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County Receives State Audit Report

County officials were commended by state auditors for their fiscal responsibility, George County Public Information Officer Ken Flanagan told the supervisors Monday.

The audit was conducted by the Office of the State Auditor - County Audit Division, as part of George County's annual process.

"All data collection and information requests were unofficially completed in early spring and the exit interview was conducted on May 21 with County Supervisors Larry McDonald and Fred Croom, Chancery Clerk Cammie Byrd, and Comptroller Amye Havens. The final report was received in the mail June 1, 2015 and will be officially completed once signed by appropriate County officials," Flanagan said.

"I'm pleased to report the County's General Fund, Fund Balance, Net Position, and Debt is good," said the county audit director. "The debt is really good. George County doesn't have the debt that many counties of this size have. I wish more counties were more like y'all fiscally."

The county operates on an approximate \$30 million budget.

The auditors examined all George County Government financial statements and funds for government activities and business-type activities. The following elected and appointed officials are all part of the county legal entity and therefore are reported as part of the primary government fiscal statements: Board of Supervisors, Chancery Clerk, Circuit Clerk, Justice Court Clerk, Purchase Clerk, Tax Assessor & Collector, and the Sheriff's Department (including Regional Jail Fund). This audit does not include George Regional Health System or the George County School District, which are audited as separate entities, according to Flanagan.

"The auditors found the County's financial condition was very strong especially when compared to other similar sized counties in the state," Flanagan said. "The primary factor was the County's low debt ratio. The 74 page report recognized the Board's accuracy in supplying financial statements. The report also stated, "In our opinion, George County, Mississippi, complied, in all material respects with state laws governing central purchasing, inventory and bid requirements for the year ended September 30, 2013."

"All of the County's federal findings look just fine as well," reported the audit team compliance investigator. "We tested two federal projects (storm shelters) and found no issues at all with receiving, distributing, and reporting of these funds. Honestly, clean as a whistle."

Board of Supervisors President Larry McDonald explains, "I was very pleased by the State Auditor's report and comments, but I was not really surprised. Our Board has maintained a solid General Fund balance and been very responsible with taking on new debt."

This audit (FY 2013) compares closely with the FY 2012 audit, primarily because of the County's consistently low debt ratio and steady General Fund. The FY 2013 audit did see improvement on timely scheduling and reporting of Surety Bonding for county officials.