

STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of the State Auditor



Rebecca Otto
State Auditor

LAC QUI PARLE-YELLOW BANK
WATERSHED DISTRICT
MADISON, MINNESOTA

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010

Description of the Office of the State Auditor

The mission of the Office of the State Auditor is to oversee local government finances for Minnesota taxpayers by helping to ensure financial integrity and accountability in local governmental financial activities.

Through financial, compliance, and special audits, the State Auditor oversees and ensures that local government funds are used for the purposes intended by law and that local governments hold themselves to the highest standards of financial accountability.

The State Auditor performs approximately 160 financial and compliance audits per year and has oversight responsibilities for over 3,300 local units of government throughout the state. The office currently maintains five divisions:

Audit Practice - conducts financial and legal compliance audits of local governments;

Government Information - collects and analyzes financial information for cities, towns, counties, and special districts;

Legal/Special Investigations - provides legal analysis and counsel to the Office and responds to outside inquiries about Minnesota local government law; as well as investigates allegations of misfeasance, malfeasance, and nonfeasance in local government;

Pension - monitors investment, financial, and actuarial reporting for approximately 730 public pension funds; and

Tax Increment Financing - promotes compliance and accountability in local governments' use of tax increment financing through financial and compliance audits.

The State Auditor serves on the State Executive Council, State Board of Investment, Land Exchange Board, Public Employees Retirement Association Board, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, and the Rural Finance Authority Board.

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**LAC QUI PARLE-YELLOW BANK
WATERSHED DISTRICT
MADISON, MINNESOTA**

For the Year Ended December 31, 2010



Management and Compliance Report

**Audit Practice Division
Office of the State Auditor
State of Minnesota**

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**LAC QUI PARLE-YELLOW BANK WATERSHED DISTRICT
MADISON, MINNESOTA**

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**LAC QUI PARLE-YELLOW BANK WATERSHED DISTRICT
MADISON, MINNESOTA**

**SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010**

**I. FINDINGS RELATED TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDITED IN
ACCORDANCE WITH *GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS***

INTERNAL CONTROL

PREVIOUSLY REPORTED ITEM NOT RESOLVED

07-1 Internal Control/Segregation of Duties

Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining internal control. This responsibility includes the internal control over the various accounting cycles, the fair presentation of the financial statements and related notes, and the accuracy and completeness of all financial records and related information. Adequate segregation of duties is a key internal control in an organization's accounting system. The size of the Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District and its staffing limits the internal control that management can design and implement into the organization. Management should be aware that segregation of duties is not adequate from an internal control point of view.

Management is responsible for the accuracy and completeness of all financial records and related information. Also, management is responsible for controls over the year-end financial reporting process, including controls over procedures used to enter transaction totals into the general ledger; initiate, authorize, record, and process journal entries into the general ledger; and record recurring and nonrecurring adjustments to the financial statements.

Management has requested that the Office of the State Auditor prepare the annual financial statements and related notes for the District. This arrangement is not unusual for organizations the size of the Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District. These decisions were based on the availability of the District's staff and the cost/benefit of using our expertise.

During our audit, we proposed significant adjustments to convert the District's financial records to the financial statements as reported. These adjustments are described in more detail in our required communication letter to the District Board.

Monitoring of internal controls is also the responsibility of management. Monitoring involves assessing the quality of performance over time. Monitoring should occur during normal operations and includes reviews, comparisons, reconciliations, and other actions employees take in performing their duties. An essential element of monitoring controls includes performing a risk assessment of existing controls over significant functions of the accounting system used to produce financial information for members of the Board, management, and for external financial reporting. The risk assessment is intended to determine if the internal controls established by management are still effective or if changes are needed to maintain a sound internal control structure. Changes may be necessary due to such things as organizational restructuring, staffing vacancies, updates to information systems, or changes to services being provided.

We recommend the Board be mindful that limited staffing causes inherent risks in safeguarding the District's assets and proper reporting of its financial activity. We recommend the Board continue to implement oversight procedures and monitor those procedures to determine if they are still effective internal controls. We recommend that a formal plan be developed that calls for assessing and monitoring the significant internal controls on a regular basis, no less than annually. The monitoring should be documented to show the results of the review, changes required, and who performed the work.

Client's Response:

The LQP-YB Watershed Board is aware of the lack of segregation of duties for internal control and limitations due to small staff size. The Board is supportive of implementing any practical procedures to limit risk due to these deficiencies and will create or modify policies to ensure that duties are segregated wherever possible and reasonable.

II. OTHER FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OTHER ITEM FOR CONSIDERATION

GASB Statement 54

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board's (GASB) Statement No. 54, *Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions*, is effective for the Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District for the year ending December 31, 2011. The standard's objectives are to enhance the usefulness of fund balance information included in the financial report through clearer fund balance classifications that can be consistently applied and to clarify existing governmental fund type definitions.

Fund Balance Reporting

Statement 54 establishes new fund balance classifications based on constraints imposed on how resources can be spent. The existing components of fund balance are reserved, unreserved-designated, and unreserved-undesignated. Statement 54 replaces these components with nonspendable, restricted, committed, assigned, and unassigned as defined below:

- *Nonspendable* - amounts that cannot be spent because they are either not spendable form (for example, inventory or prepaid items) or legally or contractually required to be maintained intact (such as the corpus of a permanent fund).
- *Restricted* - amounts that can be spent only for specific purposes stipulated by constitution, external resource providers, or through enabling legislation.
- *Committed* - amounts that can be used only for specific purposes determined by a formal action of a government's highest level of decision-making authority.
- *Assigned* - amounts a government intends to use for a specific purpose that do not meet the criteria to be classified as restricted or committed.
- *Unassigned* - spendable amounts not contained in the other classifications.

The District should begin the process for implementing the new fund balance classifications. A key step in successfully implementing the new fund balance requirements is to plan ahead. The District can start with the following steps:

- review the requirements of GASB Statement 54;
- review current fund balances and compare to the new classifications;
- reclassify January 1, 2011, fund balance using the new classifications;
- review/update/prepare a comprehensive fund balance policy;
- prepare appropriate Board resolutions to commit fund balance; and
- if the District's Board intends to delegate authority to assign fund balance, prepare the resolutions delegating that authority.

Governmental Fund Type Definitions

The definitions of the general fund, special revenue fund type, capital projects fund type, debt service fund type, and permanent fund type are clarified in the new standard. The new definition for a special revenue fund could have significant impact on the District's current fund classifications.

GASB Statement 54 provides a new and clearer description of when it is appropriate to account for an activity using a special revenue fund. Special revenue funds are used to report specific revenue sources restricted or committed to specified purposes other than debt service and capital projects, where the restricted or committed revenue sources comprise a substantial portion of the fund's resources, and are expected to continue to do so in the future. The standard does not define substantial portion; however, most recommendations are generally that the restricted or committed revenues should comprise at least 35 to 50 percent of total fund revenues. Under this definition, it is possible that some current special revenue funds will no longer meet the requirements for special revenue fund treatment. The District's management should review the District's special revenue funds to ensure these funds continue to warrant treatment as special revenue funds.

The District's management should perform the following steps prior to December 31, 2011:

- prepare a list of the District's special revenue funds;
- determine the sources of revenues for each of those funds;
- Identify whether any of those revenues are restricted or committed;
- determine if these restricted or committed revenues represent a substantial portion of the fund's revenues and are expected to continue to be a substantial source of revenues;
 - if yes, the fund may continue to be classified as a special revenue fund;
 - if not, determine whether the District will combine that fund with the general fund or with a similar purpose special revenue fund that meets the new definition;
- code revenues in the general ledger by source constraints--restricted, committed, assigned, or unassigned; and
- determine if there needs to be a restatement of beginning fund balances.

Additional implementation steps could include: informing any component units that they also will need to meet the requirements; deciding on how fund balance will be presented in the financials, i.e. detailed vs. aggregate methods; and developing the potential note disclosures. Additional guidance on GASB Statement 54 can be found on the Office of the State Auditor's website at:

http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/other/Statements/fundbalances_postGASB54_1012_statement.pdf.

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REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH *GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS*

Board of Supervisors
Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District

We have audited the financial statements of Lac qui Parle County, which include the governmental activities and each major fund of the Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District as supplementary information, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2010, and have issued our report thereon dated September 27, 2011. We conducted our audit 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.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit, we considered the Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District's internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control over financial reporting.

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 over financial reporting that might be significant deficiencies or material weaknesses and, therefore, there can be no assurance that all deficiencies, significant deficiencies, or material weaknesses have been identified. However, as described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Recommendations, we identified a deficiency in internal control over financial reporting that we consider to be a material weakness.

A deficiency in internal control over financial reporting 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 combination of deficiencies, in internal control over financial reporting such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the District's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. We consider the deficiency described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Recommendations as item 07-1 to be a material weakness.

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District's financial statements are free of 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 determination of financial statement amounts. 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*.

Minnesota Legal Compliance

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the provisions of the *Minnesota Legal Compliance Audit Guide for Political Subdivisions*, promulgated by the State Auditor pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 6.65. Accordingly, the audit included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

The *Minnesota Legal Compliance Audit Guide for Political Subdivisions* contains six categories of compliance to be tested: contracting and bidding, deposits and investments, conflicts of interest, public indebtedness, claims and disbursements, and miscellaneous provisions. Our study included all of the listed categories.

The results of our tests indicate that for the items tested, the Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District complied with the material terms and conditions of applicable legal provisions.

Also included in the Schedule of Findings and Recommendations is an other item for consideration. We believe this information to be of benefit to the District, and we are reporting it for that purpose.

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District's written response to the internal control finding identified in our audit has been included in the Schedule of Findings and Recommendations. We did not audit the District's response and, accordingly, we express no opinion on it.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Board of Supervisors, management, and others within the Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than those specified parties.

/s/Rebecca Otto

REBECCA OTTO
STATE AUDITOR

September 27, 2011

/s/Greg Hierlinger

GREG HIERLINGER, CPA
DEPUTY STATE AUDITOR