REPORT OF THE AUDIT OF THE HANCOCK COUNTY SHERIFF'S SETTLEMENT - 2023 TAXES

For The Period September 1, 2023 Through August 31, 2024

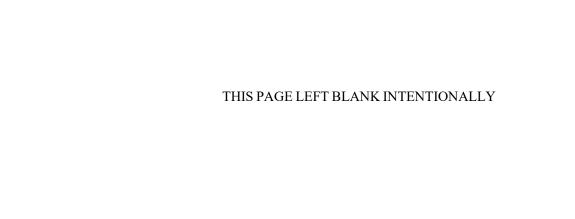


ALLISON BALL AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS auditor.ky.gov

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ALLISON BALL AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Independent Auditor's Report

To the People of Kentucky
The Honorable Andy Beshear, Governor
Holly M. Johnson, Secretary
Finance and Administration Cabinet
The Honorable Johnny Roberts, Hancock County Judge/Executive
The Honorable Ralph Dale Bozarth, Hancock County Sheriff
Members of the Hancock County Fiscal Court

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statement

Opinions

We have audited the accompanying Hancock County Sheriff's Settlement - 2023 Taxes for the period September 1, 2023 through August 31, 2024 - Regulatory Basis, and the related notes to the financial statement, which collectively comprise the Hancock County Sheriff's financial statement as listed in the table of contents.

Unmodified Opinion on Regulatory Basis of Accounting

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statement presents fairly, in all material respects, the taxes charged, credited, and paid for the period September 1, 2023 through August 31, 2024 of the Hancock County Sheriff, in accordance with the basis of accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the Commonwealth of Kentucky as described in Note 1.

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 section of our report, the financial statement does not present fairly, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the taxes charged, credited, and paid of the Hancock County Sheriff, for the period September 1, 2023 through August 31, 2024.

Basis for Opinions

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the *Audit Program for Sheriffs' Tax Settlements*. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Hancock County Sheriff and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.



AUDITOR, KY, GOV

To the People of Kentucky
The Honorable Andy Beshear, Governor
Holly M. Johnson, Secretary
Finance and Administration Cabinet
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The Honorable Ralph Dale Bozarth, Hancock County Sheriff
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Basis for Opinions (Continued)

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 Hancock County Sheriff on the basis of 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, 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 and pervasive.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statement

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the 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.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Hancock County Sheriff's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not an absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgement made by a reasonable user based on the financial statement.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statement, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statement.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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 Hancock County Sheriff's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

To the People of Kentucky
The Honorable Andy Beshear, Governor
Holly M. Johnson, Secretary
Finance and Administration Cabinet
The Honorable Johnny Roberts, Hancock County Judge/Executive
The Honorable Ralph Dale Bozarth, Hancock County Sheriff
Members of the Hancock County Fiscal Court

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement (Continued)

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statement.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Hancock County Sheriff's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued our report dated July 29, 2025, on our consideration of the Hancock County Sheriff's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and 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 effectiveness of 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 Hancock County Sheriff'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 finding:

2023-001 The Sheriff's Office Does Not Have Adequate Segregation Of Duties Over Receipts, Disbursements, And Bank Reconciliations

Respectfully submitted,

Alhin Ball

Allison Ball

Auditor of Public Accounts

Frankfort, Ky

July 29, 2025

HANCOCK COUNTY RALPH DALE BOZARTH, SHERIFF SHERIFF'S SETTLEMENT - 2023 TAXES

For The Period September 1, 2023 Through August 31, 2024

Special Taxing County Districts School State Charges Real Estate \$ 740,422 3,541,530 548,551 201,277 Tangible 97,459 351,095 1,286,105 1,790,689 Fire Protection 2,612 Total Per Sheriff's Official Receipt 301,348 1,091,517 4,827,635 2,339,240 Other Taxes & Charges Court Ordered Increases 31 2,797 545 84 Franchise Taxes 114,112 368,405 1,761,469 Additional Billings 13 52 250 272 Mineral Tax 2022 306 1,135 5,314 841 Mineral Tax 2023 425 1,562 7,469 1,152 Penalties 4,174 16,712 64,199 58,619 Gross Chargeable to Sheriff 420,409 1,482,180 6,666,881 2,400,208 Credits Exonerations 4,247 59,159 5,297 5,085 Discounts 4,263 15,263 68,711 22,094 Delinquent Real Estate 2,540 9,296 6,878 44,466 Delinquent Tangible 312 861 4,121 3,808 Delinquent Mineral Tax 2023 79 21 370 58 25 Delinquent Mineral tax 2022 119 **Total Credits** 11,390 176,946 30,821 37,923 Taxes Collected 409,019 6,489,935 1,451,359 2,362,285 Less: Sheriff's Commissions* 17,383 61,683 97,351 100,397 Taxes Due Districts 391,636 1,389,676 6,392,584 2,261,888 Taxes Paid 388,693 1,381,244 6,353,507 2,070,954 Refunds (Current and Prior Year) 2,944 8,430 39,067 190,947 (1) \$ Taxes Due Districts (Refunds Due Sheriff) (13)

^{*} and ** See next page.

HANCOCK COUNTY RALPH DALE BOZARTH, SHERIFF SHERIFF'S SETTLEMENT - 2023 TAXES For The Period September 1, 2023 Through August 31, 2024 (Continued)

* Commissions:

4.25% on \$ 4,222,663 1.5% on \$ 6,489,935

** Special Taxing Districts:

Library District \$ 1
Health District 1

Due Districts \$ 2

HANCOCK COUNTY NOT<u>ES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT</u>

August 31, 2024

Note 1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

A. Fund Accounting

The sheriff's office tax collection duties are limited to acting as an agent for assessed property owners and taxing districts. A fund is used to account for the collection and distribution of taxes. 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.

B. Basis of Accounting

The financial statement has been prepared on a regulatory basis of accounting, which demonstrates compliance with the laws of Kentucky and is a special purpose framework. Basis of accounting refers to when charges, credits, and taxes paid are reported in the settlement statement. It relates to the timing of measurements regardless of the measurement focus.

Charges are sources of revenue which are recognized in the tax period in which they become available and measurable. Credits are reductions of revenue which are recognized when there is proper authorization. Taxes paid are uses of revenue which are recognized when distributions are made to the taxing districts and others.

C. Cash and Investments

KRS 66.480 authorizes the sheriff'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).

D. Preparation of State Settlement

The Kentucky Department of Revenue prepares the settlement relating to taxes collected for the state under the provision of KRS 134.192(2)(a). This is reported as the "State Taxes" column on the financial statement.

Note 2. Deposits

The Hancock County Sheriff maintained deposits of public funds with federally insured banking institutions as required by the Department for Local Government's (DLG's) 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 sheriff 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.

HANCOCK COUNTY NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT August 31, 2024 (Continued)

Note 2. Deposits (Continued)

Custodial Credit Risk - Deposits

Custodial credit risk is the risk that in the event of a depository institution failure, the sheriff's deposits may not be returned. The Hancock County Sheriff does not have a deposit policy for custodial credit risk, but rather follows the requirements of the DLG's *County Budget Preparation and State Local Finance Officer Policy Manual*. As of August 31, 2024, all deposits were covered by FDIC insurance or a properly executed collateral security agreement.

Note 3. Tax Collection Period

A. Property Taxes

The real and personal property tax assessments were levied as of January 1, 2023. Property taxes were billed to finance governmental services for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024. Liens are effective when the tax bills become delinquent. The collection period for these assessments was October 6, 2023 through April 15, 2024.

B. Oil Property Taxes

The oil property tax assessments were levied as of January 1, 2023. Property taxes are billed to finance governmental services. Liens are effective when the tax bills become delinquent. The collection period for these assessments was January 13, 2024 through June 30, 2024.

C. Clay Property – Omitted 2023

The omitted clay property tax assessments were levied as of January 1, 2023. Property taxes are billed to finance governmental services. Liens are effective when the tax bills become delinquent. The collection period for these assessments was January 13, 2024 through June 30, 2024.

D. Limestone, Sand, and Gravel Reserves

The limestone, sand, and gravel property tax assessments were levied as of January 1, 2023. Property taxes are billed to finance governmental services. Liens are effective when the tax bills become delinquent. The collection period for these assessments was January 13, 2024 through June 30, 2024.

E. Oil, Limestone, Sand, and Gravel - 2021 and 2022 and Clay - Omitted 2022

The oil, limestone, sand, and gravel, and omitted clay property tax assessments were levied as of January 1, 2023. Property taxes are billed to finance governmental services. Liens are effective when the tax bills become delinquent. The collection period for these assessments was June 1, 2023 through November 15, 2023.

F. Franchise Taxes

The franchise tax assessments were levied by the Department of Revenue for various tax years. Franchise taxes are billed to finance governmental services. Liens are effective when the tax bills become delinquent. The collection period for these assessments was May 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024.

HANCOCK COUNTY NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT August 31, 2024 (Continued)

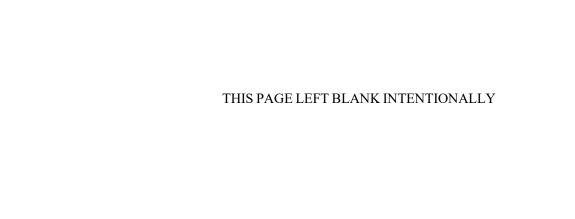
Note 4. Interest Income

The Hancock County Sheriff earned \$926 as interest income on 2023 taxes. The sheriff was in substantial compliance with his statutory responsibilities.

Note 5. Sheriff's 10% Add-On Fee

The Hancock County Sheriff collected \$15,310 of 10% add-on fees allowed by KRS 134.119(7). This amount was used to operate the sheriff's office.

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





ALLISON BALL AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

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

The Honorable Johnny Roberts, Hancock County Judge/Executive The Honorable Ralph Dale Bozarth, Hancock County Sheriff Members of the Hancock County Fiscal Court

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 Hancock County Sheriff's Settlement - 2023 Taxes for the period September 1, 2023 through August 31, 2024 - Regulatory Basis and the related notes to the financial statement and have issued our report thereon dated July 29, 2025. The Hancock County Sheriff'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.

Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statement, we considered the Hancock County Sheriff'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 Hancock County Sheriff's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Hancock County Sheriff's internal control.

Our consideration of internal control over financial reporting 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 2023-001 to be a material weakness.



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* (Continued)

Report on Compliance And Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Hancock County Sheriff's financial statement is free from 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*.

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.

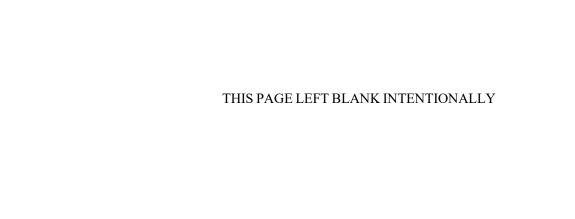
Respectfully submitted,

Allisa Ball

Allison Ball Auditor of Public Accounts Frankfort, Ky

July 29, 2025





HANCOCK COUNTY RALPH DALE BOZARTH, SHERIFF SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

For The Period September 1, 2023 Through August 31, 2024

INTERNAL CONTROL - MATERIAL WEAKNESS:

2023-001 The Sheriff's Office Does Not Have Adequate Segregation Of Duties Over Receipts, Disbursements, And Bank Reconciliations

This is a repeat finding and was included in the prior year audit report as finding 2022-001. The Hancock County Sheriff's Office has a lack of segregation of duties over the receipt and disbursement functions and preparing the bank reconciliations. The bookkeeper is responsible for the collection of cash, preparation of the daily deposit and preparing the bank reconciliations. She is also responsible for the preparation of monthly reports and issuance of monthly tax distribution checks to each taxing district. According to the sheriff, this lack of segregation of duties is due to a limited number of employees available to properly segregate these job duties.

Because the bookkeeper handled all receipt and disbursement functions and compensating controls were not implemented, the following occurred:

- 1. No documentation of reconciling bank statements to monthly reports.
- 2. No documentation of reconciling monthly reports to ledgers.

KRS 46.010(2) requires, "each county treasurer, and each county officer who receives or disburses state funds, to keep an accurate account of receipts and disbursements, showing a daily balance of receipts and disbursements." KRS 46.010(3) requires, "all county officers handling state funds, other than taxes, to make an annual report to the Department for Local Government showing receipts and disbursements, and to make other financial statements as the Department for Local Government requires." Adequate segregation of duties is a basic internal control necessary to ensure the accuracy and reliability of financial reports.

We recommend the sheriff separate the duties over the receipt and disbursement functions, and preparation of bank reconciliations. If this is not possible, due to limited number of staff, then strong oversight over those areas should occur and involve the sheriff or an employee not currently performing any of those functions. The individual providing this oversight should initial source documents as evidence of this review.

Sheriff's Response: The official did not provide a response.