



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

Rob Sand  
Auditor of State

State Capitol Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0006

Telephone (515) 281-5834 Facsimile (515) 281-6518

**NEWS RELEASE**

FOR RELEASE

December 2, 2019

Contact: Marlys Gaston  
515/281-5834

Auditor of State Rob Sand today released an agreed-upon procedures report on the City of Lamont, Iowa, for the period July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. The agreed-upon procedures engagement was performed pursuant to Chapter 11.6 of the Code of Iowa.

Sand reported six findings related to the receipt and disbursement of taxpayer funds. They are found on pages 7 and 8 of this report. The findings address issues such as a lack of segregation of duties, the lack of an independent review of bank reconciliations, the lack of utility reconciliations, and certain questionable disbursements. Sand provided the City with recommendations to address each of the findings.

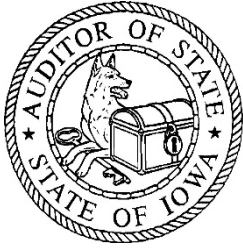
The City Council has a fiduciary responsibility to provide oversight of the City's operations and financial transactions. Oversight is typically defined as the "watchful and responsible care" a governing body exercises in its fiduciary capacity.

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/audit-reports>.

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**CITY OF LAMONT**  
**AUDITOR OF STATE'S INDEPENDENT REPORT**  
**ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES**  
**FOR THE PERIOD**  
**JULY 1, 2018 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2019**

**City of Lamont**



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Rob Sand  
Auditor of State

October 15, 2019

Officials of the City of Lamont  
Lamont, Iowa

Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

I am pleased to submit to you the agreed-upon procedures report for the City of Lamont, Iowa, for the year ended June 30, 2019. The agreed-upon procedures engagement was performed pursuant to Chapter 11.6 of the Code of Iowa and 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.

I appreciate the cooperation and courtesy extended by the officials and employees of the City of Lamont throughout the agreed-upon procedures engagement. If I or this office can be of any further assistance, please contact me or my staff at 515-281-5834.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob Sand". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Rob Sand  
Auditor of State

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**City of Lamont**

**Officials**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Eleanor McGraw-Homewood	Mayor	Jan 2020
Jodee Devlin	Council Member	Jan 2020
Mary Ann Dozark	Council Member	Jan 2020
Billie Burington	Council Member	Jan 2022
Nicholas McTaggart	Council Member	Jan 2022
Joe Rawson	Council Member	(Resigned Feb 2019)
Mark Klingner (Appointed Mar 2019)	Council Member	Nov 2019
Paula Harvey	City Clerk/Treasurer	Indefinite
Heather Prendergast	Attorney	Indefinite



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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 procedures to selected accounting records and related information of the City of Lamont for the period July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, including procedures related to the City's compliance with certain Code of Iowa requirements identified below. The City of Lamont's 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 observed selected City Council meeting minutes for compliance with Chapters 21, 372.13(6) and 380 of the Code of Iowa.
2. We obtained an understanding of 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 observed surety bond coverage for compliance with Chapter 64 of the Code of Iowa.
4. We obtained and observed 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 scanned 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 observed 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 scanned investments to determine compliance with Chapter 12B of the Code of Iowa.
8. We scanned depository resolutions, the City's investment policy and reporting of unclaimed property to the State of Iowa to determine compliance with Chapters 12C.2, 12B.10B and 556.1(12) of the Code of Iowa.

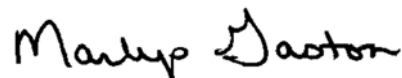
9. We scanned debt, including general obligation and revenue bonds/notes, and related transactions for proper authorization and compliance with Chapters 75, 384 and 403.9 of the Code of Iowa and to determine whether the debt and related proceeds and repayments were properly accounted for.
10. The City has no TIF.
11. We traced selected receipts to accurate accounting and consistency with the recommended COA.
12. The City has no voter approved levies.
13. We traced selected disbursements to 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.
14. The City had no transfers during the period.
15. We traced selected payroll and related transactions to proper authorization and accurate accounting and determined whether payroll was proper.
16. We observed the annual certified budget for proper authorization, certification and timely amendment.

Based on the performance of the procedures described above, we identified various findings and recommendations for the City. Our findings and recommendations are described in the Detailed Findings and Recommendations section of this report. Unless reported in the Detailed Findings and 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 findings and 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 Lamont 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.

  
Marlys K. Gaston, CPA  
Deputy Auditor of State

October 15, 2019



## **Detailed Findings and Recommendations**

City of Lamont

Detailed Findings and Recommendations

For the period July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019

(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 dishonest 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) Accounting system – performing all general accounting functions, including journal entries, and having custody of assets.
- (2) Cash – collecting, posting, depositing and reconciling.
- (3) Investments – custody and reconciling.
- (4) Long-term debt – recording and reconciling.
- (5) Receipts – opening mail, collecting, depositing, reconciling and recording.
- (6) Disbursements – purchasing, invoice processing, check writing, mailing, reconciling and recording.
- (7) Payroll – recordkeeping, preparing, distributing, entering payroll rates and adding and removing employees from the system.
- (8) Utilities – billing, collecting, depositing, entering utility rates, posting and reconciling.

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) Bank Reconciliations – The cash balances in the City’s general ledger were reconciled to bank account balances throughout the year. However, an independent review of the bank reconciliations was not performed.

Recommendation – An independent person should review the City’s bank reconciliations and document the review by signing or initialing and dating the monthly reconciliations.

(C) Change Fund – The City maintains a change fund for which no authorization could be located.

Recommendation – The City should establish, by resolution, an authorized amount for the change fund.

(D) Reconciliation of Utility Billings, Collections and Delinquent Accounts - Although the City’s software generates monthly utility reconciliations and delinquent account reports, the City does not verify the billings, collections, delinquent accounts, and other reconciling items and the reports are not printed and independently reviewed.

City of Lamont

Detailed Findings and Recommendations

For the period July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019

Recommendation – The City should establish procedures to ensure the system generated reconciliations of billings, collections, delinquent accounts, and other reconciling items are accurate. The City Council or an independent person designated by the City Council should review the reconciliations and delinquent account reports. The review of the reports should be documented by the signature or initials of the reviewer and the date of the review.

- (E) Questionable Disbursements – In accordance with Article III, Section 31 of the Iowa Constitution and an Attorney General’s opinion dated April 25, 1979, public funds may only be spent for public benefit. Certain disbursements were noted which we believe may not meet the requirements of public purpose as defined in the Attorney General’s opinion since the public benefits to be derived have not been clearly documented. These disbursements are detailed as follows:

Paid to	Purpose	Amount
Lamont Community Club	Donation	\$ 1,000
Cedar Valley Hospice	Donation	200
Independence Area Food Pantry	Donation	300
Solomon Lodge	Donation	500
Starmont High School	Donation	100
Pathways Behavioral Services	Donation	300
Operation Threshold	Donation	500
GUMC Food Pantry	Donation	200
Buchanan County Senior Center	Donation	200

According to the opinion, it is possible for such 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 an 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 requirements for proper public purpose documentation.

- (F) Journal Entries – Journal entries are not reviewed and approved by an independent person.

Recommendation – An independent person should review and approve journal entries and the approval should be documented by the signature or initials of the approver and the date of approval.

City of Lamont

Staff

This engagement was performed by:

Marlys K. Gaston, CPA, Deputy  
Gwen D. Fangman, CPA, Manager  
Matthew A. Miller, Staff Auditor  
Corey D. Hauptmann, Assistant Auditor