



Susan Montee, JD, CPA  
Missouri State Auditor

---

# Webster County



---

February 2010  
Report No. 2010-27

---

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



**Susan Montee, JD, CPA**  
Missouri State Auditor

## YELLOW SHEET

### Findings in the audit of Webster County

#### County Disbursements

The County Commission purchased four tracts of real estate without obtaining independent appraisals of the properties and also did not obtain independent appraisals of properties exchanged with the City of Marshfield. The county did not properly solicit bids or retain sufficient bid documentation for some purchases and did not ensure fuel was purchased in compliance with the agreed upon price.

Procedures for monitoring county credit card use are insufficient. The County Commission does not review itemized credit card statements and/or invoices for county credit card purchases paid from restricted special revenue funds administered by other county officials. The County Collector made several personal credit card purchases, such as meals for his wife and alcohol, and incurred excessive meal and lodging costs. Purchases were made in violation of the county's travel policies. Adequate supporting documentation was also not maintained for some of the credit card purchases made by the County Collector. Further, the County Collector opened another credit card account with a different bank, and the County Commission was not aware the additional credit card account existed.

The county has not developed a formal written policy regarding cellular phone use or established adequate monitoring procedures to determine whether a cellular phone is needed or of benefit to the county. Fuel use is not adequately reviewed and reconciled to fuel purchases. The county did not always enter into formal written agreements signed by all parties defining services to be provided and benefits to be received. Monies received from private citizens and businesses for paving projects are not receipted and deposited in a timely manner.

#### Payroll Controls and Procedures

Compensatory (overtime) balances for county employees have accumulated and could potentially be a significant liability to the county. At November 7, 2009, county employees had accumulated 5,312 hours of compensatory time valued at approximately \$68,550. Timesheets are not prepared by the Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, and some timesheets submitted by road and bridge employees were not signed by the employee or the employee's supervisor.

#### Property Tax System Controls and Procedures

Controls and procedures over the property tax system need improvement. As a result, there is less assurance that all property tax monies have been accounted for properly. Neither the County Commission nor the County Clerk adequately reviews the activities of the County Collector. The County Clerk and County Commission do not review and approve additions and abatements to the tax system. The County Collector does not refund some overpayments of property taxes. Instead, the County Assessor reduces the taxpayer's property tax valuation for the amount of the overpayment for the future tax year to compensate the taxpayer for the County Collector not



**Susan Montee, JD, CPA**  
Missouri State Auditor

## YELLOW SHEET

---

making refunds. Passwords used by the County Collector and Assessor offices are not unique to each employee.

---

### County Collector Controls and Procedures

The County Collector's accounting and reporting procedures are not sufficient and do not provide assurance monies collected are accounted for properly. Although some of these problems were noted in our previous two audits, little progress has been made. The County Collector's annual settlements are incorrect. Differences were noted between the collections and distributions reported on the annual settlements. The County Collector does not compare the reconciled bank account balances to existing liabilities and has not established procedures to routinely follow up on outstanding checks. The County Collector did not disburse some monies collected on a timely basis. Some of these monies were not disbursed until after we brought these issues to the County Collector's attention. Accounting duties are not segregated, and there was no evidence of a supervisory review of the accounting records by the County Collector. Property tax receipts are not always deposited intact and in a timely manner.

---

### Prosecuting Attorney Controls and Procedures

Procedures are not in place to routinely identify month-end liabilities and reconcile to the bank account balances. There was no independent approval to support adjustments posted to the accounting system, and adequate documentation of such adjustments was not retained. Accounting duties are not adequately segregated, and procedures have not been established to ensure charges are filed with the court for unresolved bad check complaints on a timely basis.

Other findings in the audit report relate to the controls and procedures in the Sheriff and Recorder of Deeds offices, and County Commission meeting minutes.

**All reports are available on our Web site: [auditor.mo.gov](http://auditor.mo.gov)**

---

# Webster County Table of Contents

---

State Auditor's Report	2
------------------------	---

---

Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings	1. County Disbursements .....	4
	2. Payroll Controls and Procedures .....	13
	3. Property Tax System Controls and Procedures .....	14
	4. County Collector Controls and Procedures .....	17
	5. Prosecuting Attorney Controls and Procedures .....	19
	6. Sheriff Controls and Procedures .....	22
	7. Recorder of Deeds Controls and Procedures .....	23
	8. Commission Meeting Minutes .....	26

---

Organization and Statistical Information	27
---	----



# **SUSAN MONTEE, JD, CPA**

## **Missouri State Auditor**

To the County Commission  
and  
Officeholders of Webster County

We have audited certain operations of Webster County in fulfillment of our responsibilities under Section 29.230, RSMo. In addition, Daniel Jones and Associates, Certified Public Accountants, has been engaged to audit the financial statements of Webster County for the 2 years ended December 31, 2008. The scope of our audit included, but was not necessarily limited to, the 2 years ended December 31, 2008. The objectives of our audit were to:

1. Evaluate the county's internal controls over significant management and financial functions.
2. Evaluate the county's compliance with certain legal provisions.
3. Evaluate the economy and efficiency of certain management practices and operations, including certain revenues and expenditures.

Our methodology included reviewing minutes of meetings, written policies and procedures, financial records, and other pertinent documents; interviewing various personnel of the county, as well as certain external parties; and testing selected transactions.

We obtained an understanding of internal controls that are significant within the context of the audit objectives and assessed whether such controls have been properly designed and placed in operation. However, providing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal controls was not an objective of our audit and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.

We 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 contract, 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. 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. Abuse, which refers to behavior that is deficient or improper when compared with behavior that a prudent person would consider reasonable and necessary given the facts and circumstances, does not necessarily involve noncompliance with legal provisions. Because the determination of abuse is subjective, our audit is not required to provide reasonable assurance of detecting abuse.

We conducted our audit in accordance with the standards applicable to performance audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform our 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 such a basis.

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

The accompanying Management Advisory Report presents our findings arising from our audit of Webster County.



Susan Montee, JD, CPA  
State Auditor

The following auditors participated in the preparation of this report:

Director of Audits:	Alice M. Fast, CPA, CIA, CGFM
Audit Manager:	Pamela Allison Tillery, CPA
In-Charge Auditor:	Donald Troy Royer
Audit Staff:	Toni Wade
	Connie James

# Webster County Management Advisory Report State Auditor's Findings

## 1. County Disbursements

Controls and procedures over county disbursements including real estate purchases/exchanges, bidding and conflicts of interest, credit cards, cellular phones, fuel usage, written agreements, and paving projects need improvement.

### 1.1 Real estate purchases/exchanges

While the County Commission obtained an independent appraisal for one real estate tract purchased at the request of the seller, the County Commission purchased four other tracts of real estate without obtaining independent appraisals of the properties.

	Date Purchased	Amount of Purchase	County Assessor's Assessed Value of Property*
Tract 1	August 27, 2008	\$ 25,000	7,900
Tract 2	January 23, 2009	100,000	46,100
Tract 3	January 23, 2009	60,000	20,200
Tract 4	October 9, 2009	46,900	14,900

\* Assessed value is based upon square footage and the date the building/property was built/purchased.

The county also did not obtain independent appraisals of properties exchanged with the City of Marshfield. On July 23, 2009, the city exchanged land to the county in return for a building constructed at the county's cost on another city-owned property, which the county had been leasing. Additionally, the county did not estimate the costs to demolish or dispose of buildings on tracts 1 and 2, and the property exchanged prior to the transactions.

While the County Commission believes the amounts paid and values of property exchanged were reasonable, written appraisals from an independent company should have been obtained prior to the purchases/exchange and used to provide the basis for negotiations. In addition, estimated costs to demolish and dispose of the buildings should have been considered by the County Commission in its decision making process.

### 1.2 Bidding and conflicts of interest

The county did not properly solicit bids or retain sufficient bid documentation for the following purchases:

Item or Service	Cost
Fuel (2008 and 2007)	\$ 342,653
Electrical work (2008 and 2007)	47,767
Assessor's office computer equipment	7,873
Tires for law enforcement	5,533



---

Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

---

In addition to the fuel noted above, the county purchased \$399,877 of fuel from another vendor during 2008 and 2007. While the County Commission indicated this vendor verbally agreed to set the price of fuel weekly at a set margin over the "rack price" published in an independent industry journal, the county did not always ensure the vendor charged this price.

County Commissioner Young did not abstain from the approval of payments made during 2007 and 2008 to his first cousin for the electrical work performed.

Section 50.660, RSMo, provides guidance on bidding requirements and procedures. Routine use of a competitive procurement process (advertisement for bids, phone solicitations, written requests for proposals, etc.) for major purchases ensures the county has made every effort to receive the best and lowest price and all interested parties are given an equal opportunity to participate in county business. Documentation of the various proposals received, and the county's selection process and criteria should be retained to demonstrate compliance with the law and support decisions made. The County Commission should ensure fuel is charged at the agreed upon price. Also, County Commissioners serve in a fiduciary capacity and approving disbursements to a relative could create the appearance of a conflict of interest.

### 1.3 Credit cards

The county's overall monitoring of credit cards needs improvement and some purchases made with credit cards appear inappropriate.

#### County cards

Procedures for monitoring county credit card use are insufficient and the potential liability to the county is significant. The county has 23 bank cards assigned to various county officials and employees with credit limits ranging from \$2,500 to \$5,000. The county also has 4 store credit cards, with credit limits ranging from \$1,000 to \$6,500. County credit card purchases totaled approximately \$84,000 and \$67,000 during the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2007, respectively.

The County Commission does not review itemized credit card statements and/or invoices for county credit card purchases paid from restricted special revenue funds administered by other county officials (County Collector Tax Maintenance Fund, the Prosecuting Attorney Bad Check Fund, the Recorder of Deeds User Fee Fund, the Sheriff Civil Fee Fund, and the Sheriff Revolving Fund). Cardholder needs have also not been adequately reviewed to evaluate and establish reasonable credit limits. Based on the current limits of these credit cards, there is a potential maximum liability of \$79,000 for each billing period. While many of these credit card billings are paid from special revenue funds, the county could become liable for unanticipated amounts should excessive charges be made and sufficient monies are not available to cover billed amounts.





---

Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

---

Given the lack of controls and potential liability related to credit cards, the County Commission should review credit card assignments and usage to evaluate each employee's continued need for a card and establish reasonable credit card limits. Formal credit card policies and procedures are necessary to provide guidance to employees and officials, and help ensure credit cards are used only for county business. A formal policy could address allowable purchases, maximum dollar limit of purchases, required supporting documentation and approvals, and reconciling procedures. The County Commission should also require all credit card invoices be submitted prior to payment and review activity of funds under the control of other county officials to ensure expenses paid are necessary and reasonable.

County Collector purchases

The County Collector made several personal credit card purchases, and some purchases were made in violation of the county's travel policies. For example, the County Collector incurred lodging costs using his county credit card at Osage Beach for a suite for two nights in November 2007, totaling \$296 for he and his wife, while his deputy incurred lodging costs of only \$192 for a single occupancy room for the same hotel, and dates and duration of stay. In addition, on the second day of this trip, the County Collector indicated he and his wife traveled to Lebanon on a 72 mile round trip to meet his in-laws for dinner. The County Collector charged \$63 in fuel to his credit card and \$39 for meals for he and his wife. Adequate supporting documentation was not maintained for any of the \$610 of credit card purchases made by the County Collector in November 2007. The County Collector obtained documentation from vendors at our request. This was the only month the County Collector used the county credit card. The County Collector reimbursed the Tax Maintenance Fund for these personal purchases after we brought them to his attention in December 2009.

Further, the County Collector opened another credit card account with a different bank, and the County Commission was not aware the additional credit card account existed. The County Collector disbursed approximately \$23,000 annually in credit card purchases using this card during the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2007. This credit card account also has an excessive credit limit of \$9,000. We reviewed the July and December 2008 credit card statements totaling \$4,048 and determined the County Collector purchased meals for his wife, incurred excessive meal costs, charged alcohol purchases to the account, and purchased other questionable items. For example, the County Collector purchased a bottle of wine, an appetizer, and two prime rib dinners for \$86 for he and his wife in July 2008. The county's travel policy indicates lodging costs will be reimbursed at only a single occupancy government rate, meal reimbursements are limited to a maximum of \$25 per day, and meal expenses are to be reasonable, and no alcoholic beverages are to be paid with county funds. The County Collector reimbursed the Tax Maintenance Fund for these personal purchases in November 2009, after we brought them to his attention.



---

Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

---

The County Collector should discontinue the practice of using county funds to pay for personal and inappropriate expenses and ensure all travel expenses are in compliance with the county's travel policies. County residents place a fiduciary trust in their public officials to expend public funds in a necessary and appropriate manner. The County Collector should review past credit card bills and reimburse the Tax Maintenance Fund for all personal and inappropriate expenses. The County Commission should also consider any other action that may be appropriate given the circumstances.

#### 1.4 Cellular phones

The county has not developed a formal written policy regarding cellular phone use or established adequate monitoring procedures to determine whether a cellular phone is needed or of benefit to the county. During 2008 and 2007, the Sheriff's office used eight cellular phones, the road and bridge department used three cellular phones; and the emergency management director, custodian, and two Associate Circuit Judges each used a cellular phone. The county disbursed approximately \$11,000 and \$12,000 during the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2007, respectively, for the use of these cellular phones.

We identified at least six more cellular phone bills paid through use of credit cards by the Offices of the Prosecuting Attorney (two phones), Recorder of Deeds (three phones), and County Collector (one phone). The County Commission was unaware these six cellular phones were paid through county credit cards.

Further, the Sheriff's department discontinued use of the eight cellular phones in 2009; however, only three of the phones have been returned to the Sheriff. Currently, the county pays 13 deputies a monthly stipend of \$10 for cellular phone use. In addition, the Sheriff contacted another cellular phone company in 2009 to set up his own accounts and obtain three cellular phones without any review or approval by the County Commission. The Sheriff is paying these cellular phones through a fund under his control, and the disbursements of this fund are not reviewed by the County Commission.

A written policy and adequate monitoring procedures are needed to establish guidance for the acquisition, assignment, and use of cellular phones, and to ensure cellular phones are acquired only by allowable personnel and properly used for business purposes.

#### 1.5 Fuel usage

While mileage and fuel use logs are prepared by the Sheriff's office and road and bridge department, fuel use is not adequately reviewed and reconciled to fuel purchases. The county purchased over \$700,000 of fuel during the 2 years ended December 31, 2008, from two local vendors. In addition, while the county terminated an employee in January 2009, who admitted to stealing fuel after it was reported to the county by a concerned citizen, the



---

Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

---

county did not establish any additional controls or procedures over fuel after the theft occurred.

Mileage and fuel use logs should be adequately reviewed and reconciled to fuel purchases. Failure to account for fuel purchases could result in loss, theft, and misuse going undetected.

## 1.6 Written agreements

The county did not always enter into formal written agreements signed by all parties defining services to be provided and benefits to be received.

- Written contracts were not obtained for the distribution of county aid road trust (CART) monies and capital improvement sales tax (CIST) monies to the Seymour Special Road District. During the 2 years ended December 31, 2008, approximately \$290,000 of CART monies and \$416,000 of CIST monies were distributed to the special road district based on the district's share of miles within the county. While the county requested and received financial information from the special road district regarding the use of the monies, there were no written contracts.
- The county donated \$7,209 to the Greene County/State Highway Patrol Crime Lab in March 2009. The county has pledged an annual donation of \$3,604 to the crime lab for the next 8 years. The request for funding from Greene County indicated the county's participation was strictly voluntary, and any future services provided to the county would not be contingent upon the contribution. In addition, the county does not have a written agreement and has not received any documentation from this organization detailing the use of these monies.
- The county has not entered into a written agreement with the County Surveyor for office space in the courthouse, where he conducts personal business, or to serve as the county's flood plain manager. The county provides the office space at no cost to the County Surveyor and has paid the County Surveyor \$3,000 annually during the 2 years ended December 31, 2008, to serve as the county's flood plain manager.

It is important for the county to document the adequacy of office space arrangements with the County Surveyor to avoid the appearance of an inappropriate use of public resources. While the county has a resolution regarding the appointment of a flood plain manager and the related duties, an agreement with the County Surveyor is needed to clarify this role and establish the compensation for the position.

Written contracts are necessary to ensure all parties are aware of their duties and responsibilities and to prevent misunderstandings. Written contracts signed by the parties involved, should specify the services to be rendered,



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

and the manner and amount of compensation to be paid. Section 432.070, RSMo, requires contracts of political subdivisions to be in writing.

### 1.7 Paving projects

Monies received from private citizens and businesses for paving projects are not receipted and deposited in a timely manner. The county collected \$78,686 and \$76,296 for these paving projects during the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2007, respectively. The county pays an asphalt vendor to pave county roads at the request and cost of private citizens and businesses. The county requires private citizens and businesses to pay for the cost of the paving projects in advance based upon a cost estimate; however, the County Commission has requested the County Treasurer to hold the monies until the project is completed. For example, a check dated June 30, 2009, totaling \$11,875 was not receipted and deposited by the County Treasurer until August 26, 2009, when the project was completed.

Receipt slips should be issued immediately upon receipt and monies collected should be deposited intact and timely to provide better accountability and security over monies received. Checks should be deposited timely to ensure the county is properly compensated for the project and limit the possibility of insufficient funds related to checks held for long periods.

### Similar conditions previously reported

Similar conditions to points 1.1, 1.3, and 1.6 were noted in our prior audit report.

### Recommendations

The County Commission:

- 1.1 Ensure independent appraisals are obtained and associated costs are considered for all future real estate purchases.
- 1.2 Perform a competitive procurement process for all major purchases and maintain documentation of decisions made. In addition, the County Commission should more closely examine county transactions to identify and avoid apparent and actual conflicts of interest.
- 1.3 Implement policies and procedures to adequately monitor all credit card purchases, and evaluate the need for each credit card and cancel any cards that are determined unnecessary. The County Collector should discontinue the practice of using county funds to pay for personal and inappropriate expenses, review past credit card bills, and reimburse the Tax Maintenance Fund for any personal and inappropriate expenses. The County Commission should also consider any other action that may be appropriate given the circumstances.



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

- 1.4 Develop a formal written policy regarding the use of cellular phones, and establish a monitoring system for the assignment, use, and acquisition of cellular phones.
- 1.5 Require mileage and fuel use logs be adequately reviewed and reconciled to fuel purchases. Any significant discrepancies should be investigated
- 1.6 Enter into proper written agreements.
- 1.7 Ensure proper procedures are established for the receipt and deposit of monies.

## Auditee's Response

*The County Commission provided the following written responses:*

- 1.1 *We agree we should consider obtaining an appraisal when it is deemed to be a prudent use of taxpayer money.*
- 1.2 *We agree we should more closely examine county fuel purchases. We will improve the process by rebidding the margin over wholesale bi-annually and adding a coversheet to our weekly communication with vendors stating directly what price is to be used for the coming week, rather than allow the vendor to calculate the price off the industry publication we provide to them. Finally, we will ensure that weekly invoices for fuel always match the price agreed to in the bid.*

*Bids for electrical work were solicited in June of 2008, and again in January of 2009. In each case, only one bid was received with the base wage set at prevailing wage. We erred in waiting too long in 2008 to solicit bids, and again by not formally voting to accept the lone bid submitted in June of 2008 until January 2009. We will strive to ensure this does not happen again.*

*It is true that payments made for electrical services were made to a relative of Commissioner Young, and that Commissioner Young did participate in approving invoices for electrical work. However, there is nothing wrong with that. The legal standard for "conflicts of interest" does not extend to first cousins. However, as this may appear to create a perceived conflict, each Commissioner (all of whom have large extended families) will take pains not to approve similar invoices in the future.*

- 1.3 *The reason we do not review/approve individual credit card transactions made from restricted funds administered by other officeholders is that we do not believe we have the legal authority to*



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

*do so. Of course, all transactions are public record. Any citizen can obtain copies of receipts of transactions within these special funds, and we assumed such a safeguard (along with the fact these funds are audited) would be sufficient to prevent irresponsible behavior on the part of other elected officials.*

*If the County Collector did not take such concerns to heart with regard to funds under his control, he is answerable to the public, not to the County Commission.*

*Nonetheless, we will request the Collector close the credit card account he opened without our knowledge, and remind officeholders that no contract (including those for credit cards) can be executed in the county's name without approval of the County Commission and certification by the County Clerk.*

- 1.4 *We have done well in managing cellular phone use within the funds under our supervision. If other officeholders have done otherwise with the funds entrusted to them, those officeholders should be held accountable for their individual actions.*

*Once again, we will remind other officeholders that no contract (including those for cellular phone service) can be executed in the county's name without approval of the County Commission and certification by the County Clerk. Therefore, even though the Commission has no legal authority to supervise custodial funds held by other officeholders, any cellular phone service paid exclusively by those funds still must be approved by the County Commission.*

*Finally, we will work toward developing a written county cellular phone policy, with the hope that other officeholders will agree to comply.*

- 1.5 *We will consider the use of security cameras or installing fuel pumps secured by individual codes to better monitor use of fuel from county fueling stations.*

- 1.6 *The Seymour Special Road District is an independent agency operating under a separate elected board. We believe citizens living in that district are entitled to receive their portion of the countywide sales tax for roads. The fairness of this arrangement has been confirmed by the voters through successive renewals of this tax. We do not believe interference in the affairs of the special road district would further the positive relationship between the two elected bodies.*



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

*As for the annual donation to the Greene County Crime lab, we agree and will suspend further contributions based upon the audit recommendations.*

*The position of County Surveyor is an oddity. They are elected by the people, but receive no salary. Therefore, it is necessary for the surveyor to continue private practice. The provision of office space for an elected official seems like a very basic and logical arrangement. The citizens of the county receive a very real benefit in having the surveyor available in the courthouse to answer questions and provide other non-compensated services. We agree, however, that drafting a written contract to formalize this arrangement would not be much of a burden, and we are considering writing such an agreement to comply with this recommendation.*

- 1.7 *Based upon your recommendation, we will discontinue immediately the practice of holding checks until after the project is complete. From now on, payments received for the paving of public roads will immediately be deposited into an escrow account overseen by the County Treasurer specifically for that paving project.*

*The County Collector provided the following written response:*

- 1.3 *The Tax Maintenance Fund was established solely for the collector's office and the collector is solely responsible for all collections and disbursements. As a result, to separate responsibility from any other official, many collectors in the state have a separate account for that fund. The Legislative committee of the state collector's association thinks this is a good idea.*

*I have gone through numerous audits and there has never been any problems with personal purchases before and it has never been a practice to do so. Some of these purchases were made during a national convention and the card was the only means of payment at the time. It was the collector's intention to repay when payment was made for the credit card purchase. All of the money has since been repaid in full from personal funds with no loss of any county funds.*

*I normally stay in suites when I am at the Missouri Association of Counties conference. All one bed room properties are offered at the same rate as a regular room. The Recorder and his wife and five children stayed in a two bedroom with two baths at the same rate offered for a regular room. The two bedroom suites are offered when no one bed room is available. In November 2007, I booked one bedroom. My deputy normally stays in the same type of*



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

*bedroom suite and we have shared a unit in the past. My wife and I on one level and her and her husband on the other. It is a matter of choice for her where to stay. Never have I booked something more for me than for her, she stays in whatever room she prefers. The difference in price was a billing error that I should have caught at the time. The difference for the room has since been repaid from personal funds to the Tax Maintenance Fund.*

## Auditor Comment

- 1.6 Payments can be made to the Seymour Special Road District and the Greene County/State Highway Patrol Crime Lab at the County Commission's discretion; however, written contracts to support these payments are required by state law.

---

## 2. Payroll Controls and Procedures

Improvement is needed over payroll policies and procedures.

### 2.1 Compensatory balances

Compensatory (overtime) balances for county employees have accumulated and could potentially be a significant liability to the county. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938 states overtime will be given at the rate of time and a half, and covered employees may accumulate a maximum of 240 hours (480 for law enforcement personnel) of compensatory time. Hours in excess of this maximum are to be paid to or taken off by the employee in the next pay period. Also, upon an employee's termination, total accumulated compensatory time will be paid to the employee.

Upon our request, the County Clerk's office prepared totals of accumulated compensatory hours and the potential liability those hours could create for the county. At November 7, 2009, county employees had accumulated 5,312 hours of compensatory time valued at approximately \$68,550. During our review of three employees' leave records, we identified an employee who was allowed to accumulate compensatory time in excess of the 240 hour maximum.

Proper controls over the management of compensatory time balances require the county to evaluate balances for reasonableness, review the reasons for large or increasing balances, and provide solutions to prevent excessive balances. Excessive compensatory time represents a significant liability for the county.

### 2.2 Timesheets

Timesheets are not prepared by the Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, and some timesheets submitted by road and bridge employees were not signed by the employee or the employee's supervisor. Timesheets are necessary to document hours worked, substantiate payroll disbursements, and provide the county with a method to monitor hours worked and leave taken and are beneficial in demonstrating compliance with FLSA requirements. In





Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

addition, timesheets should be signed by the employee and include documentation of supervisory approval.

Similar conditions  
previously reported

Similar conditions were noted in our prior audit report.

## Recommendations

The County Commission:

- 2.1 Continue to closely monitor county employees' compensatory time to limit potential county liabilities.
- 2.2 Ensure timesheets are prepared by all employees and are signed by both the employee and the employee's supervisor.

## Auditee's Response

*The County Commission provided the following written responses:*

- 2.1 *All officeholders have been working together throughout 2009 to bring down compensatory time balances. The actions of Sheriff Cole deserve particular commendation. Because of their cooperation, we believe this problem has already been addressed.*
- 2.2 *We believe this issue has been resolved.*

*The Prosecuting Attorney provided the following written response:*

- 2.2 *This suggestion will be considered and if practical, will be implemented.*

---

## 3. Property Tax System Controls and Procedures

Controls and procedures over the property tax system need improvement. Although some of these problems were noted in our previous two audits and the County Clerk and County Commission indicated they would implement the recommendations, little progress has been made. As a result, there is less assurance that all property tax monies have been accounted for properly.

### 3.1 Account book

Neither the County Commission nor the County Clerk adequately reviews the activities of the County Collector. The County Clerk does not maintain an account book or other records summarizing property tax transactions and changes, and no evidence was provided to indicate procedures are performed by the County Clerk or the County Commission to verify the County Collector's monthly or annual settlements. If a detailed review had been performed by the County Clerk and Commission, discrepancies in the annual settlement may have been identified (see MAR finding number 4.1).

Section 51.150.1(2), RSMo, requires the County Clerk to maintain accounts with all persons chargeable with monies payable into the county treasury.



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

An account book or other records that summarize all taxes charged to the County Collector, monthly collections, delinquent credits, abatements and additions, and protested amounts should be maintained by the County Clerk. Such records would help the County Clerk ensure the amount of taxes charged and credited to the County Collector each year is complete and accurate and could also be used by the County Clerk and County Commission to verify the County Collector's monthly and annual settlements.

**3.2 Additions and abatements** Controls and procedures over property tax additions and abatements need improvement. Additions and abatements totaling \$237,716 and \$45,800, respectively, were reported on the County Collector's annual settlement for the year ended February 28, 2009. Additions and abatements are prepared by the Assessor, and changed in the property tax system by the County Collector. The County Clerk and County Commission do not review and approve additions and abatements. As a result, additions and abatements, which constitute changes to the amount of taxes the County Collector is charged with collecting, are not properly monitored and errors and irregularities could go undetected. Sections 137.260 and 137.270, RSMo, assign responsibility to the County Clerk for making changes to the tax books with the approval of the County Commission.

**3.3 Overpayments and property assessment adjustments** The County Collector does not refund overpayments of property taxes when property taxes are abated after the original tax is paid by the taxpayer. Instead, the County Assessor reduces the taxpayer's property tax valuation in the amount of the overpayment for the future tax year to compensate the taxpayer for the County Collector not making refunds. Tracking these property assessment adjustments each year creates unnecessary bookkeeping for the County Assessor and increases the possibility of errors. To ensure proper accountability over overpayments and property assessments, the County Collector should refund any overpayments and the Assessor should discontinue making adjustments for these reasons.

**3.4 Passwords** Passwords, which restrict access to the property tax computer system used by the County Collector and Assessor offices, are not unique to each employee. A unique password should be assigned to each user of the system, and these passwords should be kept confidential and changed periodically to prevent unauthorized access.

**Similar conditions previously reported** Similar conditions to points 3.1 and 3.4 were noted in our prior two audit reports.

**Recommendations**

3.1 The County Clerk maintain an account book with the County Collector. The County Clerk and County Commission should use the account book to review the accuracy and completeness of the County Collector's monthly and annual settlements.



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

- 
- 3.2 The County Commission and County Clerk should develop procedures to ensure any changes to the property tax system are properly approved and monitored.
  - 3.3 The County Collector refund overpayments, and the County Assessor discontinue making adjustments for these reasons.
  - 3.4 The County Collector and Assessor ensure unique passwords are assigned to each employee and these passwords are periodically changed and remain confidential.

## Auditee's Response

*The County Commission and County Clerk provided the following written responses:*

- 3.1 *The County Collector is responsible for the administration of his office. However, the County Clerk is willing to work with the Collector to assist him in his duty to produce accurate monthly and annual statements.*
- 3.2 *We agree with this recommendation.*

*The County Collector provided the following written responses:*

- 3.3 *I have handled refunds in the same way for 20 years and have been through numerous audits and this has never been a problem before. The problem with giving money back after payment is the collector no longer has the money in his account. All monies collected each month are disbursed to multiple tax districts. I have talked to the Webster County Assessor and several other county collectors, all counties that I have talked to handle refunds in exactly the same way. I have no problem with giving money back for a refund if someone can tell me where to get it.*
- 3.4 *I have talked to our software provider about setting up passwords for our office and will be implementing them after the first of the year.*

*The County Assessor provided the following responses:*

- 3.3 *I will work with the County Collector to resolve this problem.*
- 3.4 *I have already taken steps to implement passwords in my office.*



## 4. County Collector Controls and Procedures

The County Collector's accounting and reporting procedures are not sufficient and do not provide assurance monies collected are accounted for properly. Although some of these problems were noted in our previous two audits and the County Collector indicated he would implement the recommendations, little progress has been made.

The County Collector's office processed collections totaling approximately \$15 million annually during the years ended February 28 (29), 2009 and 2008.

### 4.1 Annual settlements

The County Collector's annual settlements are incorrect. Differences of \$32,379 and \$35,245 were noted between the collections and distributions reported on the annual settlements for the years ended February 28 (29), 2009 and 2008, respectively. The differences were primarily due to Tax Maintenance Fund commissions being included in collections twice both years. The County Collector took no action to identify these errors or make corrections.

To help ensure the validity of tax book charges, collections, and credits, and for the County Clerk and County Commission to properly verify these amounts, the County Collector must file accurate and complete annual settlements.

### 4.2 Bank accounts and liabilities

The County Collector does not compare the reconciled bank account balances to existing liabilities and has not established procedures to routinely follow up on outstanding checks. The County Collector maintains four bank accounts, and collections are distributed monthly, except for interest earnings and surtax that are distributed annually.

We prepared a list of liabilities for the property tax bank account as of February 28, 2009, and the list totaled \$992,067. The reconciled cash balance totaled \$992,683 exceeding identified liabilities by \$616. At our request, lists of liabilities were prepared for the other three accounts maintained as of February 28, 2009, and the lists agreed to the reconciled bank balances. In addition, 12 checks in the property tax bank account totaling \$1,079 had been outstanding for over one year, with five dating back to 2006.

To ensure records are in balance, errors are detected and corrected on a timely basis, and sufficient cash is available for the payment of all amounts due, liabilities should be identified monthly and reconciled to cash balances. Failure to routinely investigate and resolve unidentified monies and old outstanding checks results in additional bookkeeping and increases the possibility of loss, theft, and misuse of funds.



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

### 4.3 Distributions

The County Collector did not disburse some monies collected on a timely basis. For example, railroad and utility taxes totaling \$717,661 collected in December 2008 were not disbursed until March 2009, and interest on investments and surtax collected during the tax year ending February 28, 2009, totaling \$231,062 was not disbursed until April 28, 2009.

The County Collector also did not disburse advertising fees collected in August of 2002 and 2001, totaling \$2,054 and protested taxes received in December 2008, totaling \$26,030 until November 2009, after we brought this issue to his attention. Based upon the date of the letter of protest received from the taxpayer and failure of the taxpayer to file a petition in the Webster County Circuit Court, the protested taxes should have been disbursed in March 2009.

In addition, a local phone company overpaid taxes in 2004, totaling \$12,971 and these monies were not refunded to the company until November 2009, after we brought this issue to the County Collector's attention.

Section 139.210, RSMo, requires all collections to be disbursed to political subdivisions by the 15th day of the following month. In addition to being required by state law, timely disbursement of collections to the political subdivisions are important because most political subdivisions rely heavily on property tax revenues to fund their operations. Also, overpayments should be refunded in a timely manner.

### 4.4 Segregation of duties

Accounting duties are not segregated, and there was no evidence of a supervisory review of the accounting records by the County Collector. Proper segregation of duties is necessary to ensure all transactions are accounted for properly and assets are adequately safeguarded. Internal controls would be improved by segregating the duties of receiving, recording, and depositing monies. If proper segregation of duties cannot be achieved, at a minimum, periodic supervisory reviews of bank reconciliations and liabilities should be performed and documented by the County Collector.

### 4.5 Depositing

Property tax receipts are not always deposited intact and in a timely manner. For example, property tax receipts collected on July 21, 2009, totaling \$4,999 were held and not deposited until July 24, 2009, while receipts received on July 22, 2009, totaling \$8,525 were deposited on July 23, 2009. Several other instances were noted where deposits were not made intact and in a timely manner. To adequately account for collections and reduce the risk of loss or misuse of funds, deposits should be made intact and in a timely manner.

### Similar conditions previously reported

Similar conditions to points 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, and 4.5 were noted in our prior audit report.



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

---

## Recommendations

The County Collector:

- 4.1 File complete and accurate annual settlements.
- 4.2 Reconcile bank account amounts to liabilities on a monthly basis, establish routine procedures to investigate checks outstanding for a considerable time, and disburse any unidentified amounts in the account in accordance with state law.
- 4.3 Ensure taxes and overpayments are disbursed in a timely manner.
- 4.4 Adequately segregate accounting duties or perform documented reviews of the accounting records.
- 4.5 Deposit all monies intact and in a timely manner.

## Auditee's Response

*The County Collector provided the following written responses:*

- 4.1 *It is priority to my office to make certain settlements are filed completely and accurately. I strive to make certain they are. There has been a problem in the past with maintenance funds that were picked up twice in doubling that amount in error. After finding and correcting that error, future settlements should be accurate.*
- 4.2 *My office will prepare a listing of liabilities each month and reconcile to our book balances.*
- 4.3 *Every effort will be made to make certain taxes and overpayments are made in compliance with the statutes.*
- 4.4 *My office tries to segregate duties as much as possible. For the bigger part of the year, there is limited amount of people on staff and it makes it hard to do this. However, I do understand that this needs to be done regularly and will make every effort to comply.*
- 4.5 *We always make an effort to make daily deposits. It is the intent of this office to make daily deposits.*

---

## 5. Prosecuting Attorney Controls and Procedures

Improvement is needed over various accounting controls and procedures in the Prosecuting Attorney's office.

The Prosecuting Attorney's office collected bad check restitution and fees, delinquent taxes, and court-ordered restitution totaling approximately \$242,000 and \$268,000 during the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2007, respectively.



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

### 5.1 Bank accounts and liabilities

Procedures are not in place to routinely identify month-end liabilities and reconcile to the bank account balances. At our request, the clerk determined liabilities as of July 31, 2009, and the reconciled cash balances, liabilities, and differences in each bank account as of this date are as follows:

	Bad Check		
	Restitution and Delinquent Fee Bank Account	Tax Bank Account	Court-ordered Restitution Bank Account
Reconciled cash balance	\$ 13,068	6,416	1,339
Liabilities	(10,795)	(1,329)	(1,369)
Differences	\$ 2,273	5,087	(30)

Without regular identification and comparison of liabilities to the reconciled cash balances, there is less likelihood errors will be identified and the ability to both identify liabilities and resolve errors is diminished. Such procedures are necessary to ensure monies are properly disbursed to individuals and/or entities for which the monies were collected. Amounts that cannot be identified should be disposed of in accordance with state law.

### 5.2 Adjustments

There was no independent approval to support adjustments posted to the accounting system, and adequate documentation of such adjustments was not retained. The bad check clerk has the ability and authority to post adjustments to the computer system without obtaining independent approval. To ensure all adjustments are valid, someone independent of receipting and recording functions should review and approve adjustments, and proper supporting documentation should be maintained for such adjustments.

### 5.3 Segregation of duties

Accounting duties are not adequately segregated. The Prosecuting Attorney's clerk collects monies, records transactions, makes deposits, prepares checks, and reconciles the bank accounts. While the Prosecuting Attorney indicated she reviews the bank reconciliation, her review is not documented. Proper segregation of duties is necessary to ensure all transactions are accounted for properly and assets are adequately safeguarded. Internal controls would be improved by segregating the duties of receiving, recording, and depositing receipts. If proper segregation of duties cannot be achieved, at a minimum, periodic supervisory reviews of accounting records should be performed and documented by the Prosecuting Attorney.

### 5.4 Timely filing of charges

Procedures have not been established to ensure charges are filed with the court for unresolved bad check complaints on a timely basis. For example, the Prosecuting Attorney received bad check complaints from local vendors for 33 bad checks written by one bad check writer, and sent out a 10-day



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

letter on March 25, 2008. Charges were not filed with the court until October 16, 2008, over 6 months after the 10-day letter was issued. By filing charges with the court in an untimely manner, the Prosecuting Attorney may limit the ability to collect bad checks for merchants.

Similar conditions  
previously reported

Similar conditions to points 5.1 and 5.2 were noted in our prior audit report.

Recommendations

The Prosecuting Attorney:

- 5.1 Identify liabilities and reconcile to cash balances on a monthly basis. Any unidentified differences should be investigated and resolved.
- 5.2 Require someone independent of the accounting system to review and approve all adjustments and ensure adequate documentation is retained to support such adjustments.
- 5.3 Adequately segregate accounting duties to the extent possible or ensure supervisory reviews of accounting records are performed and documented.
- 5.4 Establish procedures to ensure proper follow-up on 10-day letters and timely filing of charges with the court when appropriate.

Auditee's Response

*The Prosecuting Attorney provided the following written responses:*

- 5.1 *I submitted all bank account information to a certified accountants' office, Samek & Fritz, in Springfield, Missouri regarding all accounts open and existing on January 1, 2007 and any subsequent accounts opened since that date. The accounts are to be reviewed to give an itemization of all sources of deposit, withdraws, and expenditures. In addition. the receipt book for money orders or cashier's checks received will be compared to the itemized deposits. The money that existed in the accounts opened and utilized prior to January 2007, will be turned over to the Webster County Treasurer to be held in escrow until the source of the funds can be identified.*
- 5.2 *I will be notified prior to any adjustments, credits or similar transactions are going to be made to any case involving bad checks or restitution. I will be informed of the reasons for the adjustments, credits, or similar transactions, to make an informed decision on its necessity. A printed verification of the changes will be produced, and initialed by myself, with a hard copy to be kept in the file.*





Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

5.3 *I will review and initial all bank reconciliations.*

5.4 *I have initiated new procedures to assure efficient handling of bad check files, in correlation to the submission of the information by any person or merchant and action taken by my office to file and pursue charges. During a brief period of time, my office attempted to utilize a new computer program to aid in the handling of bad checks and restitution. The system was new and our office had a new employee handling the bad checks and restitution; neither worked to the benefit of our county. Therefore, the employee was replaced and my office returned to the original computerized accounting system.*

---

## 6. Sheriff Controls and Procedures

Controls and procedures over receipts need improvement, and accounting duties are not adequately segregated.

The Sheriff's office collected civil and criminal process fees and cash bonds during the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2007, totaling approximately \$162,000 and \$164,000, respectively.

### 6.1 Receipt procedures

Receipt slips are not always issued immediately upon receipt of monies. An August 5, 2009, cash count determined receipt slips were not issued for checks totaling \$3,434. While most of the checks were dated within a few days of the cash count, a \$40 check had been on hand since 2002. At our request, the Sheriff contacted the vendor, who had donated the \$40 check for the purchase of radios, and the vendor indicated the check had been cancelled. Checks and money orders are also not restrictively endorsed until deposits are prepared.

To adequately account for collections and reduce the risk of loss or misuse of funds, receipt slips should be issued for all monies immediately upon receipt and reconciled to amounts deposited. In addition, prompt restrictive endorsement of checks and money orders decreases the possibility of theft or misuse of funds.

### 6.2 Segregation of duties

Accounting duties are not adequately segregated, and a documented supervisory review of the accounting records is not performed by the Sheriff. Proper segregation of duties is necessary to ensure all transactions are accounted for properly and assets are adequately safeguarded. Internal controls would be improved by segregating the duties of receiving, recording, and depositing receipts. If proper segregation of duties cannot be achieved, at a minimum, periodic supervisory reviews of accounting records should be performed and documented by the Sheriff.

Similar conditions  
previously reported

Similar conditions were noted in our prior audit report.



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

---

## Recommendations

The Sheriff:

- 6.1 Issue receipt slips for all monies received and restrictively endorse checks and money orders immediately upon receipt.
- 6.2 Adequately segregate accounting duties to the extent possible or ensure supervisory reviews of accounting records are performed and documented.

## Auditee's Response

*The Sheriff provided the following written responses:*

- 6.1 *Policy changes have been made to receipt monies immediately upon arrival to the office. There was a check from 2002 that had not been deposited. My office contacted the donor and the donor had already had the check cancelled; the check was then destroyed.*
- 6.2 *Currently, the Administrative Assistant receipts, writes checks (does not sign them) and balances the checking accounts. The Deputy Clerk reconciles the bank statements, all receipts, and compiles all reports (she does not write checks). The Sheriff personally reviews all monthly financial reports concerning the office, signs checks, and also reconciles monthly bank statements.*

---

## 7. Recorder of Deeds Controls and Procedures

Accounting controls and procedures relating to the bank accounts need improvement, and accounting duties are not adequately segregated.

The Recorder of Deeds' office received monies for copies and recording marriage licenses, Uniform Commercial Code filings, deeds, and tax liens totaling approximately \$318,000 and \$385,000 during the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2007, respectively.

### 7.1 Bank accounts

Monthly bank reconciliations are not prepared for the Electronic Recording bank account, the monthly list of liabilities prepared by the Recorder of Deeds is not properly reconciled with the cash balance of the bank accounts, and the Recorder of Deeds does not transfer monies deposited into the electronic recording bank account to the fee account each month. At December 31, 2008, the list of liabilities exceeded the reconciled cash balance of the accounts by \$267, and electronic payments received in October and November 2008 totaling \$3,269 were not transferred from the electronic recording account to the fee account until January 2009. The Recorder of Deeds maintains a fee account for the deposit and disbursement of all recording fees and another bank account for the deposit of electronic payments. These electronic payments are to be transferred to the fee account and disbursed each month with other monies collected.



---

Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

---

Also, 19 checks totaling \$173 had been outstanding for over one year, with 13 dating back to 2005 and 2006. The failure to routinely investigate and resolve old outstanding checks results in additional bookkeeping and increases the possibility of loss, theft, and misuse of funds.

Timely preparation of monthly bank reconciliations and the transfer of electronic collections are necessary to ensure the bank accounts are in agreement with the accounting records and to detect and correct errors. In addition, to ensure the records are in balance, the list of liabilities prepared each month should be reconciled to the cash balance, and any differences investigated.

## 7.2 Segregation of duties

Accounting duties are not adequately segregated, and a documented supervisory review of the accounting records is not performed by the Recorder of Deeds. Proper segregation of duties is necessary to ensure all transactions are accounted for properly and assets are adequately safeguarded. Internal controls would be improved by segregating the duties of receiving, recording, and depositing receipts. If proper segregation of duties cannot be achieved, at a minimum, periodic supervisory reviews of accounting records should be performed and documented by the Recorder of Deeds.

## Recommendations

The Recorder of Deeds:

- 7.1 Ensure bank reconciliations are performed and electronic collections are transferred to the fee account monthly, and establish routine procedures to follow up on outstanding checks and resolve any that are outstanding for a significant period of time. In addition, the Recorder of Deeds should investigate the differences between the book balances maintained and the available cash balance, and take appropriate action.
- 7.2 Adequately segregate accounting duties or perform documented reviews of the accounting records.

## Auditee's Response

*The Recorder of Deeds provided the following written responses:*

- 7.1 *The account that was reported not to be reconciled was an account set up for e-recording. In this process funds are deposited by means of an Automated Clearing House (ACH) into the account. Being a new process, I was not comfortable allowing an outside company access to my main account, so this account was set up to accept the ACH transfers. The sole purpose of this account was to accept payment for e-recorded documents by ACH. At the end of the month all monies collected are to be transferred over to the main account for disbursement. If, for example, \$1000 was collected in the month, \$1000 was transferred to the main account, then the reconciliation*



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

would have a zero balance. It is true that October and November monies were not transferred until December's monies were. This was a one-time occurrence. It was my mistake and discovery. There were no problems associated with the untimely transfer of these funds.

After conducting business with Mobis Technologies for some time now, (the e-recording vendor for Missouri), and never having a problem with the ACH process, I am going to close one account and only have one checking account for our office. This will simplify bookkeeping. The State of Missouri as well as the federal government also use ACH as payment. The process is becoming more widely accepted and my contract only allows for funds to be deposited, NOT removed.

Outstanding checks will be turned over to the "Unclaimed Fund" after they reach 6 months old.

- 7.2 The report shows that our accounting duties are not adequately segregated, and that supervisory review of accounting records is not performed by myself.

This statement is partially opinion and partially untrue. Every transaction that occurs in the office is immediately cashiered and a receipt is made. Our books are balanced to the penny at the end of every day.

Now it is true, that I would not physically examine every daily report and initial it, but I usually do ask "How much money did we do today?" to stay on top of the situation. At the end of the month, I am the one who accounts for every daily total and prepares the report that details every dollar that comes in and goes out of this office.

I respect the opinion of the auditor that the duties are not adequately segregated, but disagree. I fully trust the staff that I have and if I didn't they would not be trusted with the duties that they have. I understand the position of the auditor, so we have changed procedures. Now every daily report is placed on my desk for review and I will initial off on the deposit record and file the report. Also, I now have the ability to check our account balance at any time with electronic banking. I am sure the State Auditor's Office have found in other places where monies were stolen and the supervisor said "I trusted the employee that worked for me." We won't have that problem here. These changes should satisfy the audit findings. I would trust my clerks with my personal money.



Webster County  
Management Advisory Report - State Auditor's Findings

---

## 8. Commission Meeting Minutes

We identified ten instances where the County Commission's open meeting minutes did not disclose the reason for entering into closed session, and the County Commission did not document how some issues discussed and votes taken in closed session were allowable under the Sunshine Law. For example, during the May 19, 2009, closed session meeting, the County Commission discussed developing a contract with an area sheltered workshop to take over the handling of the county's recycling center.

The Sunshine Law, Chapter 610, RSMo, states the question of holding the closed meeting and the reason for the closed meeting shall be voted on at an open meeting. Issues not specifically allowed by the Sunshine Law should not be discussed in closed session. The meeting minutes should provide sufficient details of discussions to demonstrate compliance with statutory provisions and support decisions made.

### Recommendation

Ensure reasons for closing a meeting are documented and only allowable topics are discussed in closed meetings.

### Auditee's Response

*The County Commission provided the following written response:*

*In the future, greater care will be given to note the reason for going into closed session and that discussions do not stray from the reasons stated.*

# Webster County

## Organization and Statistical Information

Webster County is a county-organized, third-class county and is part of the Thirtieth Judicial Circuit. The county seat is Marshfield.

Webster County's government is composed of a three-member county commission and separate elected officials performing various tasks. All elected officials serve 4-year terms. The county commission has mainly administrative duties in setting tax levies, appropriating county funds, appointing board members and trustees of special services, accounting for county property, maintaining county roads and bridges, and performing miscellaneous duties not handled by other county officials. Principal functions of these other officials relate to judicial courts, law enforcement, property assessment, property tax collections, conduct of elections, and maintenance of financial and other records important to the county's citizens.

### Elected Officials and Their Compensation Paid

The elected officials and their compensation paid for the year ended December 31 (except as noted) are indicated below:

Officeholder	2009	2008
<b>County-Paid Officials</b>		
Paul Ipock, Presiding Commissioner	\$	31,700
Denzil Young, Associate Commissioner		29,700
Billie Cunningham, Associate Commissioner		29,700
Stacy Atkison, Recorder of Deeds		45,000
Stanley D. Whitehurst, County Clerk		45,000
Danette L. Padgett, Prosecuting Attorney		107,773
Ronald O. Worsham, Sheriff		51,000
Mary P. Clair, County Treasurer		45,000
Michael Taylor, County Coroner		16,000
Donna Hannah, Public Administrator (1)		64,385
David Young, County Collector (2), year ended February 28,	55,989	
Jim Jones, County Assessor (3), year ended August 31,		45,688
Dennis D. Amsinger, County Surveyor (4)		
<b>State-Paid Officials:</b>		
Jill Peck, Circuit Clerk		52,668
Donald Cheever, Associate Circuit Judge		107,641
Kenneth F. Thompson, Associate Circuit Judge		107,641

(1) Includes fees from probate cases.

(2) Includes \$10,989 of commissions earned for collecting city property taxes.

(3) Includes \$688 annual compensation received from the state.

(4) Compensation on a fee basis.