

2019

Travis County Auditor's Office Review of the Travis County Constable, Precinct One Office

#19-09

8/8/2019

TRAVIS COUNTY
AUDITOR'S OFFICE

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To: Danny Thomas
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From: Patti Smith, CPA
Travis County Auditor

Date: August 8, 2019

Subject: Constable, Precinct 1 Examination

Scheduled as part of our statutory requirements, the Risk Evaluation and Consulting (REC) Division of the Travis County Auditor's Office has completed an examination of the Constable, Precinct 1 Office. We conducted our examination in accordance with the applicable statutes governing the County Auditor's Office, and those relating to County financial and accounting protocols. As a result of our examination, we are providing this report on our findings and recommendations.

BACKGROUND

Constables serve as a law enforcement agency for Travis County, with county-wide jurisdiction in civil and criminal matters. They process and execute civil processes from various courts, including forcible entry and detainer suits, writs of possession, citations, and executions issued from justice of the peace courts. Constables also process and execute misdemeanor traffic and hot check warrants of arrest for Travis County justice of the peace courts and for other municipalities and counties.

SCOPE OF EXAMINATION

This examination includes an assessment of the adequacy and effectiveness of the overall system of financial controls in place for the Constable, Precinct 1 Office during the period August 1, 2018 to January 31, 2019. This encompassed examinations of controls over handling and managing collections, disbursements, receivables, liabilities, bank reconciliations, and user access to the County's financial system.

EXAMINATION METHODOLOGY

Our work was based on applying sampling procedures to office records and on verbal and written representations from the Constable, Precinct 1 Office. Sampling relates to examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial records and statements. The use of sampling techniques would not necessarily disclose all matters in the Constable, Precinct 1's financial statements, financial records, and financial controls that might be material weaknesses or misstatements. In regard to the written and verbal representations made by personnel from the Constable, Precinct 1 Office, unless otherwise noted in this report, office management maintains that the assertions we relied upon in the examination were correct to the best of their knowledge.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

During this examination, we noted that one manual receipt book could not be located. Missing receipt books may be used for unauthorized purposes, potentially resulting in the loss or theft of incoming funds. We recommend that the Constable, Precinct 1 Office locate the missing manual receipt book and determine if the receipts are valid or unused.

ATTACHMENTS

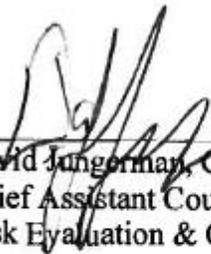
Attachment A: This attachment contains the details of our findings for this review, including the significance of the noted items, recommendations to office management, and responses by Office management.

EXAMINATION TEAM

Lisa Denton, CFE, Senior Auditor
Ronald Cintron, Financial Auditor III

CLOSING

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Travis County Constable, Precinct 1 Office and the Commissioners' Court. We greatly appreciate the cooperation and assistance received from the management and staff of the Constable, Precinct 1 Office during this examination. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns regarding this report.



David Jungerman, CIA
Chief Assistant County Auditor II
Risk Evaluation & Consulting Division



Patti Smith, CPA
Travis County Auditor

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Examination File

ATTACHMENT A – FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. MANUAL RECEIPT BOOKS

During our testing, we reviewed Office manual receipt books used in the period August 1, 2018 through January 31, 2019. This office tracks these books on a “Field Receipt Book Issuance and Return Log”. These manual receipts are issued by deputies for all payments received outside of the office building. As the result of our review, we noted that one manual receipt book with receipt number range #1451 to #1475 could not be located. This manual receipt book was issued to a deputy who is no longer employed by this Office.

Significance:

Missing manual receipt books allow for the possibility that these receipts may be used for unauthorized purposes or for theft of incoming funds.

Recommendation:

Based on the significance noted above, we recommend that the Constable, Precinct 1 Office locate the missing manual receipt book and determine if the receipts are valid or unused. If the receipts are valid, the Constable’s Office should verify the funds collected were deposited in the Office bank account and accounted for properly. Any unused receipts should be properly defaced with “void,” and all copies should be retained in the manual receipt book.

Management Response:

The office has been unable to locate the missing receipt book with receipt number range #1451 to #1475. According to the receipt log, this book was assigned to Deputy Eric Gaitan on *March 30, 2015*. The deputy’s employment with Travis County Constable, Pct. 1 was terminated on March 23, 2018. Per Mr. Gaitan, the book was returned to Sergeant Nixon prior to his departure. The receipt book has been noted as missing in the receipt log for future reference.

Manual receipt numbers are currently captured in the note/memo field of the system generated receipts. The field is not searchable but it is reportable so we ran reports from 03/30/2015 to 05/31/2019 in QuickBooks, Civil Serve and Odyssey.

Report Results:

QuickBooks 03-30-15 to 10-31-17 - No field receipts found between 1451 and 1475

Civil Serve 10-30-17 to 05-31-19 - No field receipts found between 1451 and 1475

Note: CNI migrated from QuickBooks to Civil Serve on 10/30/2017

Odyssey:

- 03-30-15 to 08-31-16 - No field receipts found between 1451 and 1475
- 09-01-16 to 12-31-17
 - System Rec #2017-30963 included field receipt #1454, deposited 05/16/17, \$252.00
 - System Rec #2017-30959 included field receipt #1455, deposited 05/16/17, \$395.97
- 01-01-18 to 07-10-19 - No field receipts found between 1451 and 1475

In order to improve locating field receipts within the case management systems, the constable offices will be implementing a new manual receipt procedure that uses the manual receipt number as the system number in the Odyssey and Civil Serve case management systems. This new procedure will make manual receipt numbers searchable in both systems.

Management realizes the importance of safeguarding receipt books and will be meeting with staff to go over the manual receipt policies and procedures including:

- Receipt log
- Receipt book check-out policy
- Receipt book return policy