



STATE OF INDIANA
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

B61467

STATE BOARD OF ACCOUNTS
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May 15, 2023

TO: THE OFFICIALS OF VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP, MONROE COUNTY, INDIANA

As authorized under Indiana Code 5-11-1, we performed certain procedures to the accounting records and related documents of Van Buren Township (Township), Monroe County, for the period of January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2022, to determine compliance with applicable Indiana laws and uniform compliance guidelines established by the Indiana State Board of Accounts.

Management is responsible for preparing and maintaining its accounting records and related documents, as well as compliance with applicable state laws and uniform compliance guidelines established by the Indiana State Board of Accounts.

The Township's Annual Financial Reports filed by management can be found on the Gateway Website: www.gateway.ifionline.org.

The Comments contained herein describe the identified reportable instances of noncompliance found as a result of the procedures we performed. Our procedures were not designed to identify all instances of noncompliance; therefore, noncompliance may exist that is unidentified.

Comments

IMPROPER USE OF PUBLIC FUNDS

Condition and Context

During 2021, payments were made to a local printing company totaling \$3,099 for resources to campaign against annexation. These expenditures are considered to be an improper use of public funds and outside the normal duties of a Trustee set forth by Indiana Code.

Criteria

Indiana Code 36-6-4-3 states:

"The executive shall do the following:

- (1) Keep a written record of official proceedings.
- (2) Manage all township property interests.
- (3) Keep township records open for public inspection.
- (4) Attend all meetings of the township legislative body.

- (5) Receive and pay out township funds.
- (6) Examine and settle all accounts and demands chargeable against the township.
- (7) Administer township assistance under [IC 12-20](#) and [IC 12-30-4](#).
- (8) Perform the duties of fence viewer under [IC 32-26](#).
- (9) Provide and maintain cemeteries under [IC 23-14](#).
- (10) Provide fire protection under [IC 36-8](#), except in a township that:
 - (A) is located in a county having a consolidated city; and
 - (B) consolidated the township's fire department under [IC 36-3-1-6.1](#).
- (11) File an annual personnel report under [IC 5-11-13](#).
- (12) Prepare a statement of estimated expenditures and present the statement to the legislative body at the annual meeting under section 11 of this chapter.
- (13) File the annual budget adopted by the township legislative body with the department of local government finance within the time specified and otherwise in accordance with [IC 6-1.1-17-5\(d\)](#).
- (14) Submit information to the department of local government finance's computer gateway within the time specified as prescribed under [IC 6-1.1-17-3\(a\)](#).
- (15) Provide and maintain township parks and community centers under [IC 36-10](#).
- (16) Destroy detrimental plants, noxious weeds, and rank vegetation under [IC 15-16-8](#).
- (17) Provide insulin to the poor under [IC 12-20-16](#).
- (18) Perform other duties prescribed by statute."

Every effort should be made by the unit to avoid unreasonable or excessive costs. Unreasonable or excessive costs may be the personal obligation of the responsible official or employee. (Accounting and Uniform Compliance Guidelines Manual for Townships, Chapter 1)

Sources and uses of funds must be limited to those authorized by the enabling law, ordinance/ resolution, or grant agreement. (Accounting and Uniform Compliance Guidelines Manual for Townships, Chapter 1)

Public funds may not be used to pay for personal items or for expenses which do not relate to the functions and purposes of the unit. Any personal expenses paid by the unit may be the personal obligation of the responsible official or employee. (Accounting and Uniform Compliance Guidelines Manual for Townships, Chapter 1)

This report is intended solely for the information and use of management, governance, and others within the organization. This restriction is not intended to limit the distribution of this report, which is a matter of public record.

The Schedule of Cash and Investment Balances - Regulatory Basis is presented as other information. It has not been subjected to any auditing procedures, and, accordingly, we do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on it.

SCHEDULE OF CASH AND INVESTMENT
BALANCES - REGULATORY BASIS
As of December 31, 2022

Fund	Cash and Investments 12-31-22
TOWNSHIP	\$ 1,126,391
RECREATION FUND	74,284
TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE	479,004
2020 ENCUMBERED FIRE	-
RAINY DAY FUND	3,380,590
EXCISE LEVY TAX	5,797
COMMISSIONERS DONATION TO TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE OVER PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS	2,931
KOONTZ CEMETERY DONATION	27,966
HARMONY CEMETERY	<u>23,976</u>
Total	<u>\$ 5,120,939</u>

Any Official Response to the Comments, incorporated within this report, was not verified for accuracy.

The contents of this report were communicated to Rita Barrow, Trustee, on May 8, 2023.

Respectfully,



Beth Kelley, CPA, CFE
Deputy State Examiner

Rita Barrow, Trustee
Van Buren Township Monroe County

May 11, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I want to explain why information was sent to residents concerning annexation. I know now it wasn't a decision that should have made, but justification in my mind and heart.

1. As an elected Trustee and feeling responsible to inform approximately 13,000 residents.
2. With the inundated phone calls, emails, and in-person visits to my office it was time for me to help in any way I could think would allow them to receive this information.
3. With all the postcards and letters sent there were only two individuals who responded negative that I remember. Two out of 13,000 was enough evidence to me for justification.
4. Using Rainy Day funding, I performed a notice to residents, with approval from the board, following the procedure below.
 - a. Notified Van Buren Township board and received approval for funding
 - b. Requested the additional appropriations with DLGF and it was approved.
 - c. Placed a legal notice in the newspaper for additional appropriations two times and held a public meeting.

All of the documents distributed were overwhelming approved by almost all of residents not wanting to be annexed. Van Buren Township had the 2nd largest amount of homes of the seven areas being annexed.

Area 1A, 1B and 1C all Van Buren:	Residents
Area 1A - Totally Van Buren Township	1297
Area 1B - Van Buren Township	802
Area 1C - Totally Van Buren Township	<u>106</u> (all Habitat for Humanity Homes)
<u>Total</u>	<u>2205</u>

Listed below are the remaining area residents:

Area 1B Perry Township (with Van Buren Township)	1602
Area 2 Perry Township	1725
Area 4 Perry Township	106
Area 5 Perry Township	<u>126</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>3562</u>
Area 2 Salt Creek Township	39
Area 2 Benton Township	6
Area 2, 3, 6, & 7 Bloomington Township	350 (area 6 & 7 were dismissed)
Area 1A Richland Township	306



Average Income for Van Buren Township according to 2020 census:

Household income	38%	\$29,314
Household income	38%	\$54,096
Household income	22%	\$100,000 - \$200,000
Household income	2%	Over \$200,000

I understand why this was not the best decision however, residents need to know what could occur with their property, especially taking into consideration that in spite of all social media, there are some who have no equipment or idea how to use these resources.

Respectively,



Rita Barrow, Trustee
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