible full-time employees and provides for retirement, disability and death benefits to plan members. Benefit contributions and provisions are established by statute.

Nonhazardous covered employees are required to contribute five percent of their salary to the plan. Nonhazardous covered employees who begin participation on or after September 1, 2008 are required to contribute six percent of their salary to the plan. The county's contribution rate for nonhazardous employees was 17.67 percent for the first six months and 17.06 percent for the last six months.

In accordance with Senate Bill 2, signed by the Governor on April 4, 2014, plan members who began participating on, or after, January 1, 2014, were required to contribute to the Cash Balance Plan. The Cash Balance Plan is known as a hybrid plan because it has characteristics of both a defined benefit plan and a defined contribution plan. Members in the plan contribute a set percentage of their salary each month to their own accounts. Members contribute five percent (nonhazardous) of their annual creditable compensation and one percent to the health insurance fund which is not credited to the member's account and is not refundable. The employer contribution rate is set annually by the Board based on an actuarial valuation. The employer contributes a set percentage of the member's salary. Each month, when employer contributions are received, an employer pay credit is deposited to the member's account. A member's account is credited with a four percent (nonhazardous) employer pay credit. The employer pay credit represents a portion of the employer contribution.

Benefits fully vest on reaching five years of service for nonhazardous employees. Aspects of benefits for nonhazardous employees include retirement after 27 years of service or age 65. Nonhazardous employees who begin participation on or after September 1, 2008 must meet the rule of 87 (member's age plus years of service credit must equal 87, and the member must be a minimum of 57 years of age) or the member is age 65, with a minimum of 60 months service credit.

CERS also provides post-retirement health care coverage as follows:

For members participating prior to July 1, 2003, years of service and respective percentages of the maximum contribution are as follows:

Years of Service	% paid by Insurance Fund	% Paid by Member through Payroll Deduction
20 or more	100%	0%
15-19	75%	25%
10-14	50%	50%
4-9	25%	75%
Less than 4	0%	100%

MERCER COUNTY
 NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT
 December 31, 2015
 (Continued)

Note 2. Employee Retirement System and Other Post-Employment Benefits (Continued)

As a result of House Bill 290 (2004 General Assembly), medical insurance benefits are calculated differently for members who began participation on or after July 1, 2003. Once members reach a minimum vesting period of ten years, non-hazardous employees whose participation began on or after July 1, 2003, earn ten dollars per month for insurance benefits at retirement for every year of earned service without regard to a maximum dollar amount. This dollar amount is subject to adjustment annually based on the retiree cost of living adjustment, which is updated annually due to changes in the Consumer Price Index.

Historical trend information showing the CERS' progress in accumulating sufficient assets to pay benefits when due is presented in the Kentucky Retirement Systems' annual financial report. This report may be obtained by writing the Kentucky Retirement Systems, 1260 Louisville Road, Frankfort, KY 40601-6124, or by telephone at (502) 564-4646.

Note 3. Deposits

The Mercer County Clerk maintained deposits of public funds with depository institutions insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) as required by KRS 66.480(1)(d). According to KRS 41.240, the depository institution should pledge or provide sufficient collateral which, together with FDIC insurance, equals or exceeds the amount of public funds on deposit at all times. In order to be valid against the FDIC in the event of failure or insolvency of the depository institution, this pledge or provision of collateral should be evidenced by an agreement between the county clerk and the depository institution, signed by both parties, that is (a) in writing, (b) approved by the board of directors of the depository institution or its loan committee, which approval must be reflected in the minutes of the board or committee, and (c) an official record of the depository institution.

Custodial Credit Risk - Deposits

Custodial credit risk is the risk that in the event of a depository institution failure, the county clerk's deposits may not be returned. The Mercer County Clerk does not have a deposit policy for custodial credit risk but rather follows the requirements of KRS 66.480(1)(d) and KRS 41.240. As of December 31, 2015, all deposits were covered by FDIC insurance or a properly executed collateral security agreement.

Note 4. Lease Agreement

The Mercer County Clerk's office was committed to the following lease agreements as of December 31, 2015:

Item Purchased	Monthly Payment	Term Of Agreement	Ending Date	Principal Balance December 31, 2015
Copier	\$ 578	60 months	3/1/2017	\$ 7,510
Hardware/Software	\$ 4,174	60 months	9/23/2017	\$ 94,076

MERCER COUNTY
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT
December 31, 2015
(Continued)

Note 5. Related Party Transaction

During the calendar year 2015, the Mercer County Clerk paid \$967 to a business for bookkeeping services. The owner of the business is the brother-in-law of a deputy clerk who disclosed these related party transactions.

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REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING AND
ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL
STATEMENT PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH *GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS*



MIKE HARMON
AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

The Honorable Milward Dedman, Mercer County Judge/Executive
The Honorable Chris Horn, Mercer County Clerk
Members of the Mercer County Fiscal Court

**Report On Internal Control Over Financial Reporting And
On Compliance And Other Matters Based On An Audit Of The Financial
Statement Performed In Accordance With Government Auditing Standards**

Independent Auditor's Report

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 Statement of Receipts, Disbursements, and Excess Fees - Regulatory Basis of the Mercer County Clerk for the year ended December 31, 2015, and the related notes to the financial statement and have issued our report thereon dated July 18, 2016. The Mercer County Clerk's financial statement is prepared on a regulatory basis of accounting, which demonstrates compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Internal Control over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statement, we considered the Mercer County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) to determine audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statement, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Mercer County Clerk's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Mercer County Clerk'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 statement 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 over financial reporting was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.



Report On Internal Control Over Financial Reporting And
On Compliance And Other Matters Based On An Audit Of The Financial
Statement Performed In Accordance With *Government Auditing Standards*
(Continued)

Compliance And Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Mercer County Clerk's financial statement is free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the 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.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Harmon", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mike Harmon
Auditor of Public Accounts

July 18, 2016

