

**OFFICE OF AUDITOR OF STATE
STATE OF IOWA**

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE

March 29, 2019

Contact: Marlys Gaston
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Auditor of State Rob Sand today released an agreed-upon procedures report on the City of Hills, Iowa for the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. The agreed-upon procedures engagement was performed pursuant to Chapter 11.6 of the Code of Iowa.

Sand recommended the City strengthen its internal controls to obtain the maximum internal control possible.

A copy of the agreed-upon procedures report is available for review on the Auditor of State's web site at <https://auditor.iowa.gov/reports/audit-reports/>.

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CITY OF HILLS
AUDITOR OF STATE'S INDEPENDENT REPORT
ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES
FOR THE PERIOD
JULY 1, 2017 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2018

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City of Hills

Officials

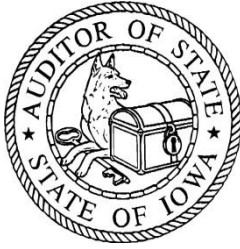
(Before January 2018)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Tim Kemp	Mayor	Jan 2018
Bruce Endris	Council Member	Jan 2018
Thomas Kirkpatrick	Council Member	Jan 2018
Steve Harris	Council Member	Jan 2020
Merle Hill	Council Member	Jan 2020
Cathy Knebel	Council Member	Jan 2020
Cathy Fitzmaurice-Hill	City Administrator	Indefinite
Erek Sittig	Attorney	Jan 2018

(After January 2018)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Tim Kemp	Mayor	Jan 2020
Steve Harris	Council Member	Jan 2020
Merle Hill	Council Member	Jan 2020
Cathy Knebel	Council Member	Jan 2020
Christine Peters	Council Member	Jan 2022
Teresa Volk	Council Member	Jan 2022
Cathy Fitzmaurice-Hill	City Administrator	Indefinite
Erek Sittig	Attorney	Jan 2020

City of Hills



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Auditor of State's Independent Report on Applying Agreed-Upon Procedures

To the Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

We performed the procedures below which were established at Iowa Code Chapter 11.6 to provide oversight of Iowa cities. Accordingly, we have applied certain tests and procedures to selected accounting records and related information of the City of Hills for the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018, including procedures related to the City's compliance with certain Code of Iowa requirements identified below. The City of Hills' management, which agreed to the performance of the procedures performed, is responsible for compliance with these requirements and for the City's records.

This agreed-upon procedures engagement was conducted in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the standards for attestation engagements contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The sufficiency of these procedures is solely the responsibility of those parties specified in the report. Consequently, we make no representation regarding the sufficiency of the procedures described below, either for the purpose for which this report has been requested or for any other purpose.

The procedures we performed are summarized as follows:

1. We reviewed selected City Council meeting minutes for compliance with Chapters 21, 372.13(6) and 380 of the Code of Iowa.
2. We reviewed the City's internal controls to determine if proper control procedures are in place and incompatible duties, from a control standpoint, are not performed by the same employee.
3. We reviewed surety bond coverage for compliance with Chapter 64 of the Code of Iowa.
4. We obtained and reviewed the City Clerk's financial reports and selected bank reconciliations to determine whether the bank balances properly reconciled to the general ledger account balances and monthly financial reports provided to the City Council.
5. We reviewed City funds for consistency with the City Finance Committee's recommended Uniform Chart of Accounts (COA) and to determine required funds and fund balances are properly maintained and accurately accounted for.
6. We reviewed the City's fiscal year 2018 Annual Financial Report to determine whether it was completed and accurately reflects the City's financial information.
7. We reviewed investments to determine compliance with Chapter 12B of the Code of Iowa.
8. We reviewed compliance with Chapters 12C.2, 12B.10B and 556.1(12) of the Code of Iowa pertaining to required depository resolutions, investment policy and reporting of unclaimed property to the State of Iowa.

9. We reviewed debt, including general obligation and revenue bonds/notes, and related transactions for proper authorization and compliance with Chapters 75, 384 and 403.9 of the Code of Iowa and to determine whether the debt and related proceeds and repayments were properly accounted for.
10. We reviewed and tested selected receipts for accurate accounting and consistency with the recommended COA.
11. We reviewed and tested selected disbursements for proper approval, adequate supporting documentation, accurate accounting and consistency with the recommended COA and compliance with the public purpose criteria established by Article III, Section 31 of the Constitution of the State of Iowa.
12. We reviewed transfers between funds for propriety, proper authorization and accurate accounting.
13. We reviewed and tested selected payroll and related transactions for propriety, proper authorization and accurate accounting.
14. We reviewed the annual certified budget for proper authorization, certification and timely amendment.

Based on the performance of the procedures described above, we identified various recommendations for the City. Our recommendations are described in the Detailed Recommendations section of this report. Unless reported in the Detailed Recommendations, items of non-compliance were not noted during the performance of the specific procedures listed above.

We were not engaged to and did not conduct an examination or review, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion or conclusion, respectively, on specific accounting records and related information of the City, including compliance with specific Code of Iowa requirements. 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.

The purpose of this report is to report, in accordance with Chapter 11.6 of the Code of Iowa, certain agreed-upon procedures and the resulting recommendations pertaining to selected accounting records and related information of the City, including the City's compliance with certain Code of Iowa requirements. This report is not suitable for any other purpose.

We would like to acknowledge the many courtesies and assistance extended to us by personnel of the City of Hills during the course of our agreed-upon procedures engagement. Should you have any questions concerning any of the above matters, we shall be pleased to discuss them with you at your convenience.



ROB SAND
Auditor of State

March 7, 2017

Detailed Recommendations

City of Hills

Detailed Recommendations

For the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018

(A) Segregation of Duties – Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining internal control. A good system of internal control provides for adequate segregation of duties so no one individual handles a transaction from its inception to completion. In order to maintain proper internal control, duties should be segregated so the authorization, custody and recording of transactions are not under the control of the same employee. This segregation of duties helps prevent losses from employee error or dishonesty and maximizes the accuracy of the City’s financial statements. Generally, one individual has control over each of the following areas for the City:

- (1) Cash – handling, reconciling and recording.
- (2) Investments – recordkeeping, investing, custody of investments and reconciling earnings.
- (3) Receipts – opening mail, collecting, recording, reconciling and posting.
- (4) Utilities – billing, collecting, reconciling and posting.
- (5) Disbursements – purchasing, invoice processing, check writing, signing checks, mailing and recording.
- (6) Payroll – entering rates into the system, recordkeeping, preparing, approving, signing and distributing.
- (7) Debt – recordkeeping, compliance and debt payment processing.

Recommendation – We realize segregation of duties is difficult with a limited number of employees. However, the City should review its control procedures to obtain the maximum internal control possible under the circumstances utilizing currently available staff, including elected officials. Independent reviews of reconciliations should be documented by the signature or initials of the reviewer and the date of the review.

(B) Dual Signatures on Checks – City policy requires dual signatures on all checks. However, when checks are printed, the Mayor’s “dual” signature is automatically printed on the checks, negating the intended control of an independent countersignature.

Recommendation – The City should comply with City policy requiring dual signatures on all checks. Checks should be prepared and signed by one individual and then the supporting vouchers and invoices should be made available, along with the check, to the second or independent individual for review and countersignature.

City of Hills

Detailed Recommendations

For the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018

- (C) Questionable Disbursement – We noted a disbursement that may not meet the requirements of public purpose as defined in an Attorney General's opinion dated April 25, 1979 since the public benefits to be derived have not been clearly documented. The disbursement is detailed as follows:

<u>Paid to</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Harry's Custom	Firefighter awards	\$ 69

According to the opinion, it is possible for certain disbursements to meet the test of serving a public purpose under certain circumstances, although such items will certainly be subject to a deserved close scrutiny. The line to be drawn between a proper and improper purpose is very thin.


Recommendation – The City Council should determine and document the public purpose served by these disbursements before authorizing any further payments. If this practice is continued, the City should establish written policies and procedures, including the requirement for proper documentation.

City of Hills

Staff

This engagement was performed by:

Katherine L. Rupp, CPA, Manager
Cody J. Pifer, Staff Auditor
Coltin R. Collins, Assistant Auditor


Marlys K. Gaston, CPA
Deputy Auditor of State