



# Scott Fitzpatrick

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Missouri State Auditor

## Village of Leslie

Report No. 2024-083

October 2024

[auditor.mo.gov](http://auditor.mo.gov)



**Scott Fitzpatrick**  
Missouri State Auditor

# CITIZENS SUMMARY

## Findings in the audit of the Village of Leslie

Sewer Account Oversight	The Board does not actively monitor or manage the village's sewer accounts and does not obtain sufficient financial reports from the accounting firm that performs its sewer system accounting functions. As a result, the Board is unaware of sewer billings and accounts receivable and cannot ensure all money received by the accounting firm is properly handled and deposited. In addition, some accounts continue to be billed for services not provided.
Sewer and Street Maintenance Plans	The Board has not developed a formal annual maintenance plan for the village sewer system. The Board has a service contractor perform specific sewer maintenance, after evaluating requests from property owners. Requests made are not documented and a list of such requests is not maintained. The Board has not developed a formal annual maintenance plan for village streets. The Board's informal street maintenance strategy is to minimize costs.
Ordinances	Village ordinances are not organized, complete, or up to date. As a result, the ordinances may not accurately reflect current operations or provide clear expectations and responsibilities between the village and its residents. Most of the available sewer ordinances are approximately 20 years old, the Board does not have ordinances to address outstanding accounts receivable balances when property owners change, and the Board does not have an ordinance establishing changes to certain fees and limits to sewer accounts receivable balances. Additionally, available ordinances were found in a disorganized manner and it was not possible to determine if these were all the active ordinances.
Trustee Vacancies	The village has not filled a vacancy on the Board for several years. Currently, there are 2 vacancies following the April 2, 2024, municipal election. Board trustee vacancies have impacted the Board's ability to adequately oversee village operations.
Budgets, Financial Reporting, and Sewer Rate Review	The village did not prepare a budget for the years ended March 31, 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021. The village did not file adequate annual financial reports with the State Auditor's Office as required by state law for the years ended March 31, 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020. The village did not timely file its financial reports for the years ended March 31, 2021, and 2020. Section 105.145.9, RSMo, requires political subdivisions to be fined \$500 per day for missing filing deadlines, and as a result of the village's failure to timely file financial reports the village owes \$362,500 in fines, which stopped accruing on December 14, 2022, when the village filed its fiscal year 2020 and 2021 financial reports. Because the village does not impose a sales or use tax, the Department of Revenue (DOR) has not recouped any money from the village. The DOR further indicated if the village imposes such a tax in the future, the DOR would begin recouping the fine from any tax distributions the DOR would make to the village. The village does not publish or post semiannual financial statements as required by state law. The village has not obtained annual audits of its sewer system as required by state law. The village has not performed a recent formal review, such as a cost study, of its sewer rates.

Property Tax Revenues	The Board did not complete the village's 2023 property tax rate certification process. As a result, the Franklin County Clerk set the village's 2023 tax rate levy at zero. The village only received \$839 in property tax revenues for the year ended March 31, 2024, compared to \$6,843 received for the year ended March 31, 2023.
Procurement	The Board did not comply with the village's procurement ordinance when it failed to solicit bids for purchases exceeding \$500. The village's procurement ordinance requires 3 written bids when the estimated cost exceeds \$1,500 and 3 telephone or mail bids from prospective vendors when the estimated cost is more than \$500 but less than \$1,500. The village does not obtain written contracts with some service providers and outside parties. The only written contract the village has is for accounting services and this contract was created in October 2000.
Sunshine Law	The Board failed to comply with the Sunshine Law as it did not provide notice of the time, date, and place of each of its monthly meetings, and did not prepare or provide tentative agendas. In addition, minutes were not formally approved by either the preparer (a Board member) and at least one other Board member. The Board has not adopted a written policy regarding public access to village records as required by state law.
Electronic Communication Policy	The village 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 **Poor**.\*

\*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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# Village of Leslie

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**SCOTT FITZPATRICK**  
MISSOURI STATE AUDITOR

To the Honorable Chairman  
and  
Members of the Board of Trustees  
Village of Leslie, Missouri

The State Auditor was petitioned under Section 29.230, RSMo, to audit the Village of Leslie. We have audited certain operations of the village in fulfillment of our duties. The scope of our audit included, but was not necessarily limited to, the year ended March 31, 2024. The objectives of our audit were to:

1. Evaluate the village's internal controls over significant management and financial functions.
2. Evaluate the village's compliance with certain legal provisions.
3. Evaluate the economy and efficiency of certain management practices and procedures, including certain financial transactions.

Our methodology included reviewing minutes of meetings, written policies and procedures, financial records, and other pertinent documents; interviewing various personnel of the village, as well as certain external parties; and performing sample testing using judgmental selection. The results of our sample testing cannot be projected to the entire populations from which the test items were selected. We obtained an understanding of internal control that is significant to the audit objectives and planned and performed procedures to assess internal control to the extent necessary to address our audit objectives. We also obtained an understanding of legal provisions that are significant within the context of the audit objectives, and we assessed the risk that illegal acts, including fraud, and violations of applicable contract, grant agreement, or other legal provisions could occur. Based on that risk assessment, we designed and performed procedures to provide reasonable assurance of detecting instances of noncompliance significant to those provisions.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The accompanying Organization and Statistical Information is presented for informational purposes. This information was obtained from the village's management and was not subjected to the procedures applied in our audit of the village.

For the areas audited, we identified (1) deficiencies in internal controls, (2) noncompliance with legal provisions, and (3) the need for improvement in management practices and procedures. The accompanying Management Advisory Report presents our findings arising from our audit of the Village of Leslie.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Fitzpatrick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "S".

Scott Fitzpatrick  
State Auditor

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# Village of Leslie

## Management Advisory Report

### State Auditor's Findings

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#### **1. Sewer Account Oversight**

The Board does not actively monitor or manage the village's sewer accounts and does not obtain sufficient financial reports from the accounting firm (referred to as "the firm" throughout the remainder of this report) that performs its sewer system accounting functions. As a result, the Board is unaware of sewer billings and accounts receivable and cannot ensure all money received by the firm is properly handled and deposited. In addition, some accounts continue to be billed for services not provided.

The Board pays the firm to maintain village sewer accounts and perform related bookkeeping, such as account billing and receipting, and disbursements approved by the Board. The Board relied on the firm's work and did not understand that it needed to manage and monitor this arrangement and the accounts.

The firm bills all sewer accounts monthly for the village. Billings only stop if the Board makes a request to the firm to stop billings for a specific account. The Board did not make any requests for billings to stop for any accounts during the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024.

We reviewed the firm's village account data for the calendar year ended December 31, 2023. At December 31, 2023, there were approximately 70 village sewer accounts, and the village's outstanding accounts receivable balance totaled \$28,329. During the year ended December 31, 2023, account billings and receipts totaled \$33,674 and \$39,973, respectively.

#### Billings

The Board does not review accounts to determine if action should be taken on monthly billings or outstanding accounts receivable balances. We noted the following concerns:

- The Board did not attempt to collect payments for 2 accounts whose outstanding balances totaled \$7,097, and \$1,788, respectively, as of December 31, 2023. These balances were also the balances for the 2 preceding years. No billings by the firm, or payments from the owners, occurred during this period. For the first account, the Board indicated the property is inhabited, billing was stopped in March 2020 for unknown reasons, and billings should restart. This account's balance represents over 15 years of unpaid billings at the village's current \$38 monthly billing rate. For the second account, the Board indicated the property is abandoned, and billing was stopped in March 2013 for unknown reasons.
- The Board did not attempt to stop billings for 4 accounts despite the village not providing services for these accounts. For 2 of the accounts the owner continued paying monthly billings despite the property being a vacant lot or abandoned. The owners of the other 2 abandoned properties did not make monthly payments on their accounts. It is unclear



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why the village did not have the firm stop billing and shut down the sewer services.

- When a property owner changes, a new account is not created. Instead, the firm updates the property's existing account to reflect the new owner. As a result, the new owner inherits the old owner's outstanding balance. For example, new owners inherited outstanding balances of \$4,460, \$3,456, and \$1,216, respectively, during 2023 and these amounts remained as part of their balance as of December 31, 2023. In addition, the Board does not have an ordinance addressing these situations (see Management Advisory Report (MAR) finding number 3).
- The Board is not aware when property owners change, and does not request the firm to provide any updates on the accounts to the Board. The firm periodically initiates such updates on the village's behalf, after it learns of new owners through title company notifications. The Board receives a monthly accounts receivable aging summary report from the firm that lists the current accountholders, but it does not clearly indicate the firm's updates to accounts since the previous month.

Reviews of firm reports and information

The Board does not obtain sufficient reports and information from the firm to review sewer accounts and financial activity, and does not make full use of the report it does obtain from the firm. We noted the following concerns:

- The Board obtains, but does not thoroughly review, the firm's monthly accounts receivable aging summary report. This report offers limited information and does not meet the Board's monitoring and management needs. The report presents accounts receivable balances for individual accounts, as well as the total accounts receivable balance, but it typically excludes accounts with \$0 balances, even if these accounts are actively billed.
- The Board does not obtain additional reports available from the firm, such as monthly amounts billed for active accounts, monthly payments received for active accounts, and transaction histories for active accounts. The Board also does not request other useful information, such as updates made to the accounts for name changes.
- The Board does not obtain other financial information from the firm, such as bank statements and deposit reports, to ensure all money received was deposited and disbursements were appropriate.

Signed agreements

The Board does not obtain signed sewer agreements with property owners to document procedures over sewer billings. Thus, the Board is not aware of ownership changes made to properties, and there is no assurance the village's





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procedures are consistently communicated to, or clearly understood by, owners.

Overall conclusion

Without proper monitoring and management of the village's sewer accounts, the concerns noted will not be resolved, and similar situations will likely occur for other accounts. The village has relied on the firm to handle the sewer accounts and activity. Without obtaining adequate financial reports and bank statements from the firm regarding money handled for the village, the Board cannot ensure all money is properly deposited and disbursed.

Recommendation

The Board of Trustees establish policies and procedures to monitor and manage the village's sewer accounts, including reviewing current accounts to determine any action needed on monthly billings or outstanding balances; obtaining and reviewing adequate sewer account information from the firm; and obtaining signed agreements with all property owners. The Board should also obtain financial reports and bank statements from the firm to ensure all money received by the firm for the village is properly deposited and disbursed.

Auditee's Response

*We will act on all recommendations to the best of our ability.*

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## 2. Sewer and Street Maintenance Plans

The village has not developed formal annual maintenance plans for its sewer system or streets.

Sewer maintenance

The Board has not developed a formal annual maintenance plan for the village sewer system. The Board has a service contractor perform specific sewer maintenance, after evaluating requests from property owners. Requests made are not documented and a list of such requests is not maintained. The village paid the contractor \$9,382 during the year ended March 31, 2024, and \$14,181 during the year ended March 31, 2023. The absence of routine, village-wide maintenance has left the village with minimal knowledge of the state of its sewer system, repair prioritization needs, and potential financial impacts.

Street maintenance

The Board has not developed a formal annual maintenance plan for village streets. The Board's informal street maintenance strategy is to minimize costs. The Board spent \$560 during the year ended March 31, 2024, and \$1,970 during the year ended March 31, 2023, for gravel. The Board did not spend additional money for services to repair the streets; instead, some Board members used their personal tractors to spread gravel on village streets.

Overall conclusion

Formal maintenance plans should be prepared in conjunction with the annual budget (see MAR finding number 5.1) and include a description of the sewer infrastructure and streets needing maintenance, the type of work to be performed, an estimate of the quantity and cost of materials needed, the dates



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such work could begin, the amount of labor required to perform the work, and other relevant information. The plans should be included in the budget message and approved by the Board. In addition, a public hearing should be held to obtain input from village residents.

Formal maintenance plans would serve as useful management tools and provide greater input into the overall budgeting process. Plans provide a means to continually and more effectively monitor and evaluate the progress made in the repair and maintenance of sewers and streets throughout the year. The Board indicated it was unaware of the importance of developing maintenance plans, and simply performed repairs as needed.

## Recommendation

The Board of Trustees establish formal annual maintenance plans for the sewer system and streets. In addition, the Board should document and maintain property owners' requests for sewer maintenance.

## Auditee's Response

*We will establish a written plan to service the sewer system and maintenance of the roads.*

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## 3. Ordinances

Village ordinances are not organized, complete, or up to date. As a result, the ordinances may not accurately reflect current operations or provide clear expectations and responsibilities between the village and its residents. We noted the following concerns:

- Most of the available sewer ordinances are approximately 20 years old, with the most recent ordinance dated July 2015. This ordinance increased the monthly billings from \$37 to \$38 for sewer accounts.
- The Board does not have an ordinance to address outstanding accounts receivable balances when property owners change. The firm currently assigns any outstanding balance to the property's new owner (see MAR finding number 1).
- The Board does not have a formal ordinance regarding a new policy implemented and communicated to sewer customers in June 2023 to set certain fees and to limit sewer accounts receivable balances to \$250 before it acts to shut down sewer services.<sup>1</sup>
- Available ordinances were disorganized and it was not possible to determine if these were all the active ordinances.

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<sup>1</sup> The village made one attempt to remove sewer services during the year ended March 31, 2024, but determined it was not feasible to do this without the water district also shutting down water services.



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- Village personnel were not familiar with the various ordinances, and did not identify the existence of any newer ordinances. Similarly, the village's meeting minutes showed the Board rarely discussed ordinances.

Because ordinances passed by the Board to govern the village and its residents have the force and effect of law, it is important they are complete and followed. In addition, complete, consistent, and updated ordinances, including sewer ordinances documenting sewer operations, help ensure equitable treatment to residents, and help prevent misunderstandings. It is unclear why the village's ordinances are not organized, complete, or up to date.

**Recommendation**

The Board of Trustees ensure the village maintains complete, consistent, and updated ordinances for all operations.

**Auditee's Response**

*We are planning to review at least one ordinance per month and update as needed. We will organize them into a binder.*

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**4. Trustee Vacancies**

The village has not filled a vacancy on the Board for several years. Currently, there are 2 vacancies following the April 2, 2024, municipal election. Board trustee vacancies have impacted the Board's ability to adequately oversee village operations. The Board indicated it has tried to get residents interested in filling the vacancies, but has not yet located suitable and willing candidates.

Section 80.040, RSMo, states the corporate powers and duties of the village shall be vested in a board of trustees, to consist of five members.

**Recommendation**

The Board of Trustees fill the vacant trustee positions, to consist of five members as required by state law.

**Auditee's Response**

*We have been and will continue to ask village citizens to join but have not had anyone say yes at this point.*

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**5. Budgets, Financial Reporting, and Sewer Rate Review**

The village did not prepare annual budgets, file adequate annual financial reports, publish semiannual financial statements, or obtain an annual sewer audit, as required by state law. In addition, the village has not performed a recent review of its sewer rates.

**5.1 Budgets**

The village did not prepare a budget for the years ended March 31, 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021. Board members were not aware a budget needed to be prepared annually.

A complete and well-planned budget, in addition to meeting statutory requirements, can serve as a useful management tool by establishing specific financial expectations for each area of village operations. It also assists in



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setting sewer rates (see section 5.5) and the property tax levy (see MAR finding number 6), and informs the public about village operations and current finances. Section 67.010, RSMo, requires the budget present a complete financial plan for the ensuing budget year and sets specific guidelines for the information to be included in the budget. In addition, Section 67.080, RSMo, provides that no expenditures of public money should be made unless it is authorized in the budget. Proper monitoring of budgeted amounts to actual results is necessary for the budget to be an effective management tool.

## 5.2 Financial reporting

The village did not file adequate annual financial reports with the State Auditor's Office (SAO) as required by state law for the years ended March 31, 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020. The village did not timely file its financial reports for the years ended March 31, 2021, and 2020. For all 4 years, the village submitted copies of monthly bank statements for its non-sewer accounts instead of submitting a financial report. The village also did not submit any financial information about its sewer operations. The current Board indicated it did not know how to prepare financial reports, and instead submitted bank statements to meet deadlines.

Section 105.145, RSMo, requires each political subdivision to file annual reports of financial transactions with the SAO. Section 105.145.5, RSMo, prohibits elected officials from continuing to receive compensation or processing disbursements after the deadline to submit the financial statement and until the financial statement is submitted to the SAO. Section 105.145.9, RSMo, requires political subdivisions to be fined \$500 per day for missing filing deadlines.<sup>2</sup> In addition, 15 CSR 40-3.030, requires each political subdivision to file annual reports within 6 months of the end of the subdivision's fiscal year.

## 5.3 Published financial statements

The village does not publish or post semiannual financial statements as required by state law. As a result, information regarding the village's financial activity and condition is not available to citizens. The Board indicated it was unaware that semiannual financial statements needed to be published.

Section 80.210, RSMo, requires the Board to prepare and publish semiannual financial statements in a local newspaper, or if there is no local newspaper, to post semiannual financial statements in at least six of the most public places in the village.

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<sup>2</sup> The Department of Revenue (DOR) indicated the village's total fine is \$362,500, which stopped accruing on December 14, 2022, when the village filed its fiscal year 2020 and 2021 financial reports. Because the village does not impose a sales or use tax, the DOR has not recouped any money from the village. The DOR further indicated if the village imposes such a tax in the future, the DOR would begin recouping the fine from any tax distributions the DOR would make to the village.



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## 5.4 Annual audits

The village has not obtained annual audits of its sewer system as required by state law. The Board indicated it was unaware audits were required.

Section 250.150, RSMo, requires the village obtain annual audits of the sewer system with the cost of the audit to be paid from revenues received from the system. Additionally it states the audit shall be performed by a public accountant employed for that purpose.

## 5.5 Sewer rates

The village has not performed a recent formal review, such as a cost study, of its sewer rates. Without current cost studies, it is unclear whether the rates assessed are set at an appropriate level. The village's current sewer rate of \$38 per month was set in 2015 through a village ordinance. The Board indicated it did not know if any formal reviews have been done.

Section 67.042, RSMo, provides that fees may be increased if supported by a statement of costs that shows the increase is necessary to cover costs of providing the service. To ensure sewer rates are appropriately set and cover the total cost of operations without generating excessive profits, it is necessary for village officials to perform and document a detailed cost study of the village's sewer costs, including depreciation and audit costs.

## Recommendations

The Board of Trustees:

- 5.1 Prepare annual budgets that contain all information required by state law, and ensure the budgets are adequately monitored.
- 5.2 Submit adequate annual financial reports to the State Auditor's Office as required by state law.
- 5.3 Publish or post semiannual financial statements as required by state law.
- 5.4 Obtain annual audits of the sewer system as required by state law.
- 5.5 Ensure a formal review of sewer rates is performed periodically to support sewer rate increases and ensure revenues are sufficient to cover all costs of providing the service.

## Auditee's Response

- 5.1 *We will prepare annual budgets. We will ensure the budgets contain information required by state law and review the budgets quarterly.*
- 5.2 *We will prepare financial reports that include all bank accounts, including the sewer accounts.*
- 5.3 *We will publish a semiannual financial statement.*



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5.4 *We will solicit bids for annual audits.*

5.5 *We will meet with the firm to review the sewer rates. This will ensure revenues are sufficient.*

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## 6. Property Tax Revenues

The Board did not complete the village's 2023 property tax rate certification process. As a result, the Franklin County Clerk set the village's 2023 tax rate levy at zero. The village only received \$839 in property tax revenues for the year ended March 31, 2024, compared to \$6,843 received for the year ended March 31, 2023. Without having a property tax levy the village lost approximately \$6,000 in property tax revenue. The Franklin County Clerk indicated he contacted the Board several times, but the Board did not submit the required documentation. The Board indicated one Board member was the Franklin County Clerk's single point of contact, but he either did not receive or did not act on the Franklin County Clerk's phone calls. The Board either did not complete, or could not locate, the required documentation, and there were no tax levy discussions in the Board's meeting minutes. In addition, the Board did not hold a required public hearing to propose rates for citizen input.

Failing to complete subsequent years' property tax certification processes will result in further revenue losses. Section 67.110, RSMo, requires the governing body to set property tax rates, and hold at least one public hearing, at which citizens may be heard, prior to approval of the proposed tax rates. The Board indicated it was not aware of these requirements.

## Recommendation

The Board of Trustees ensure a public hearing prior to setting the village's property tax rates is held in accordance with state law and ensure documentation regarding the property tax levy is submitted to the Franklin County Clerk.

## Auditee's Response

*A notice for the meeting was put in the local newspaper and a public hearing regarding the property tax levy was held on August 28, 2024. All documentation was submitted to the Franklin County Clerk by email on August 28, 2024. A reply from the County Clerk indicated he received the documentation.*

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## 7. Procurement

The Board did not comply with the village's procurement ordinance to solicit bids and obtain written contracts for services procured during the year ended March 31, 2024.

### 7.1 Bidding

The Board does not solicit bids for any services as required by the village's procurement ordinance. Purchases exceeding \$500 that were not bid during the year ended March 31, 2024, are listed below:



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Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

Vendor	Purpose	Amount
ESA, Inc.	Sewer repair services	\$ 9,382
Travelers	Village hall insurance	6,033
Leroy A. Strubberg & Associates, Inc.	Accounting services	3,275
Schulte Lawn Care	Non-sewer property mowing	900
Schulte Lawn Care	Sewer property mowing	900
Voss Hauling	Street gravel	560
Total payments		\$ 21,050

The village's procurement ordinance requires 3 written bids when the estimated cost exceeds \$1,500 and 3 telephone or mail bids from prospective vendors when the estimated cost is more than \$500 but less than \$1,500. The Board indicated some purchases were for recurring services using the same vendor across a period of time, or for services using a single source vendor. However, the village's procurement ordinance does not address these situations as reasons for not obtaining bids. In addition to being required by village ordinance, the routine use of a competitive procurement process for major purchases ensures the village has made every effort to receive the best and lowest price and all interested parties are given an equal opportunity to participate in village business.

## 7.2 Written contracts

The village does not obtain written contracts with some service providers and outside parties. The only written contract the village has is for accounting services and this contract was created in October 2000.

Clear and detailed written contracts are necessary to ensure all parties are aware of their duties and responsibilities, prevent misunderstandings, and ensure village money is used appropriately and effectively. Section 432.070, RSMo, requires contracts for political subdivisions to be in writing. Additionally, the village's procurement ordinance states, "All contractual services shall be purchased by formal, written contract from the lowest and best responsible provider . . ." It is unclear why the Board did not follow the village's procurement ordinance regarding written contracts.

## Recommendations

The Board of Trustees:

- 7.1 Solicit bids and proposals as required by village ordinance.
- 7.2 Enter into written contracts defining services provided and benefits received, and update the agreement for accounting services.

## Auditee's Response

- 7.1 *We will review ordinances and follow them.*
- 7.2 *Per the procurement ordinance, we will solicit bids and enter into written contracts to define the services and benefits we will receive.*



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*We will update the agreement we have with the accounting firm that handles the sewer district accounts.*

## 8. Sunshine Law

The Board did not always ensure compliance with the Sunshine Law. The Board met monthly during the year ended March 31, 2024.

### 8.1 Board meeting notices, agendas, and approval of minutes

The Board did not provide notice of the time, date, and place of each meeting, and did not prepare or provide tentative agendas. In addition, minutes were not formally approved by the preparer (a Board member) and at least one other Board member. The Board indicated it was not aware of these requirements.

Section 610.020, RSMo, requires public entities to give notice of the time, date, and place of each meeting, and its tentative agenda, to advise the public of matters to be considered. The meeting minutes should be signed by the preparer and at least one other Board member to provide an independent attestation that the minutes are a correct record of the matters discussed and actions taken during the meetings.

### 8.2 Public access policy

The Board has not adopted a written policy regarding public access to village records as required by state law. A written policy regarding public access to village records would establish guidelines for the village to make records available to the public. Such policies typically identify a person to contact, provide an address to mail such requests, and establish fees that may be assessed for providing copies of public records.

Section 610.023, RSMo, lists requirements for making records available to the public. Section 610.026, RSMo, allows the village to charge fees for providing access to and/or copies of public records and provides requirements related to fees. Section 610.028, RSMo, requires a written policy regarding release of information under the Sunshine Law. The Board indicated it was not aware of these requirements.

## Recommendations

The Board of Trustees:

8.1 Ensure notices and agendas are provided to advise the public of village meetings. In addition, ensure meeting minutes are formally approved by the preparer and at least one other Board member.

8.2 Develop a written public access policy.

## Auditee's Response

8.1 *We have already put these processes in place.*

8.2 *We will develop a written public access policy.*





Village of Leslie  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

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## 9. Electronic Communication Policy

The village 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.

Section 109.270, RSMo, provides that all records made or received by an official in the course of his/her public duties are public property and are not to be disposed of except as provided by law. Section 109.255, RSMo, provides that the Local Records Board issue directives for the destruction of records. The guidelines for managing electronic communications records can be found on the Secretary of State's website.<sup>3</sup>

Development of a written policy to address the use of electronic communications is necessary to ensure all documentation of official business of the village is retained as required by state law. The Board indicated it was unaware of the record retention requirements and the electronic communications guidelines.

### Recommendation

The Board of Trustees 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.

### Auditee's Response

*We will develop a written records management and retention policy.*

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<sup>3</sup> Missouri Secretary of State Records Services Division, *Electronic Communications Records Guidelines for Missouri Government*, May 14, 2019, is available at <<https://www.sos.mo.gov/CMSImages/LocalRecords/CommunicationsGuidelines.pdf>>, accessed May 24, 2024.

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# Village of Leslie

## Organization and Statistical Information

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The Village of Leslie is located in Franklin County. The village was incorporated in 1912. The village does not have any employees. The village's population was 136 in 2020, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Village operations include sewer and street maintenance.

### Mayor and Board of Trustees

The village government consists of a five-member board of trustees. The members are elected for 2-year terms. The chairman, who is a member of the board, is elected for a 2-year term, and presides over the board of trustees. Members of the Board of Trustees, at March 31, 2024, are identified below. The Chairman and Board members receive no compensation.

Don Hess, Chairman  
Carl Bleckman, Trustee  
Scott Miller, Trustee  
Vacancy (1)  
Vacancy (2)

- (1) Vacant position since Scott Guerrant, Trustee, resigned from the Board (date unknown) prior to March 31, 2024. This vacancy was not filled by the April 2, 2024, election.
- (2) Vacant position since the 2021 election. This vacancy was not filled by the April 2, 2024, election.

### Financial Activity

A summary of the village's financial activity for the year ended March 31, 2024, follows.



Village of Leslie  
Organization and Statistical Information

Village of Leslie  
Schedule of Receipts, Disbursements, and Changes in Cash  
Year Ended March 31, 2024

	General Account	Building Account	Sewer General Account	Sewer Debt Service Account	Sewer Maintenance and Extension Account	Total
RECEIPTS (1)	\$ 10,213	0	40,590	264	9,388	60,455
DISBURSEMENTS (1)	10,815	0	28,489	8,596	0	47,900
RECEIPTS OVER (UNDER) DISBURSEMENTS	(602)	0	12,101	(8,332)	9,388	12,555
CASH, APRIL 1, 2023	29,889	218	16,743	18,892	500	66,242
CASH, MARCH 31, 2024	\$ 29,287	218	28,844	10,560	9,888	78,797

(1) Receipts and disbursements presented include transfers between accounts.