REPORT OF THE AUDIT OF THE GREEN COUNTY CLERK

For The Year Ended December 31, 2020



MIKE HARMON AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS www.auditor.ky.gov

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MIKE HARMON AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

The Honorable John H. Frank, Green County Judge/Executive The Honorable Jessica Baker, Green County Clerk Members of the Green 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 Green County, Kentucky, for the year ended December 31, 2020, 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 and budget laws. 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.

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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 Green 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 the Green County Clerk, as of December 31, 2020, 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 Green County Clerk for the year ended December 31, 2020, 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 September 8, 2021, on our consideration of the Green County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, 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 Green County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Based on the results of our audit, we have presented the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Responses, included herein, which discusses the following report comment:

2020-001 The Green County Clerk Does Not Have Adequate Segregation Of Duties Over Receipts, Disbursements, And Reconciliations

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Harmon Auditor of Public Accounts

September 8, 2021

GREEN COUNTY JESSICA BAKER, COUNTY CLERK <u>STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES - REGULATORY BASIS</u>

For The Year Ended December 31, 2020

<u>Receipts</u>		
Federal Grant		\$ 11,528
State Revenue Supplement		68,059
State Fees For Services		680
Fiscal Court		680
Licenses and Taxes: Motor Vehicle- Licenses and Transfers Usage Tax Tangible Personal Property Tax Notary Fees Lien Release Fees Miscellaneous Income Other- Marriage Licenses Deed Transfer Tax Delinquent Tax	\$ 395,628 471,988 951,823 2,798 4,758 54 3,000 33,592 143,713	2,007,354
Fees Collected for Services: Recordings- Bail Bonds Chattel Mortgages and Financing Statements Deeds, Easements and Contracts Leases Leases Liens and Lis Pendens Powers of Attorney Releases Real Estate Mortgages Affordable Housing Trust Wills and Estate Settlements Storage Fees All Other Recordings Charges for Other Services- Candidate Filing Fees Copy Work Postage Overnavments	34 30,610 18,333 34 2,468 1,905 19,640 34,288 12,270 1,860 22,080 5,480 490 650 1,531 597	152 270
Overpayments	 597	152,270

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

GREEN COUNTY JESSICA BAKER, COUNTY CLERK STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES - REGULATORY BASIS For The Year Ended December 31, 2020 (Continued)

Receipts (Continued)					
Interest Earned				\$	656
Total Receipts				2,24	1,227
<u>Disbursements</u>					
Payments to State:					
Motor Vehicle-					
Licenses and Transfers	\$ 288,680				
Usage Tax	457,828				
Tangible Personal Property Tax	350,341				
Licenses, Taxes, and Fees-					
Delinquent Tax	12,020				
Legal Process Tax	10,746				
Affordable Housing Trust	 12,089	\$ 1,131,7	704		
Payments to Fiscal Court:					
Tangible Personal Property Tax	84,273				
Delinquent Tax	10,620				
Deed Transfer Tax	31,913	126,8	206		
	 51,715	120,0	500		
Payments to Other Districts:					
Tangible Personal Property Tax	479,136				
Delinquent Tax	 78,764	557,9	000		
Payments to Sheriff		11,5	502		
Payments to County Attorney		18,6	589		
Tax Bill Preparation		2,2	269		
Other Regulatory Payments:					
Other Refunds		5	574		
Operating Disbursements:					
Personnel Services-					
Deputies' Salaries	103,636				

GREEN COUNTY JESSICA BAKER, COUNTY CLERK STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES - REGULATORY BASIS For The Year Ended December 31, 2020 (Continued)

Disbursements (Continued)			
Operating Disbursements: (Continued)			
Employee Benefits-			
Employer's Share Social Security	\$ 15,761		
Contracted Services-			
Microfilming and Indexing	14,883		
Office Equipment and Agreements	300		
Advertising	2,021		
Printing and Binding	1,092		
Materials and Supplies-			
Office Supplies	9,831		
Other Charges-			
Conventions and Travel	157		
Dues	1,605		
Postage	8,754		
Telephone and Internet	4,480		
Election Expense	11,528		
Miscellaneous	 300	\$ 174,348	
Total Disbursements			\$ 2,023,792
Net Receipts			217,435
Less: Statutory Maximum			86,250
Excess Fees			131,185
Less: Expense Allowance		3,600	
Training Incentive Benefit		 2,156	5,756
Excess Fees Due County for 2020			125,429
Payment to Fiscal Court - March 8, 2021			108,000
Balance Due Fiscal Court at Completion of Audit*			\$ 17,429

* - The county clerk presented additional checks to the fiscal court for excess fees in the amount of \$17,413 on May 13, 2021 and \$16 on August 5, 2021.

GREEN COUNTY NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT

December 31, 2020

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 is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. This basis 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 2020 services
- Reimbursements for 2020 activities
- Payments due other governmental entities for December tax and fee collections and payroll
- Payments due vendors for goods or services provided in 2020

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 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).

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

The clerk's office has elected to participate, pursuant to KRS 78.530, in the County Employees Retirement System (CERS), which is administered by the Board of Trustees of the Kentucky Retirement Systems (KRS). 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.

GREEN COUNTY NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT December 31, 2020 (Continued)

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 be allocated as follows: five percent will go to the member's account and one percent will go to the KRS insurance fund.

In accordance with Senate Bill 2, signed by the Governor on April 4, 2013, 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. Nonhazardous covered employees contribute five percent of their annual creditable compensation. Nonhazardous members also contribute one percent to the health insurance fund which is not credited to the member's account and is not refundable. 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 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.

The county's contribution rate for nonhazardous employees was 24.06 percent for the year.

Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB)

A. <u>Health Insurance Coverage - Tier 1</u>

CERS 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%

GREEN COUNTY NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT December 31, 2020 (Continued)

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

Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) (Continued)

A. <u>Health Insurance Coverage - Tier 1</u> (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.

Benefits are covered under KRS 161.714 with exception of COLA and retiree health benefits after July 2003.

B. Health Insurance Coverage - Tier 2 and Tier 3 - Nonhazardous

Once members reach a minimum vesting period of 15 years, 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 by 1.5 percent. This was established for Tier 2 members during the 2008 Special Legislative Session by House Bill 1. During the 2013 Legislative Session, Senate Bill 2 was enacted, creating Tier 3 benefits for members.

The monthly insurance benefit has been increased annually as a 1.5 percent cost of living adjustment (COLA) since July 2003 when the law changed. The annual increase is cumulative and continues to accrue after the member's retirement.

Tier 2 member benefits are covered by KRS 161.714 with exception of COLA and retiree health benefits after July 2003. Tier 3 members are not covered by the same provisions.

C. Cost of Living Adjustments - Tier 1

The 1996 General Assembly enacted an automatic cost of living adjustment (COLA) provision for all recipients of KRS benefits. During the 2008 Special Session, the General Assembly determined that each July beginning in 2009, retirees who have been receiving a retirement allowance for at least 12 months will receive an automatic COLA of 1.5 percent. The COLA is not a guaranteed benefit. If a retiree has been receiving a benefit for less than 12 months, and a COLA is provided, it will be prorated based on the number of months the recipient has been receiving a benefit.

D. Cost of Living Adjustments - Tier 2 and Tier 3

No COLA is given unless authorized by the legislature with specific criteria. To this point, no COLA has been authorized by the legislature for Tier 2 or Tier 3 members.

E. Death Benefit

If a retired member is receiving a monthly benefit based on at least 48 months of service credit, KRS will pay a \$5,000 death benefit payment to the beneficiary designated by the member specifically for this benefit. Members with multiple accounts are entitled to only one death benefit.

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

KRS Annual Financial Report and Proportionate Share Audit Report

KRS issues a publicly available annual financial report that includes financial statements and required supplementary information on CERS. 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.

KRS also issues proportionate share audit reports for both total pension liability and other post-employment benefits for CERS determined by actuarial valuation as well as each participating county's proportionate share. Both the Schedules of Employer Allocations and Pension Amounts by Employer and the Schedules of Employer Allocations and Pension Amounts by Employer and the Schedules of Employer Allocations and the related actuarial tables are available online at https://kyret.ky.gov. The complete actuarial valuation report, including all actuarial assumptions and methods, is also available on the website or can be obtained as described in the paragraph above.

Note 3. Deposits

The Green County Clerk maintained deposits of public funds with federally insured banking institutions as required by the Department for Local Government's (DLG) *County Budget Preparation and State Local Finance Officer Policy Manual*. The DLG Manual strongly recommends perfected pledges of securities covering all public funds except direct federal obligations and funds protected by federal insurance. In order to be perfected 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. These requirements were met.

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 Green County Clerk does not have a deposit policy for custodial credit risk, but rather follows the requirements of the DLG *County Budget Preparation and State Local Finance Officer Policy Manual.* As of December 31, 2020, all deposits were covered by FDIC insurance or a properly executed collateral security agreement.

Note 4. Federal Grant

The Green County Clerk's office received a "Help America Vote Act" federal grant through the Kentucky State Board of Elections in the amount of \$24,291. Funds totaling \$11,528 were expended during the year, leaving an unexpended grant balance of \$12,763. The unexpended grant balance was returned to the state board of elections on April 12, 2021.

Note 5. State Grant

The Green County Clerk's office received a local records microfilming grant from the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives in the amount of \$8,477. Funds totaling \$5,100 were expended by the former clerk during calendar year 2018, and the remaining funds of \$3,377 were transferred to the current clerk on May 5, 2019. During calendar year 2019, funds totaling \$3,137 were expended, leaving a balance of \$240. The ending balance of \$240 was returned to the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives on August 6, 2020.

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 John H. Frank, Green County Judge/Executive The Honorable Jessica Baker, Green County Clerk Members of the Green 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 Green County Clerk for the year ended December 31, 2020, and the related notes to the financial statement and have issued our report thereon dated September 8, 2021. The Green 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 Green County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statement, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Green County Clerk's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Green County Clerk's internal control.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the preceding paragraph and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. However, as described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Responses, we identified a certain deficiency in internal control that we consider to be a material weakness.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statement will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis. We consider the deficiency described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Responses as item 2020-001 to be a material weakness.

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Compliance And Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Green 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 financial statement. 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*.

Views of Responsible Official and Planned Corrective Action

The Green County Clerk's views and planned corrective action for the finding identified in our audit are described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Responses. The Green County Clerk's response was not subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statement and, accordingly, we express no opinion on it.

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,

Mike Harmon Auditor of Public Accounts

September 8, 2021

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

GREEN COUNTY JESSICA BAKER, COUNTY CLERK SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

For The Year Ended December 31, 2020

INTERNAL CONTROL - MATERIAL WEAKNESS:

2020-001 The Green County Clerk Does Not Have Adequate Segregation Of Duties Over Receipts, Disbursements, And Reconciliations

This is a repeat finding and was included in the prior year audit report as finding 2019-001. The county clerk and deputies collecting receipts also close out cash drawers, prepare daily checkout sheets, prepare deposit tickets, prepare daily reports, prepare and sign checks, and post to the receipts and disbursements ledgers. In addition, the county clerk prepares weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports, and reconciles the bank accounts. These incompatible duties create a lack of segregation of duties over receipts, disbursements, and reconciliations. No documented compensating controls were noted to offset this control deficiency except the county clerk and another deputy co-sign all checks after comparing to reports.

According to the county clerk, a lack of segregation of duties existed because a limited number of employees were available to properly segregate job duties. A lack of segregation of duties increases the risk of misappropriation of assets, errors, and inaccurate financial reporting to external agencies such as the taxing districts.

Segregation of duties over receipts, disbursements, and reconciliations or implementation of compensating controls, when needed because the number of staff is limited, is essential for providing protection to employees in the normal course of performing their duties and can also prevent inaccurate financial reporting and misappropriation of assets.

We recommend the county clerk separate duties over receipts, disbursements, and reconciliations. If these duties cannot be separated due to limited staff or limited budget, then strong oversight over those areas should occur and involve the clerk or an employee not currently performing any of those functions. The individual providing this oversight should initial source documents as evidence of review.

County Clerk's Response: I had other deputies doing reports. We are working on this issue and are implementing additional controls.