



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 16, 2024

CONTACT

Marti Brown, City Manager

Email: mbrown@cityofwillows.org

Phone: (530) 685-0069

City of Willows Issues ‘Clean’ FY 2022-23 Audit with No Material Findings

(Willows, CA) – On Tuesday, May 14, 2024, the City of Willows’ Auditor presented the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23 Audit to the Willows City Council. While he did note a significant and concerning 17% or approximately \$400,000 decline in the General Fund balance, as well as an excess of approximately \$740,000 in operation expenditures, the Auditor also confirmed a ‘clean’ audit with no material findings.

Councilmember Thomas commented, “I was pleased to receive a presentation of the FY 2022-23 Audit from our CPA firm at Tuesday’s Council meeting. It was good to know that aside from the need for more funding for city services, there were no material findings. He added, “When questioned, our Auditor said our financial accounting has improved greatly in the last three years.”

Highlights of the Tuesday’s Audit presentation included direct questions from Councilmember Vodden and Mayor Hansen:

“... We were exposed to concerns about the sewer. There were statements made about the sewer fund and its application, allocation, and handling and so on...Is there anything in your audit that speaks to anything irregular, inappropriate, or otherwise having to do with the City of Willows,” questioned Councilmember Vodden?

The Auditor responded: “I am not aware of any misappropriations, no.”

Mayor Hansen later followed up with further confirmation: “There were no material weaknesses on behalf of the City of Willows, is that correct?”

Again, the Auditor responded: “Yes, that is correct.”

Councilmember Vodden continued: “This council has made a commitment to the citizens of willows as a condition, if you will, of the sales tax increase on the November ballot to operate at the most efficient and transparent and honorable way with all the dollars, sense that we have. So, this Audit dated June 2023 becomes a statement of that reality, so it’s imperative that it be bullet proof in terms of what you do. I want to walk away from here, Norm, knowing your company believes and would state that we are financially appropriate, correct as based on this audit and all standard account principles for audits.”

The Auditor responded, "These numbers are materially correct. I'm not going to tell you that they're perfect.... I can tell you in the Finance Department, two people there were helping us. That's pretty darn lean."

Mayor Hansen further commented a few days after the Auditor's presentation, "I was pleased and in no way surprised that the statutorily mandated annual audit of all City financials found "no material weaknesses." All budgeted spending, such as taxpayer money, was properly and accurately accounted for with absolutely no misappropriation of any funds whatsoever, which has been the case with each and every audit of the City's budget since I have served on this Council."

The City's Accounting Manager, Joanne Moore, also observed, "Our audit report revealed zero material findings, which is a remarkable accomplishment. We will continue to prioritize financial integrity and accountability as we move forward. Our team remains committed to upholding the highest standards of financial management and reporting."

"Validating the integrity of the City's financial reporting is invaluable to me and to the citizens of Willows. Transparency, trust, and honor were reasons I ran for City Council. Those who questioned the veracity of our accounting can now rest assured. According to legally bound, certified professionals, Willows follows accepted accounting principles in all of its accounting transactions. They checked! We passed! It's certified," emphatically concluded Councilmember Vodden!"

###