REPORT OF THE AUDIT OF THE KNOTT 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 Jeff Dobson, Knott County Judge/Executive The Honorable Maurica Cornett, Knott County Clerk Members of the Knott 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 Knott 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.

209 ST. CLAIR STREET FRANKFORT, KY 40601-1817 TELEPHONE 502.564.5841

The Honorable Jeff Dobson, Knott County Judge/Executive The Honorable Maurica Cornett, Knott County Clerk Members of the Knott 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 Knott 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 Knott 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 Knott 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 June 7, 2021, on our consideration of the Knott 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 Knott 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 County Clerk Did Not Have Segregation Of Duties Over Receipts

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Harmon Auditor of Public Accounts

June 7, 2021

KNOTT COUNTY MAURICA CORNETT, COUNTY CLERK <u>STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES - REGULATORY BASIS</u>

For The Year Ended December 31, 2020

Receipts

State Grant		\$	6,500
State Revenue Supplement			68,059
Fiscal Court			15,773
Licenses and Taxes:			
Motor Vehicle-			
Licenses and Transfers	\$ 409,037		
Usage Tax	1,258,025		
Tangible Personal Property Tax	1,136,252		
Other-			
Fish and Game Licenses	3,597		
Marriage Licenses	4,568		
Deed Transfer Tax	15,330		
Delinquent Tax	522,215	3,	349,024
Fees Collected for Services:			
Recordings-			
Deeds, Easements, and Contracts	22,787		
Real Estate Mortgages	20,255		
Chattel Mortgages and Financing Statements	34,559		
Affordable Housing Trust	8,712		
All Other Recordings	47,268		
Charges for Other Services-			
Candidate Filing Fees	790		
Copy Work	484		
Postage	3,131		
County Attorney Fees	17,728		
State Election Fees	30,360		
Miscellaneous Income	7,148		193,222
Interest Earned			397
Total Receipts		3,	632,975

KNOTT COUNTY MAURICA CORNETT, COUNTY CLERK STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES - REGULATORY BASIS For The Year Ended December 31, 2020 (Continued)

Disbursements

Payments to State:		
Motor Vehicle-		
Licenses and Transfers	\$ 302,596	
Usage Tax	1,213,364	
Tangible Personal Property Tax	480,511	
Licenses, Taxes, and Fees-		
Fish and Game Licenses	3,457	
Delinquent Tax	45,455	
Legal Process Tax	10,248	
Affordable Housing Trust	8,712	\$ 2,064,343
Payments to Fiscal Court:		
Tangible Personal Property Tax	116,980	
Delinquent Tax	54,329	
Deed Transfer Tax	14,513	185,822
Payments to Other Districts:		
Tangible Personal Property Tax	493,775	
Delinquent Tax	202,921	696,696
Payments to Sheriff		66,068
Payments to County Attorney		78,564
Operating Disbursements:		
Personnel Services-		
Deputies' Salaries	190,023	
Part-Time Salaries	596	
Employee Benefits-		
Employer's Share Social Security	20,095	
Employer's Share Retirement	65,252	
Other Payroll Disbursements	666	
Contracted Services-		
Legal and Accounting	28,737	
Materials and Supplies-		
Office Supplies	58,530	
Copier	655	

KNOTT COUNTY MAURICA CORNETT, COUNTY CLERK STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES - REGULATORY BASIS For The Year Ended December 31, 2020 (Continued)

Disbursements (Continued)		
Operating Disbursements: (Continued)		
Other Charges-		
Conventions and Travel	\$ 1,789	
Dues	900	
Postage	11,101	
Refunds	12,070	
Miscellaneous	516	
Libraries and Archives Grant	6,500 \$ 397,430	
Debt Service:	25.070	
Lease Purchases	25,868	
Total Disbursements		\$ 3,514,791
Net Receipts		118,184
Less: Statutory Maximum		86,250
		21.024
Excess Fees	2 (00	31,934
Less: Expense Allowance	3,600	5 75(
Training Incentive Benefit	2,156	5,756
Excess Fees Due County for 2020		26,178
Payment to Fiscal Court - March 15, 2021		13,000
Balance Due Fiscal Court at Completion of Audit		\$ 13,178

KNOTT 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.

Note 2.

The county clerk's contribution for calendar year 2018 was \$48,171, calendar year 2019 was \$55,243, and calendar year 2020 was \$65,252.

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%

KNOTT 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.

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

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 Knott 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 Knott 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. State Grant

The Knott County Clerk's office received a local records microfilming grant from the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives in the amount of \$6,500. Funds totaling \$6,500 were expended during the year. The grant balance was \$0 as of December 31, 2020.

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

Note 5. Lease Agreements

The Knott County Clerk's office was committed to the following lease agreements as of December 31, 2020:

Item Purchased	onthly syment	Term Of Agreement	Ending Date	 pal Balance ber 31, 2020
Computer Equipment				
and Software	\$ 200	36 months	September 2022	\$ 4,000
Software	1,285	36 months	June 2022	23,130
Copier	327	60 months	December 2022	 7,848
Totals	\$ 1,812			\$ 34,978

Note 6. Fiduciary Account

Escrow Account

The Knott County Clerk deposited outstanding checks into a custodial bank account. When statutorily required, the county clerk will turn over the escrowed funds to the Kentucky State Treasurer as unclaimed property. The county clerk's escrowed amounts were as follows:

2018 \$371

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* THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY



MIKE HARMON AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

The Honorable Jeff Dobson, Knott County Judge/Executive The Honorable Maurica Cornett, Knott County Clerk Members of the Knott 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 Knott County Clerk for the year ended December 31, 2020, and the related notes to the financial statement and have issued our report thereon dated June 7, 2021. The Knott 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 Knott County Clerk'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 financial statement, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Knott County Clerk's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Knott 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 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. 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 and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified. We identified a certain deficiency in internal control, which is described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Responses as item 2020-001 that we consider to be a significant deficiency.

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Knott 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 Knott 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 Knott 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

June 7, 2021

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

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KNOTT COUNTY MAURICA CORNETT, COUNTY CLERK SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

For The Year Ended December 31, 2020

INTERNAL CONTROL - SIGNIFICANT DEFICIENCY:

2020-001 The County Clerk Did Not Have Segregation Of Duties Over Receipts

This is a repeat finding and was included in the prior year audit report as finding 2019-001. The bookkeeper collects cash, prepares the daily checkout sheets, prepares monthly tax reports, and posts to the receipts ledger. These incompatible duties create a lack of segregation of duties over receipts. To adequately protect assets from misappropriation and inaccurate financial reporting, duties involving collecting cash, preparing daily checkout sheets, preparing to the receipts ledger should be separated.

According to the county clerk, the office has a limited budget which restricts the number of employees, and prevents a proper segregation of duties. This deficiency increases the risk of misappropriation of assets, errors, and inaccurate financial reporting.

Segregation of duties over cash collections, daily checkout procedures, and deposit preparation are essential for providing protection from asset misappropriation and inaccurate financial reporting. Additionally, proper segregation of duties protects employees in the normal course of performing their daily responsibilities. Also, the county clerk can implement oversight when duties cannot be segregated.

We recommend the county clerk separate the duties involved in receiving cash, preparing bank deposits, posting to ledger, and preparation of reports. If segregation of duties is not feasible due to lack of staff, the county clerk can implement compensating controls. Additionally, the county clerk could deliver the daily checkout sheets to the outside firm that generates financial reports for the clerk, and request a computerized receipts ledger be generated with the original source documents.

County Clerk's Response: We the Knott County office has limited number of employees, due to our budget. This has made it difficult to segregate duties as recommended by the auditor. This will be looked at, and try to correct to the best of our ability. Lords willing I can make this happen.