

**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**

Contact: Brian Brustkern  
515/281-5834

FOR RELEASE

December 21, 2023

---

Auditor of State Rob Sand today released an agreed-upon procedures report on the City of Clarence, Iowa, for the period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. 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 9 and 10 of this report. The findings address issues such as a lack of segregation of duties, deficit balance in the capital project funds and no evidence of review of approved invoices. Sand provided the City with recommendations to address each of the findings.

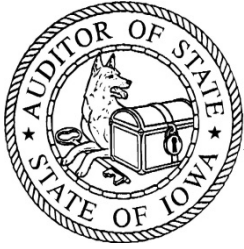
Four of the six findings discussed above are repeated from the prior year. The City Council has a fiduciary responsibility to provide oversight of the City's operations and financial transactions. Oversight is typically defined as the "watchful and responsible care" a governing body exercises in its fiduciary capacity.

A copy of the agreed-upon procedures report is available for review on the Auditor of State's website at [Audit Reports – Auditor of State](#).

###

**CITY OF CLARENCE**  
**AUDITOR OF STATE'S INDEPENDENT REPORT**  
**ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES**  
**FOR THE PERIOD**  
**JULY 1, 2022 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2023**

**City of Clarence**



**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

December 6, 2023

Officials of the City of Clarence  
Clarence, 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 Clarence, Iowa, for the period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. 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 Clarence 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

## Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Officials	3
Auditor of State's Independent Report on Applying Agreed-Upon Procedures	5-7
Detailed Findings and Recommendations:	<u>Finding</u>
Segregation of Duties	A 9
Utility Rates	B 9
Unclaimed Property	C 9
Financial Condition	D 10
Void Receipts	E 10
Disbursement Approval	F 10
Staff	11

**City of Clarence**

**Officials**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Steve Bixler	Mayor	Jan 2026
Bart Miller	Mayor Pro tem	Jan 2026
Jim Barber	Council Member	(Resigned Jan 2022)
Larry Havel (Appointed Mar 2022)	Council Member	Nov 2023
Rodney Dennis	Council Member	Jan 2024
Bob Kunkel	Council Member	Jan 2026
Trent Siver	Council Member	Jan 2026
Joseph Williams	City Clerk/Treasurer	Indefinite
Kyle Maurer	Attorney	Indefinite

**City of Clarence**



**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

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 Clarence for the period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023, including procedures related to the City's compliance with certain Code of Iowa requirements identified below. The City of Clarence'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 City of Clarence's management has agreed to and acknowledged that the procedures performed are appropriate to meet the intended purpose to report, in accordance with Chapter 11.6 of the Code of Iowa, 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 may not be suitable for any other purpose. The procedures performed may not address all the items of interest to a user of this report and may not meet the needs of all users of this report and, as such, users are responsible for determining whether the procedures performed are appropriate for their purposes.

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, journal entries 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 2023 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. We scanned selected tax increment financing (TIF) transactions, including receipts, disbursements and transfers, for compliance and accurate accounting, including compliance with the TIF reporting requirements of Chapter 384.22 of the Code of Iowa.
11. We observed the City's TIF debt certification forms filed with the County Auditor, including requests for collection of reduced TIF amounts and to decertify certain TIF obligations, as applicable, for proper support and compliance with Chapter 403.19(6) of the Code of Iowa.
12. We traced selected receipts for accurate accounting and consistency with the recommended COA.
13. The City had no voter approved levies.
14. 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.
15. We traced transfers between funds to proper authorization and accurate accounting and to determine whether transfers were proper.
16. We traced selected payroll and related transactions to proper authorization and accurate accounting and determined whether payroll was proper.
17. 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, no exceptions were noted during the performance of the specific procedures listed above.

We were engaged by the City of Clarence's management to perform this agreed-upon procedures engagement and conducted our engagement 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. We were not engaged to and did not conduct an examination or review engagement, 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.

We are required to be independent of the City of Clarence and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements related to our agreed-upon procedures engagement.

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 Clarence 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.



Brian R. Brustkern, CPA  
Director

December 6, 2023

## **Detailed Findings and Recommendations**

City of Clarence

Detailed Findings and Recommendations

For the period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023

(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, depositing and recording.
- (2) Investments – recordkeeping, investing, and reconciling earnings.
- (3) Debt – recordkeeping and debt payment processing
- (4) Receipts – opening mail, collecting, depositing, recording, reconciling, and posting.
- (5) Disbursements – preparing, invoice processing, check writing, mailing, reconciling, and recording.
- (6) Payroll – recordkeeping, preparing, distributing, custody of checks, comparing time records to payroll, custody of checks and entering rates into the computer system.
- (7) Utility receipts – billing, collecting, depositing, posting, and maintaining detail accounts receivable.
- (8) Computer system – performing all general accounting functions and controlling all data input and output.
- (9) Financial reporting – preparing and reconciling.
- (10) Journal entries – approving, recording and reviewing.

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) Utility Rates – The utility rates entered into the system are not periodically reviewed by an independent person to ensure proper utility calculations and billings.

Recommendation – An independent person should periodically review utility rates entered in the system and when rate changes occur to ensure the proper rates are used to calculate utility billings.

(C) Unclaimed Property – Chapter 556.11 of the Code of Iowa requires entities to report and remit outstanding obligations, including checks, trusts, and bonds held for more than two years to the Office of Treasurer of State annually. The City did not remit all outstanding checks held for more than two years to the Office of Treasurer of State annually.

Recommendation – Outstanding obligations should be reviewed annually and amounts over two years old should be remitted to the Office of Treasurer of State annually, as required.

City of Clarence

Detailed Findings and Recommendations

For the period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023

- (D) Financial Condition – At June 30, 2023, the City had a deficit balance of \$45,584 in the Capital Projects Fund.

Recommendation – The City should investigate alternatives to eliminate the deficit balance and return the fund to a sound financial condition.

- (E) Void Receipts – Void receipts are not reviewed by an independent person.

Recommendation – Void receipts should be reviewed by an independent person for propriety. The review should be documented by signing or initialing the void receipt.

- (F) Disbursement Approval – While the City Council notes approval of claims in the minutes record, the minutes record does not include the list of claims or any other way to identify the specific claims approved (i.e., a total of the claims listing). Also, while a claim list is provided to the City Council for approval, the listings are not signed to document approval and to authenticate the record.

Recommendation – The City should establish procedures to document the specific claims approved, either by including a list of the claims in the minutes record, or by including the total of the claims approved in the minutes and providing a listing of the claims to the City Council. The claims listing should be signed by the City Council to evidence approval and to authenticate the record.

City of Clarence

Staff

This engagement was performed by:

Brian R. Brustkern, CPA, Director  
Katherine L. Rupp, CPA, Manager  
Enoch Duval, Staff Auditor  
Hunter W. Penton, Staff Auditor