Scott Fitzpatrick
Missouri State Auditor

CITIZENS SUMMARY

Findings in the audit of the City of Pine Lawn

Procurement and Disbursements	Controls and procedures over procurement and disbursements need improvement. There is no documentation that city officials always solicited bids or proposals as required by city code and the city did not have controls in place to ensure personnel sought bids and proposals prior to making purchases. A review of 25 haphazardly selected disbursements, totaling $57,540, noted city officials did not obtain bids or proposals for 3 of the 6 applicable expenditures, including a consulting firm that helps with the annual tax levy for $1,600, fuel for $1,005, and lawn mower tires for $3,100. The city sponsors events including out-of-town trips, luncheons, and park events and makes donations to charitable organizations that do not appear to benefit the city as a whole or to be necessary uses of taxpayer funds. As part of the events the city purchased food and other items totaling approximately $2,209 in fiscal year 2025. Charitable donations to organizations and programs, including Toys for Tots, totaled $1,216 in fiscal year 2025.
Bank Reconciliations	The city contracted bookkeeper does not perform timely bank reconciliations of the city's general account. The bookkeeper indicated when she was hired in June 2021, the city did not have any bank reconciliations on file. She started performing reconciliations chronologically beginning with 2016 and had only reconciled up to June 2023, as of February 2026.
Late Fees and Finance Charges	City personnel did not ensure bills were paid timely, credit card balances were monitored to avoid finance charges, and credit card bills were paid in full each month. During the year ended June 30, 2025, the city incurred late fees and finance charges totaling $1,595, including $1,219 in copier contract late fees, $190 in credit card late fees, and $186 in finances charges.
Closed Meeting Minutes	The Board did not prepare sufficient meeting minutes for 7 of 8 closed meetings held during the period January 2024 through May 2025.
Electronic Communication Policy	The city has not developed a records management and retention policy that includes electronic communication in compliance with the Missouri Secretary of State Records Services Division guidance, as approved by the Missouri Local Records Commission. This guidance recommends government entities have a policy on electronic messaging, including text messages, email, and other third party platforms.

In the areas audited, the overall performance of this entity was **Fair**.*

*The rating(s) cover only audited areas and do not reflect an opinion on the overall operation of the entity. Within that context, the rating scale indicates the following:

Excellent: The audit results indicate this entity is very well managed. The report contains no findings. In addition, if applicable, prior recommendations have been implemented.

Good: The audit results indicate this entity is well managed. The report contains few findings, and the entity has indicated most or all recommendations have already been, or will be, implemented. In addition, if applicable, many of the prior recommendations have been implemented.

Fair: The audit results indicate this entity needs to improve operations in several areas. The report contains several findings, or one or more findings that require management's immediate attention, and/or the entity has indicated several recommendations will not be implemented. In addition, if applicable, several prior recommendations have not been implemented.

Poor: The audit results indicate this entity needs to significantly improve operations. The report contains numerous findings that require management's immediate attention, and/or the entity has indicated most recommendations will not be implemented. In addition, if applicable, most prior recommendations have not been implemented.

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RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

Recommendations in the audit of the City of Pine Lawn

Procurement and Disbursements	The Board of Aldermen: 1.1 Solicit bids and proposals in accordance with city code. 1.2 Ensure all disbursements are necessary and prudent uses of public funds.
Bank Reconciliations	The Board of Aldermen ensure bank reconciliations are prepared timely.
Late Fees and Finance Charges	The Board of Aldermen implement procedures to ensure bills are paid timely to avoid late fees and finance charges.
Closed Meeting Minutes	The Board of Aldermen ensure sufficient meeting minutes are prepared and retained for all closed meetings.
Electronic Communication Policy	The Board of Aldermen develop a written records management and retention policy to address electronic communications management and retention to comply with Missouri Secretary of State Records Services Division electronic communications guidelines.