

# GALVESTON COUNTY



## Office of County Auditor

Randall Rice CPA CISA CIO, County Auditor  
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August 10, 2020

Honorable Mark A. Henry, County Judge, and  
Members of the Commissioners Court  
722 Moody Avenue  
Galveston, Texas 77550

Honorable Mark A. Henry and Members of the Court:

Attached to be received and filed is the internal audit report of the County Engineering Department Audit that covered the period June 1, 2019 through May 31, 2020. Also attached is the response letter from Michael C. Shannon, County Engineer, dated July 30, 2020.

Sincerely,

Randall Rice CPA

Digitally signed by Randall Rice  
CPA  
Date: 2020.07.31 13:14:35 -05'00'

Randall Rice CPA  
County Auditor

cc: Michael C. Shannon, County Engineer

Attachment: County Engineering Department Audit Report  
Response Letter, Michael C. Shannon



# County Engineering Department Audit

July 7, 2020

Galveston County  
Internal Audit Division

Randall Rice CPA  
CITP CISA CID CBM DABFA CGMA  
County Auditor

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# Executive Summary

## Reliability and Integrity of Information (page 3)

- Adequate controls are in place to ensure proper separation of duties relative to recording, authorizing and collecting.

## Safeguarding of Assets (page 4)

- Physical security over assets (collections) is adequate.
- There were no material exceptions when issuing receipts.

## Compliance with Statutes, Policies and Procedures (page 5)

- Collections were not consistently deposited in accordance with LGC §113.022.
- No material exceptions were noted in testing permit fees for compliance with the Floodplain Management Regulations.
- No exceptions were noted in reviewing refunds.
- No exceptions were noted in the testing of voided receipts.

## General Information (page 6)

- The Engineering Department collects revenue for three divisions: Engineering, Building Inspector and Right of Way.

## Introduction

The Internal Audit Division conducted an internal audit of the County Engineering Department, in accordance with Local Government Code (LGC) §115. The internal audit covered the period June 1, 2019 through May 31, 2020. The audit was performed from June 8, 2020 through July 7, 2020.

The primary objectives of the internal audit are to provide reasonable assurance concerning:

- Reliability and integrity of the information
- Safeguarding of assets
- Compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, policies, plans and procedures

The scope of the internal audit encompassed the financial records and administrative procedures related to the County Engineering Department. The internal audit included, but was not limited to, the books, accounts, reports and records of the County Engineering Department.

The internal audit included examining transactions on a test basis and required exercising judgment in the selection of such tests. As the internal audit was not a detailed examination of all transactions, there is a risk that errors or fraud were not detected during the internal audit. The official therefore retains the responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of the financial information.

Because of certain statutory duties required of the County Auditor, we are not independent with regard to the County Engineering Department as defined by the AICPA professional standards. However, our internal audit was performed with objectivity and due professional care.

Jessica Robbins, Internal Auditor, performed the audit.

## **Reliability and Integrity of Information**

Reliable information is accurate, timely, complete and useful. In order to achieve this, controls over record keeping and reporting must be adequate and effective.

### **Separation of Duties**

One of the most important internal controls is to have proper separation of duties. No one person should authorize a transaction, record the transaction and have custody of the assets.

The Permit Technician and Compliance Officer collect building permit fees and engineering fees for services rendered and record the transactions in the manual receipt book and receipt log. The receipts are totaled and all payments are entered on the cash receipt in ONESolution. The Administrative Coordinator provides a signature of approval on the receipt log and the ONESolution batch report. The collections, along with proper support documentation, are taken to the Treasurer's Office for deposit.

The Engineer's Office has a proper separation of duties.

# Safeguarding of Assets

Safeguarding of assets has three basic components: 1) physical security of assets, 2) minimal exposure to loss and 3) proper management of the assets.

## Physical Security - Collections

Physical security encompasses any method to physically secure the collections from loss. Monies collected should be kept in a locked drawer or safe until they are deposited.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a surprise cash count was not conducted. The County Engineering Department does not accept cash payments. Any payments made must be in the form of check, money order or credit card. Checks and money orders are restrictively endorsed immediately upon receipt. The County Engineering Department uses a lockable bank bag secured in a desk drawer to hold the collections until the day of deposit.

## Physical Security – Manual Receipts

A pre-numbered, county-issued manual receipt is provided for each check or money order payment. The receipts are filled out in triplicate with the original going to the customer and the copies remaining in the receipt book. When the cash receipt is filled out, the checks to be deposited are compared to the receipt book to make sure receipts are reconciled with collection totals. The receipt book is kept in a drawer, inaccessible to customers, at the front counter.

# Compliance with Statutes, Policies and Procedures

Adequate internal controls have been implemented in order to ensure compliance with applicable statutes, policies and procedures.

## Timeliness of Deposits

LGC §113.022 Time For Making Deposits requires that money received shall be deposited “on or before the fifth business day after the day on which the money is received.”

**Finding:** Collections were not consistently deposited in accordance with LGC §113.022.

**Recommendation ENG-20-01:** To ensure compliance with LGC §113.022 Time for Making Deposits, collections should be deposited on or before the next regular business day but no later than 5 business days.

## Court-Approved Fees

Building permit fees collected by the County Engineering Department are contingent upon the Floodplain Management Regulations as required by the National Flood Insurance Act (Title 42). The County Engineering Department can collect these fees as approved by Commissioners Court and may not collect any amount that exceeds what is required.

No material exceptions were noted in testing permit fees for compliance with the Floodplain Management Regulations.

## Refunded Payments

Payments are refunded when an applicant is unable to provide all documents needed to continue processing the permit or if the applicant will no longer be moving forward with the construction and the construction never began. The permit fee will be refunded less any application fees.

No exceptions were noted in reviewing refunds.

## Voided Receipts

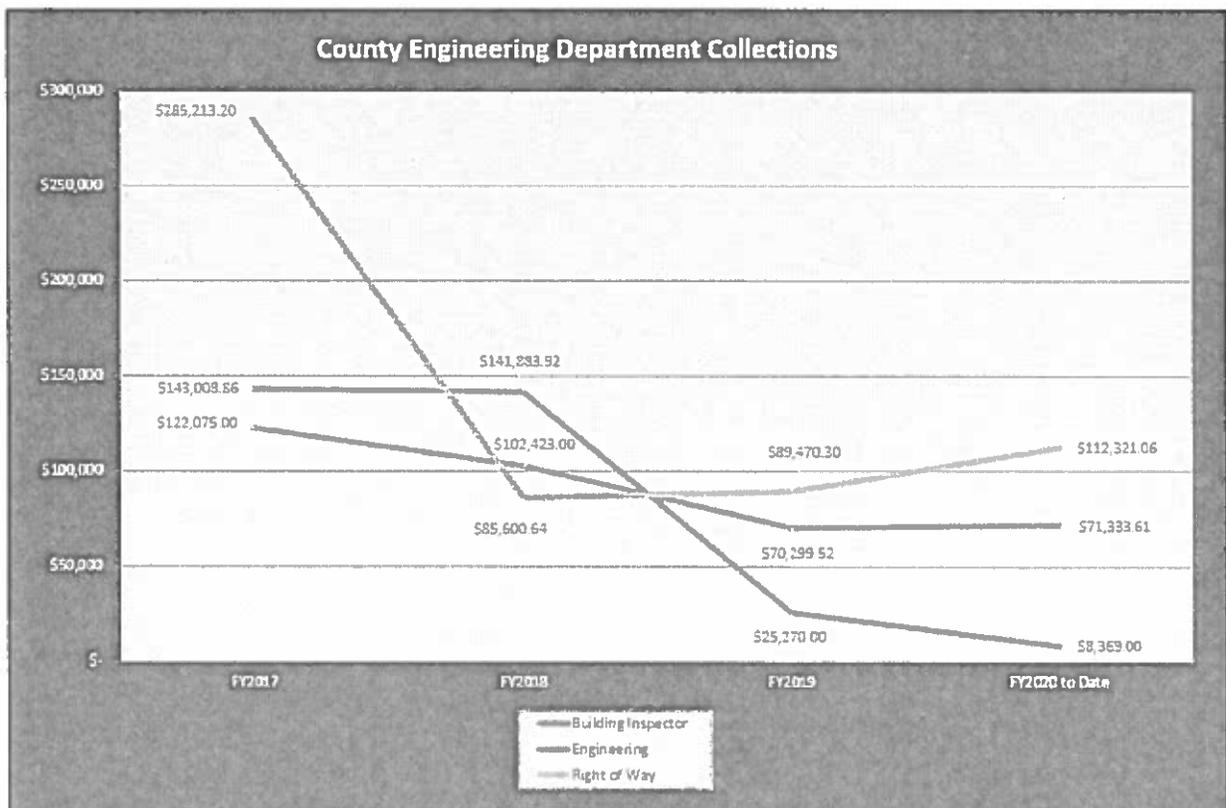
The County Engineering Department policy dictates all voided receipts must be approved by the County Engineer or an approved employee in his absence. Void is written across the receipt, the County Engineer or approved employee sign the receipt and an explanation for the void is documented. All copies of the receipt are retained in the manual receipt book.

No exceptions were noted in the testing of voided receipts.

## General Information

A statistical analysis was performed on the revenue collected by the County Engineering Department for FY2017, FY2018, FY2019 and FY2020 (through May 31, 2020). The department collects revenue for three divisions: Engineering, Building Inspector and Right of Way. The following charts illustrate revenue by fiscal year for the three divisions.

	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020 <i>as of 5/31/2020</i>
<b>Engineering</b>				
Seawall/Levee Inspections	\$102,463.00	\$71,228.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Army Corp of Engineers Reviews Reimbursements	\$30,276.21	\$61,917.28	\$13,000.00	\$0.00
Engineering Fees	\$10,269.65	\$8,738.64	\$12,270.00	\$8,369.00
	<b>\$143,008.86</b>	<b>\$141,883.92</b>	<b>\$25,270.00</b>	<b>\$8,369.00</b>
<b>Building Inspector</b>				
Building Permits	\$122,075.00	\$102,423.00	\$70,299.52	\$71,333.61
<b>Right of Way</b>				
Leases of ROW	\$207,410.35	\$42,865.35	\$42,865.35	\$42,865.35
Reimbursements From TXDOT	\$47,632.26	\$159.70	\$0.00	\$0.00
State Reimbursements	\$25,070.59	\$25,070.59	\$25,041.95	\$25,030.69
Encroachment and Abandonment	\$5,100.00	\$17,505.00	\$21,563.00	\$44,425.02
	<b>\$285,213.20</b>	<b>\$85,600.64</b>	<b>\$89,470.30</b>	<b>\$112,321.06</b>



MICHAEL C. SHANNON, PE, CFM  
COUNTY ENGINEER



NANCY M. BAHER, PE  
ASSISTANT COUNTY ENGINEER

THE COUNTY OF GALVESTON  
Office of the County Engineer  
722 Moody, Galveston, TX 77550  
(409) 770-5453

July 30, 2020

Randall Rice, CPA  
County Auditor  
722 Moody, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Galveston, TX 77550

Re: County Engineering Department internal audit June 1, 2019 through May 31, 2020

Dear Mr. Rice:

I have received your draft internal audit report dated July 7, 2020. The audit indicated that adequate controls are in place, physical security of assets is adequate, and no material exceptions were noted when issuing receipts. The audit also indicated that collections were not consistently deposited in accordance with LGC §113.022

LGC §113.022 requires that money received shall be deposited on or before the fifth business day after the day on which the money is received. While deposits were made weekly, the deposits were not consistently done on the same day of the week which results in some collections being deposited after the sixth day. We have instituted a new policy where collections will be deposited every Tuesday and Thursday to ensure compliance with this requirement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michael C. Shannon".

Michael C. Shannon, PE, CFM  
County Engineer

cc: Nancy Baher, Assistant County Engineer  
Elizabeth Robertson, Administrative Coordinator  
Sean Welsh, Permit Manager  
Nicole Stelly, Compliance Officer