

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial
District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

Annual Financial Statements

Year Ended June 30, 2024

Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana
Annual Financial Statements
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024
With Required Supplementary Information Schedules

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Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana
Annual Financial Statements
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024
With Required Supplementary Information Schedules

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Independent Auditor's Report

Mr. Charles M. Reid, District Defender
Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities and the general fund of the Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender, Amite, Louisiana, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the governmental activities and the major fund of the Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender as of June 30, 2024, and the respective changes in financial position for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender (the Public Defender) and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Public Defender's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the basic financial statements as a whole are free of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards*, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Public Defender's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Public Defender's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis (pages 7 through 13), budgetary comparison information (page 46), and pension information (pages 47 and 48) be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of

management and, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquires of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquires, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements that collectively comprise the Public Defender's basic financial statements. The schedule of compensation, benefits, and other payments to agency head or chief executive officer and the justice system funding schedule – receiving entity, listed as other supplementary information in the table of contents, are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the basic financial statements of the Public Defender. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the schedule of compensation, benefits, and other payments to agency head or chief executive officer and the justice system funding schedule – receiving entity are fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated December 30, 2024, on our consideration of the Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Governmental Auditing Standards* in considering the Public Defender's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.


Metairie, Louisiana
December 30, 2024

Required Supplemental Information (Part I)
Management's Discussion and Analysis

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

**Management's Discussion and Analysis
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024**

Introduction

The Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender (the "Public Defender") is pleased to present its Annual Financial Report developed in compliance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 34, *Basic Financial Statements – Management's Discussion and Analysis – For State and Local Governments* (GASB 34), and related standards.

The Public Defender's discussion and analysis is designed to (a) assist the reader in focusing on significant financial issues, (b) provide an overview of the Public Defender's financial activity, (c) identify changes in the Public Defender's financial position, (d) identify any significant variations from the Public Defender's financial plan, and (e) identify individual fund issues or concerns.

As with other sections of this financial report, the information contained within this Management's Discussion and Analysis should be considered only a part of a greater whole. The readers of this statement should take time to read and evaluate all sections of this report, including the footnotes and the other Required Supplemental Information ("RSI") that is provided in addition to this Management's Discussion and Analysis.

Financial Highlights

- At June 30, 2024, the Public Defender's assets exceeded its liabilities by \$1,951,508 (net position). Of this amount \$1,935,286 (unrestricted net position) may be used to meet the Public Defender's ongoing obligations to provide services to citizens.
- At June 30, 2024, the Public Defender reported an ending fund balance of \$1,619,984, an increase of \$214,037 for the year. \$1,586,594 of this amount is available for spending at the Public Defender's discretion.
- For the year ended June 30, 2024, the Public Defender's total debt decreased by \$857,338, due primarily to the net pension liability recorded.
- Investment income for the year ended June 30, 2024, was \$115,508, an increase of \$52,204, due to increases in the interest rate and increase in funds invested.

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

**Management's Discussion and Analysis
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024**

Overview of the Annual Financial Report

The Management's Discussion and Analysis is intended to serve as an introduction to the Public Defender's basic financial statements, which consist of the following components:

1. Government-Wide Financial Statements
2. Fund Financial Statements
3. Notes to the Financial Statements
4. Other Supplementary Information, which is in addition to the basic financial statements themselves.

Government-Wide Financial Statements

The government-wide financial statements are designed to provide readers with a broad overview of the Public Defender's finances in a manner similar to a private-sector business.

The Statement of Net Position presents information on the Public Defender's assets and liabilities using the accrual basis of accounting, in a manner similar to the accounting used by private business enterprises. The difference between the assets and liabilities is reported as net position. Over time, the increases or decreases in net position and changes in the components of net position may serve as a useful indicator of whether the financial position of the Public Defender is improving or deteriorating.

The Statement of Activities presents information showing how the Public Defender's net position changed during the most recent fiscal year, focusing on both the gross and net costs of various activities that are supported by the Public Defender's various revenues. This is intended to summarize and simplify the reader's analysis of the cost and/or subsidy of various governmental services.

The government-wide financial statements can be found on pages 15 and 16 of this report.

Fund Financial Statements

A fund is a grouping of related accounts that is used to maintain control over resources that have been segregated for specific activities or objectives. The Public Defender, like other state and local governments, uses fund accounting to ensure and demonstrate compliance with finance-related and legal requirements. The Public Defender uses a single category of funds to account for financial transactions: governmental funds. Traditional users of governmental financial statements will find the fund financial statements presentation more familiar.

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

**Management's Discussion and Analysis
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024**

Governmental funds are used to account for all the Public Defender's basic services. However, unlike the government-wide financial statements, governmental fund financial statements focus on how money flows into and out of those funds and the balances that are left at year-end that are available for spending. These funds are reported using the modified accrual basis of accounting, which measures cash and all other financial assets that can readily be converted to cash. The governmental fund statements provide a detailed short-term view of the Public Defender's general government operations and the basic services it provides. Governmental fund information helps to determine whether there are more or fewer financial resources that can be spent in the near future to finance the Public Defender's programs. The basic governmental fund financial statement can be found on pages 18 and 20 of this report.

Because the focus of governmental funds is narrower than that of the government-wide financial statements, there are differences in the information presented for government funds and for governmental activities in the government-wide financial statements. Review of these differences provides the reader of the financial statements insight on the long-term impact of the Public Defender's more immediate decisions on the current use of financial resources. Both the governmental fund balance sheet and the governmental fund statement of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balances provide a reconciliation immediately following the fund financial statements to facilitate this comparison between governmental funds and governmental activities. Also, see Note 1.E. for a similar reconciliation.

Notes to the Financial Statements

The notes to the financial statements provide additional information that is essential to a full understanding of the data provided in the government-wide and fund financial statements. The notes to the financial statements can be found on pages 23 through 44 of this report.

Government-Wide Financial Analysis

As noted earlier, net position may serve over time as a useful indicator of a government's financial position. The following table provides a summary of the Public Defender's net position for the current year as compared to the prior year. For more detailed information, see the Statement of Net Position on page 15 of this report.

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

Management's Discussion and Analysis
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

**Statement of Net Position
June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2023**

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Assets:				
Current and Other Assets	\$ 1,845,628	\$ 1,536,897	\$ 308,731	20%
Capital Assets	<u>61,898</u>	<u>108,402</u>	<u>(46,504)</u>	-43%
Total Assets	<u>1,907,526</u>	<u>1,645,299</u>	<u>262,227</u>	16%
Deferred Outflows of Resources	<u>730,211</u>	<u>1,488,625</u>	<u>(758,414)</u>	-51%
Liabilities:				
Current Liabilities	265,166	168,400	96,766	57%
Long-Term Liabilities	<u>293,676</u>	<u>1,247,780</u>	<u>(954,104)</u>	-76%
Total Liabilities	<u>558,842</u>	<u>1,416,180</u>	<u>(857,338)</u>	-61%
Deferred Inflows of Resources	<u>127,387</u>	<u>132,677</u>	<u>(5,290)</u>	-4%
Net Position:				
Net Investment in Capital Assets	16,222	25,275	(9,053)	-36%
Restricted	-	-	-	0%
Unrestricted	<u>1,935,286</u>	<u>1,559,791</u>	<u>375,495</u>	24%
Total Net Position	<u>\$ 1,951,508</u>	<u>\$ 1,585,066</u>	<u>\$ 366,442</u>	23%

Approximately 1% of the Public Defender's net position reflects its investment in capital assets (land, buildings, furniture, and equipment) net of any outstanding debt used to acquire those assets. These capital assets are used to provide services to citizens and do not represent resources available for future spending.

Approximately 99% of the Public Defender's net position is unrestricted and may be used to meet the Public Defender's ongoing obligations to its citizens at the Public Defender's discretion.

At the end of the current fiscal year, the Public Defender was able to report positive balances in its sole category of net position, governmental activities. The same held true for the prior fiscal year.

The Public Defender's activities increased its net position by \$366,442; the increase is equally attributable to the decrease in expenses and increase in revenue.

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

**Management's Discussion and Analysis
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024**

In order to further understand what makes up the changes in net position, the following table provides a summary of the results of the Public Defender's activities for the current period as compared to the prior year. An analysis of the primary sources of these changes follows the table. For more detailed information, see the Statement of Activities on page 16 of this report.

**Changes in Net Position
For The Year Ended June 30, 2024 and the Year Ended June 30, 2023**

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Program Revenues				
Operating grants	\$ 2,303,183	\$ 2,160,613	\$ 142,570	7%
Court costs, fines, bonds and other	1,538,393	1,550,495	(12,102)	-1%
Charges for Services	62,328	116,731	(54,403)	-47%
Pension related	29,862	-	29,862	100%
Total program revenues	<u>3,933,766</u>	<u>3,827,839</u>	<u>105,927</u>	3%
General Revenues:				
Interest earnings	115,508	63,304	52,204	82%
Miscellaneous	1,985	-	1,985	100%
Total general revenues	<u>117,493</u>	<u>63,304</u>	<u>54,189</u>	86%
Expenses:				
Salaries and related benefits	2,957,241	3,176,296	(219,055)	-7%
Insurance	29,870	28,824	1,046	4%
Other attorneys	390,785	344,136	46,649	14%
Other expenditures	163,901	169,509	(5,608)	-3%
Professional fees	50,800	63,200	(12,400)	-20%
Publications	2,880	5,400	(2,520)	-47%
Rent-office	13,610	14,797	(1,187)	-8%
Travel	15,220	13,375	1,845	14%
Utilities and telephone	14,006	15,444	(1,438)	-9%
Depreciation expense	46,504	42,873	3,631	8%
Total Expenses	<u>3,684,817</u>	<u>3,873,854</u>	<u>(189,037)</u>	-5%
Changes in Net Position	366,442	17,289	349,153	2020%
Net Position, Beginning of Year	<u>1,585,066</u>	<u>1,567,777</u>	<u>17,289</u>	1%
Net Position, End of Year	<u>\$ 1,951,508</u>	<u>\$ 1,585,066</u>	<u>\$ 366,442</u>	23%

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

**Management's Discussion and Analysis
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024**

Governmental Activities

The Public Defender's governmental net position increased by \$366,442, or by 23% of the prior year ending net position, to \$1,951,508. General revenues increased by \$54,189 and program revenues increased by \$105,927. Expenses decreased by \$189,037; total revenues exceeded total expenses causing the net increase in changes in net position.

The decrease in expenses noted above is primarily due to decreases in salary and related benefits.

Fund Financial Analysis

As noted earlier, the Public Defender uses fund accounting to ensure and demonstrate compliance with finance-related legal requirements.

Government Funds

The focus of the Public Defender's governmental funds is to provide information on near-term inflows, outflows, and balances of spendable resources. Such information is useful in assessing the Public Defender's financing requirements. In particular, unreserved fund balance may serve as a useful measure of the Public Defender's net resources available for spending at the end of the year. The basic governmental fund financial statements can be found on pages 18 and 20 of this report.

At the end of the current year, the Public Defender reported an ending fund balance of \$1,619,984. This represents an increase of \$214,037 or 15% of the prior year's ending balance.

Major Governmental Fund Budgetary Highlights

The Public Defender followed the provisions of LSA-R.S. 39:1307 in preparing and adopting a budget for the year ended June 30, 2024. The original budget was advertised and a public hearing was held as required. Actual revenues were 17% above anticipated results and actual expenditures were favorably within budgeted amounts by less than 1%.

The Public Defender is not expecting any significant changes in operations and services in the future, and next year's activities are expected to be stable and similar to the current period.

Capital Assets and Debt Administration

Capital Assets

The Public Defender's investment in capital assets for its governmental activities as of June 30, 2024, amounts to \$16,222 (net of depreciation). The district did not purchase any capital

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

**Management’s Discussion and Analysis
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024**

assets during the year. The total decrease in the Public Defender’s investment in capital assets for the current fiscal year was \$9,053 (net of depreciation and amortization).

The following table provides a summary of the Public Defender’s capital assets at the end of the current year as compared to the prior year. For more detailed information see Note 6 to the financial statements on page 31 of this report.

	<u>Governmental Activities</u>	
	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Capital assets being depreciated, net	\$ 18,604	\$ 27,404
Lease assets being amortized, net	<u>43,294</u>	<u>80,998</u>
	<u>\$ 61,898</u>	<u>\$ 108,402</u>

Long-Term Debt

At June 30, 2024, the Public Defender had no long-term debt outstanding (from loans or borrowings), nor did it have any as of June 30, 2023. The Public Defender has entered into a lease of an automobile and a lease of a building with a non-current lease payable of \$6,154, as of June 30, 2024.

Contacting The Public Defender’s Financial Management

This financial report is designed to provide the Public Defender’s users with a general overview of the Public Defender’s finances and show the Public Defender’s accountability for the money it receives. Questions regarding this report or requests for additional information should be addressed to Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender, Post Office Box 1004, Amite, Louisiana 70422.

Basic Financial Statements
Government-Wide Financial Statements

Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender

Amite, Louisiana

Statement Of Net Position

June 30, 2024

	<u>Governmental Activities</u>
Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 148,404
Investments, at fair value	1,482,269
Receivables	181,036
Other assets-security deposits	529
Prepaid expense	33,390
Capital assets, net	<u>61,898</u>
 Total assets	 <u>1,907,526</u>
Deferred Outflows of Resources	
Pension related	<u>730,211</u>
Total deferred outflows of resources	<u>730,211</u>
Liabilities	
Accounts payable	6,603
Payroll payables	114,457
Accrued compensated absences	104,584
Lease payable-current	39,522
Lease payable-noncurrent	6,154
Net pension liability	<u>287,522</u>
Total liabilities	<u>558,842</u>
Deferred Inflows of Resources	
Pension related	<u>127,387</u>
Total deferred inflows of resources	<u>127,387</u>
Net Position	
Net investment in capital assets	16,222
Unrestricted	<u>1,935,286</u>
 Total net position	 <u>\$ 1,951,508</u>

The Notes to the Financial Statements are an integral part of these statements.

Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender

Amite, Louisiana

Statement Of Activities

Year Ended June 30, 2024

	Governmental <u>Activities</u>
Expenditures/Expenses	
Salary and related benefits	\$ (2,957,241)
Insurance	(29,870)
Other attorneys	(390,785)
Other expenditures	(163,901)
Professional fees	(50,800)
Publications	(2,880)
Rent	(13,610)
Travel	(15,220)
Utilities and telephone	(14,006)
Depreciation and amortization	<u>(46,504)</u>
Total expenditures/expenses	(3,684,817)
Program Revenues	
Operating grants	2,303,183
Court cost, fines, bonds and other	1,538,393
Charges for services	62,328
Contributions from non-employer contributing entities	<u>29,862</u>
Net program (expense) revenue	<u>248,949</u>
General Revenues	
Interest earnings	115,508
Miscellaneous	<u>1,985</u>
Total general revenues	<u>117,493</u>
Change In Net Position	366,442
Net Position	
Beginning of the year	<u>1,585,066</u>
End of the year	<u>\$ 1,951,508</u>

The Notes to the Financial Statements are an integral part of these statements.

Basic Financial Statements
Governmental Fund Financial Statements

**Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

Balance Sheet - Governmental Fund

June 30, 2024

	<u>General Fund</u>
Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 148,404
Investments	1,482,269
Receivables	181,036
Prepaid expenses	33,390
Other assets-security deposits	<u>529</u>
 Total assets	 <u><u>\$ 1,845,628</u></u>
 Liabilities And Fund Balances	
Liabilities:	
Accounts payable	\$ 6,603
Payroll payables	114,457
Accrued compensated absences	<u>104,584</u>
 Total liabilities	 <u>225,644</u>
 Fund Balances:	
Nonspendable-prepays	33,390
Unassigned	<u>1,586,594</u>
 Total fund balances	 <u>1,619,984</u>
 Total liabilities and fund balances	 <u><u>\$ 1,845,628</u></u>

The Notes to the Financial Statements are an integral part of these statements.

**Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

Reconciliation Of The Governmental Fund Balance Sheet
To The Government-Wide Statement Of Net Position
June 30, 2024

Total Fund Balances, Governmental Fund	\$	1,619,984
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Amounts reported for governmental activities in the statement of net position are different because:

Deferred outflows and inflows are not financial resources or currently payable:

Deferred outflows	\$	730,211	
Deferred inflows		<u>(127,387)</u>	602,824

Capital assets used in governmental activities are not financial resources and therefore are not reported in the funds. The assets consist of:

Governmental capital assets, net of depreciation	18,604	
Lease asset, net of accumulated amortization	<u>43,294</u>	61,898

Long-term liabilities are not due and payable in the current period, and therefore are not reported in the governmental funds:

Lease liability	(45,676)
Net pension liability	<u>(287,522)</u>

Total Net Position, Governmental Activities	\$	<u><u>1,951,508</u></u>
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The Notes to the Financial Statements are an integral part of these statements.

Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana
Statement Of Revenues, Expenditures, And Changes In Fund Balances
Governmental Fund
Year Ended June 30, 2024

	<u>General Fund</u>
Revenues	
Intergovernmental Revenues	
Grants	\$ 2,303,183
Court costs, fines, bonds and other	1,538,393
Charges for services	62,328
Interest earnings	115,508
Miscellaneous	1,985
Total revenues	<u>4,021,397</u>
Expenditures	
Salary and related benefits	(3,088,837)
Insurance	(29,870)
Other attorneys	(390,785)
Other expenditures	(168,700)
Professional fees	(50,800)
Publications	(2,880)
Rent	(46,262)
Travel	(15,220)
Utilities and telephone	(14,006)
Total expenditures	<u>(3,807,360)</u>
Excess Of Revenues Over Expenditures	214,037
Other Financing Sources (Uses)	<u>-</u>
Net Change In Fund Balance	214,037
Fund Balances At Beginning Of Year	<u>1,405,947</u>
Fund Balances At End Of Year	<u>\$ 1,619,984</u>

The Notes to the Financial Statements are an integral part of these statements.

**Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

Reconciliation Of The Statement Of Revenues, Expenditures
And Changes In Fund Balances Of Governmental Fund
To The Statement Of Activities
Year Ended June 30, 2024

Total Net Change In Fund Balances, Governmental Fund	\$	214,037
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Amounts reported for governmental activities in the statement of activities are different because:

Capital outlays are reported in governmental funds as expenditures. However, in the statement of activities, the cost of these assets is allocated over their estimated useful lives as depreciation and amortization expenses.

These differences consist of:

Amortization expense	\$ (37,704)	
Depreciation expense	<u>(8,800)</u>	(46,504)

Repayment of lease obligations is an expenditure in the governmental fund, but the repayment reduces long-term liabilities in the statement of net position.

Repayments of lease liability	37,451
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Governmental funds report employer contributions to its plan as expenditures; however, in the statement of activities, pension expense represents the Public Defender's proportionate share of the plan's change in net pension liability.

Pension contributions in excess of pension expense:		
Pension plan contributions	251,175	
Pension expense	<u>(119,579)</u>	131,596
Revenue from share of plan's non-employer contributions		<u>29,862</u>

Change In Net Position, Governmental Activities	\$	<u>366,442</u>
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The Notes to the Financial Statements are an integral part of these statements.

Basic Financial Statements
Notes to the Financial Statements

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

Notes to the Financial Statements
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

Introduction

The Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender (hereinafter referred to as “Public Defender”), was established in compliance with Louisiana Revised Statutes 15:141-149, to provide and compensate counsel appointed to represent indigents in criminal and quasi-criminal cases on the district court level. The Public Defender has both full and part-time employees. In August 2007, the Louisiana Public Defender Act (Act 307) passed the Louisiana Legislature creating the Louisiana Public Defender Board which has the supervisory responsibilities over the Public Defender. Effective March 2024, Act 22 of the 2024 Second Extraordinary Session abolished the Louisiana Public Defender Board and renamed the agency the Office of the State Public Defender. This change effectively transferred most of the Board’s regulatory power to that Office. It also created a new Board, The Louisiana Public Defender Oversight Board, that is advisory in nature with specific areas of authority.

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

A. Basis of Presentation

The accompanying basic financial statements of the Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender have been prepared in conformity with governmental accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is the accepted standard-setting body for establishing governmental accounting and financial reporting principles. The accompanying basic financial statements have been prepared in conformity with GASB Statement 34, *Basic Financial Statements-and Management’s Discussion and Analysis—for State and Local Governments*, issued in June 1999.

B. Financial Reporting Entity

For the financial reporting purposes, in conformance with GASB Codification Section 2100, the Public Defender is a part of the district court system of the State of Louisiana. The Public Defender has the responsibility for the hiring and retention of employees, authority over budgeting, responsibility for deficits, and the receipt and disbursement of funds. The Public Defender is financially independent and operates autonomously from the State of Louisiana and independent from the district court system. Therefore, the Public Defender reports as a reporting entity, not as a component unit and the basic financial statements include only the transactions of the Public Defender.

C. Fund Accounting And Governmental Funds

The Public Defender uses funds to maintain its financial records during the year.

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Fund accounting is designed to demonstrate legal compliance and to aid management by segregating transactions related to certain Public Defender functions and activities. A fund is defined as a separate fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts.

C. Fund Accounting And Governmental Funds (continued)

Governmental Funds

Governmental funds account for all of the Public Defender's general activities. These funds focus on the sources, uses, and balances of current financial resources. Expendable assets are assigned to the various governmental funds according to the purposes for which they may be used. Current liabilities are assigned to the fund from which they will be paid. The difference between a governmental fund's assets and liabilities is reported as fund balance. In general, fund balance represents the accumulated expendable resources which may be used to finance future period programs or operations of the Public Defender.

The Public Defender reports the following governmental fund:

General Fund - The General Fund is the general operating fund of the Public Defender. It accounts for all financial resources, except those required to be accounted for in other funds. The General Fund is available for any purpose provided it is expended or transferred in accordance with state and federal laws and according to Public Defender policy.

D. Measurement Focus/Basis Of Accounting

Fund Financial Statements (FFS)

The amounts reflected in the General Fund are accounted for using a current financial resources measurement focus. With this measurement focus, only current assets and current liabilities are generally included on the balance sheet. The statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balances reports on the sources (i.e., revenues and other financing sources) and uses (i.e., expenditures and other financing uses) of current financial resources. This approach is then reconciled, through adjustment, to a government-wide view of Public Defender operations.

The amounts reflected in the General Fund use the modified accrual basis of accounting. Under the modified accrual basis of accounting, revenues are recognized as soon as they are both measurable and available. Revenues are considered to be available when they are collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to pay liabilities of the current period. For this purpose, the Public Defender considers revenues to be available if they are collected within sixty (60) days after the year end. Expenditures generally are recorded when a

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liability is incurred, as under accrual accounting. However, debt service expenditures, as well as expenditures related to certain compensated absences and claims and judgments, are recorded only when payment is due. The governmental funds use the following practices in recording revenues and expenditures:

Revenues – Revenues are generally recognized when they become measurable and available as net current assets. Court costs are recorded when due. Substantially all other revenues are recorded when received.

Expenditures – Expenditures are generally recognized under the modified accrual basis of accounting when the related fund liability is incurred.

E. Government-Wide Financial Statements

The Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities display information about the Public Defender as a whole. These statements include all the financial activities of the Public Defender. Information contained in these statements is reported using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. Revenues, expenses, gains, losses, assets, and liabilities resulting from exchange or exchange-like transactions are recognized when the exchange occurs, regardless of the timing of related cash flows. Revenues, expenses, gains, losses, assets, and liabilities resulting from nonexchange transactions are recognized in accordance with the requirements of GASB Statement No. 33, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Nonexchange Transactions*.

Program Revenues – Program revenues included in the Statement of Activities are derived directly from the Public Defender’s users as a fee for services; program revenues reduce the cost of the function to be financed from the Public Defender’s general revenues. Program revenues also include operating grants and funds received from local court systems in the district.

Reconciliation

The reconciliation of the items reflected in the governmental fund financial statements to the Statement of Activities (Statement B) and Statement of Net Position (Statement A) are as follows:

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Statement F

Recording of Depreciation/Amortization Expense	\$ (46,504)
Repayment of Lease Liability	37,451
Pension Expense	(119,579)
Pension Plan Contributions	251,175
Contributions from Non-Employer Contributing Entities	<u>29,862</u>
 Net Effect of Changes	 <u>\$ 152,405</u>

Statement D

Deferred Outflows/Inflows	\$ 602,824
Recording Net Capital Assets	16,222
Net Pension Liability	<u>(287,522)</u>
 Net Effect of Changes	 <u>\$ 331,524</u>

F. Budgets and Budgetary Accounting

The Public Defender followed the provisions of LSA-R.S. 39:1307 in preparing, adopting, and amending a budget for the year ended June 30, 2024. The original budget was advertised and a public hearing was held as required.

Formal budgetary integration is not employed; however, periodic budget comparisons are made a part of interim reporting. Budgeted amounts included in the accompanying financial statements are the original and final adopted budget amounts.

G. Cash And Cash Equivalents

The Public Defender's cash and cash equivalents include demand deposits, interest-bearing demand deposit and short-term investments with original maturities of three months or less from the date of acquisition. Under state law, the Public Defender may deposit funds in demand deposits, interest-bearing demand deposits, or time deposits with state banks organized under Louisiana law or any other state of the United States, or under the laws of the United States. Cash and cash equivalents are insured through the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

H. Investments

Investments are limited by Louisiana Revised Statute (R.S.) 33:2955 and the Public Defender's investment policy. If the original maturities of investments exceed 90 days, they are classified as investments; however, if the original

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maturities are 90 days or less, they are classified as cash equivalents.

I. Capital Assets

Capital assets are capitalized at historical cost or estimated cost if historical cost is not available. Donated assets are recorded as capital assets at their estimated fair market value at the date of donation.

Capital assets are recorded in the Statement of Net Position. Since surplus assets are sold for an immaterial amount when declared as no longer needed for public purposes, no salvage value is taken into consideration for depreciation purposes. All capital assets, other than land, are depreciated using the straight-line methods and accelerated over the following useful lives:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Lives</u>
Machinery and equipment	5-10 years
Buildings and building improvements	20-40 years
Furniture and fixtures	5 years
Vehicles	5-10 years

J. Compensated Absences

Vacation and sick leave policies are set by the Public Defender. Employees receive four weeks vacation if continuously employed for ten years, three weeks vacation if continuously employed for five years, and two weeks if continuously employed for one year. Vacation leave does not accrue. Sick leave is accumulated at the rate of one day per month beginning with the first full month of employment. Sick leave may be accrued up to a maximum of sixty days. Accrued sick leave will not be paid to an employee upon termination; therefore, no accruals for sick leave are reflected in these basic financial statements. The holidays designated as court holidays by the State Legislature are observed. While vacation leave does not accrue, the Public Defender records unused vacation leave at June 30th, the end of its fiscal year.

K. Lease Accounting

The Public Defender implemented GASB Statement No. 87, *Leases*, effective July 1, 2021. The Public Defender determines if an arrangement is a lease accounted for under the lease standard at the inception of the agreement based on the terms and conditions in the contract. Basically, a contract is a lease if it conveys control of an underlying asset in an exchange or exchange-like transaction, unless ownership is transferred at the end of the term. As a lessee, the Public Defender records a lease liability and a corresponding right-of-use (ROU)

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asset for all leases with a term greater than 12 months. Subsequently, the ROU asset is amortized in a systematic manner over the lease term.

L. Long-Term Obligations

Other than liabilities related to lease liabilities and pension plan, there were no other long-term obligations at June 30, 2024.

M. Fund Equity

In the fund financial statements, governmental funds report reservations of fund balance for amounts that are not available for appropriation or are legally restricted by outside parties for use for a specific purpose. Nonspendable balance represents resources, generally, not in spendable form (such as prepaids). Committed or assigned amounts represent management's plans that are subject to change. Unassigned fund balance represents amounts available for any purpose.

The Public Defender's policy is to apply expenditures against nonspendable, restricted, committed, assigned and unassigned fund balances, in that order, at the end of the fiscal year by adjusting journal entry.

N. Restricted Net Position

For government-wide Statement of Net Position, net position is reported as restricted when constraints placed on net position use are either:

1. Externally imposed by creditors (such as debt covenants), grantors, or laws or regulations of other governments; or
2. Imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

O. Extraordinary and Special Items

Extraordinary items are transactions or events that are both unusual in nature and infrequent in occurrence. Special items are transactions or events within the control of the Public Defender, which are either unusual in nature or infrequent in occurrence.

P. Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues, expenditures, and expenses during the reported period. Actual results could differ from those

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estimates.

Q. Pensions

For purposes of measuring the net pension liability/asset, deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions, and pension expense, information about the fiduciary net position of the Parochial Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana ("the Plan"), and additions to/deductions from the Plan's fiduciary net position have been determined on the same basis as they are reported by the Plan. For this purpose, benefit payments (including refunds of employee contributions) are recognized when due and payable in accordance with the benefit terms. Investments are reported at fair value.

2. Cash and Cash Equivalents

At June 30, 2024, the Public Defender had cash and cash equivalents (book balances) totaling \$148,404 as follows:

Total cash and cash equivalents	\$ 148,404
Less: petty cash	<u>(1,299)</u>
Interest Bearing Demand Deposits	<u>\$ 147,105</u>

These demand deposits are stated at cost, which approximates market. Under state law, these deposits (or the resulting bank balances) must be secured by federal deposit insurance or the pledge of securities owned by the fiscal agent bank. The market value of the pledged securities plus the federal deposit insurance must at all times equal the amount on deposit with the fiscal agent. These securities are held in the name of the Public Defender in a holding or custodial bank that is mutually acceptable to both parties.

At June 30, 2024, the Public Defender had \$164,295 in bank deposits (collected bank balances). These deposits are secured from risk by \$250,000 federal deposit insurance.

3. Investments

At June 30, 2024, the Public Defender had the following investments:

LAMP	<u>\$ 1,482,269</u>
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The Public Defender invests monies with LAMP. LAMP is considered to be an external investment pool administered by LAMP, Inc., a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Louisiana. Only local government entities having contracted to participate in LAMP have an investment interest in its pool of

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assets. The primary objective of LAMP is to provide a safe environment for the placement of public funds in short-term, high quality investments. The LAMP portfolio includes only securities and other obligations in which local governments in Louisiana are authorized to invest in accordance with LA-R.S. 33:2955.

LAMP is an investment pool that, to the extent practical, invest in a manner consistent with GASB Statement No. 79. The following facts are relevant for investment pools:

- Credit risk: LAMP is rated AAAM by Standard & Poor's.
- Custodial credit risk: LAMP participants' investments in the pool are evidenced by shares of the pool. Investments in pools should be disclosed, but not categorized because they are not evidenced by securities that exist in physical or book-entry form. The public entity's investment is with the pool, not the securities that make up the pool; therefore, no disclosure is required.
- Concentration of credit risk: Pooled investments are excluded from the five percent disclosure requirement.
- Interest rate risk: LAMP is designed to be highly liquid to give its participants immediate access to their account balances. LAMP prepares its own interest rate risk disclosure using the weighted average maturity (WAM) method. The WAM of LAMP assets is restricted to not more than 900 days, and consists of no securities with a maturity in excess of 397 days or 762 days for U.S. Government floating/variable rate investments. The WAM for LAMP's total investments is generally 60 days or less to maintain AAAM rating.
- Foreign currency risk: Not applicable.

The investments in LAMP are stated at fair value. The fair value is determined on a weekly basis by LAMP and the value of the position in the external investment pool is the same as the net asset value of the pool shares.

LAMP, Inc. is subject to the regulatory oversight of the state treasurer and the board of directors. LAMP is not registered with the SEC as an investment company.

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4. Receivables

The following is a summary of receivables at June 30, 2024:

Class of Receivable:	
Court cost on fines and forfeitures	\$ 162,611
Reimbursed expense - CINC	<u>18,425</u>
Total Receivables	<u>\$ 181,036</u>

5. Interfund Receivable/Payable

Interfund receivables and payables are recorded when one fund overpays or underpays its portion of an expenditure. The Public Defender had no interfund receivables and payables since it had only one fund.

6. Capital Assets

Capital assets and depreciation for governmental activities as of and for the year ended June 30, 2024:

	6/30/2023	Increases	Decrease	6/30/2024
Capital Assets Depreciated				
Equipment	\$ 138,774	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 138,774
Furniture	<u>34,321</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>34,321</u>
Total Capital Assets Depreciated	<u>173,095</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>173,095</u>
Less Accumulated Depreciation For				
Furniture and Equipment	<u>145,691</u>	<u>8,800</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>154,491</u>
Total Accumulated Depreciation	<u>145,691</u>	<u>8,800</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>154,491</u>
Capital Assets Being Depreciated, Net	<u>27,404</u>	<u>8,800</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>18,604</u>
Lease Assets				
Vehicle	29,274	-	-	29,274
Office	<u>91,166</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>91,166</u>
Total Accumulated Amortization	<u>120,440</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>120,440</u>
Total Accumulated Amortization	<u>39,442</u>	<u>37,704</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>77,146</u>
Total Lease Assets, Net	<u>80,998</u>	<u>37,704</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>43,294</u>
Capital Assets, Net	<u>\$ 108,402</u>	<u>\$ 46,504</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 61,898</u>

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Depreciation expense of \$8,800, and amortization expense of \$37,704, for the year ended June 30, 2024, were charged to the Governmental activities.

7. Leases

In November 2021, the Public Defender entered into a lease agreement for a new vehicle for 48 months with an option to extend the lease on an unlimited month-to-month basis thereafter. At inception of the lease a ROU asset and corresponding liability was recorded in the amount of \$29,274, based on the present value of the lease payments discounted at 7%.

In August 2022, the Public Defender amended the former expired lease agreement for the Livingston office for 36 months with no option to renew at this time. The base monthly lease payment is \$2,721. Accordingly, at inception of the lease a ROU asset was recorded in the amount of \$91,166, based on the present value of the lease payments discounted at 5%, which is an estimated implied rate and estimated incremental borrowing rate. A corresponding lease liability was recognized in the amount of \$91,166.

Lease assets are reported with capital assets; the ROU assets are amortized in a systematic manner over the lease term. See Note 6, Capital Assets, for the accumulated amortization of the ROU assets.

Interest expense recognized for the current period under lease agreements was \$3,613.

The future lease payments (to maturity) under the lease agreement are as follows:

<u>Year Ended</u>	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Total</u>
2025	39,522	1,542	41,064
2026	<u>6,154</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>6,226</u>
Total	<u>\$ 45,676</u>	<u>\$ 1,614</u>	<u>\$ 47,290</u>

Short-term Lease

The Public Defender also leases file storage space on a month-to-month basis at a variable rate. Total rental expense under this arrangement was \$13,610 for the current period.

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8. Accounts, Salaries and Other Payables

The payables at June 30, 2024 are as follows:

Accounts payable	\$ 6,603
Payroll payables	114,457
Lease payable	45,676
Accrued compensated absences	104,584
Net pension liability	<u>287,522</u>
 Total Liabilities	 <u><u>\$ 558,842</u></u>

9. Short-Term Debt

The Public Defender had no short-term debt outstanding at June 30, 2024, and had no short-term debt activity during the year then ended.

10. Long-Term Obligations

During the year ended June 30, 2024, the Public Defender had the following changes in noncurrent liabilities:

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Reductions	Ending Balance	Due Within One Year
Lease liability	<u>\$ 83,127</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 37,451</u>	<u>\$ 45,676</u>	<u>\$ 39,522</u>

11. Pension Plan

Plan Description

Substantially all full-time employees of Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender of Tangipahoa Parish are members of the Parochial Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana (System), a multi-employer (cost-sharing), defined benefit plan. PERS is controlled and administered by a separate board of trustees. The System is composed of two (2) distinct plans, Plan A and Plan B, with separate assets and benefit provisions. All employees of the Public Defender are members of Plan A.

Benefits Provided

All permanent employees working at least 28 hours per week who are paid wholly or in part from parish funds and all elected parish officials (except coroners, justices of the peace, and parish presidents) are eligible to participate in the System. Under Plan

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11. Pension Plan (continued)

A, an employee is eligible for retirement benefits after meeting one of the following criteria:

For employees hired prior to January 1, 2007:

1. Any age with thirty (30) or more years of creditable service.
2. Age 55 with twenty-five (25) years of creditable service.
3. Age 60 with a minimum of ten (10) years of creditable service.
4. Age 65 with a minimum of seven (7) years of creditable service.

For employees hired after January 1, 2007:

1. Age 55 with (30) years of service.
2. Age 62 with (10) years of service.
3. Age 67 with (7) years of service.

Generally, the monthly amount of the retirement allowance of any member of Plan A shall consist of an amount equal to three percent of the member's final average compensation multiplied by his/her years of creditable service. However, under certain conditions as outlined in the statutes, the benefits are limited to specified amounts.

Employees who terminate with at least the amount of creditable service stated above and do not withdraw their employee contributions may retire at the ages specified above and receive the benefit accrued to their date of termination. The System also provides death and disability benefits. Benefits are established or amended by state statute.

The System issues an annual publicly available financial report that includes financial statements and required supplementary information for the System. That report may be obtained by writing to the Parochial Employees' Retirement System, Post Office Box 14619, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70898-4619, or by calling (225) 928-1361.

Survivor Benefits

Upon the death of any member of the plan with five (5) or more years of creditable service who is not eligible for retirement, the plan provides for benefits for the surviving spouse and minor children, as outlined in the statutes.

Any member of the plan, who is eligible for normal retirement at time of death, the surviving spouse shall receive an automatic Option 2 benefit, as outlined in the statutes.

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11. Pension Plan (continued)

Deferred Retirement Option Plan

Act 338 of 1990 established the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) for the System. DROP is an option for that member who is eligible for normal retirement.

In lieu of terminating employment and accepting a service retirement, any member of the plan who is eligible to retire may elect to participate in the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) in which they are enrolled for three years and defer the receipt of benefits. During participation in the plan, employer contributions are payable but employee contributions cease. The monthly retirement benefits that would be payable, had the person elected to cease employment and receive a service retirement allowance, are paid into the DROP Fund.

Upon termination of employment prior to or at the end of the specified period of participation, a participant in the DROP may receive, at his option, a lump sum from the account equal to the payments into the account, a true annuity based upon his account balance in that fund, or roll over the fund to an Individual Retirement Account.

Interest is accrued on the DROP benefits for the period between the end of DROP participation and the member's retirement date.

For individuals who become eligible to participate in the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) on or after January 1, 2004, all amounts which remain credited to the individual's subaccount after termination in DROP will be placed in liquid asset money market investments at the discretion of the Board of Trustees. These subaccounts may be credited with interest based on money market rates of return or, at the option of the System, the funds may be credited to self-directed subaccounts. The participant in the self-directed portion of DROP must agree that the benefits payable to the participant are not the obligations of the state or the System, and that any returns and other rights of DROP are the sole liability and responsibility of the participant and the designated provider to which contributions have been made.

Disability Benefits

A member shall be eligible to retire and receive a disability benefit if they were hired prior to January 1, 2007, and has at least five years of creditable service or if hired after January 1, 2007, has seven years of creditable service, and is not eligible for normal retirement and has been officially certified as disabled by the State Medical Disability Board. Upon retirement caused by disability, a member shall be paid a disability benefit equal to the lesser of an amount equal to 3% of the member's final average compensation multiplied by his years of service, not to be less than 15, or

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11. Pension Plan (continued)

three percent multiplied by years of service assuming continued service to age 60 for those members who are enrolled prior to January 1, 2017 and to age 62 for those members who are enrolled January 1, 2007 and later.

Cost of Living Increases

The Board is authorized to provide a cost of living allowance for those retirees who retired prior to July 1973. The adjustment cannot exceed 2% of the retiree's original benefit for each full calendar year since retirement and may only be granted if sufficient funds are available from investment income in excess of normal requirements.

In addition, the Board may provide an additional cost of living increase to all retirees and beneficiaries who are over age 65 equal to 2% of the member's benefit paid on October 1, 1977, (or the member's retirement date, if later). Also, the Board may provide a cost of living increase up to 2.5% for retirees 62 and older. (RS 11:1937). Lastly, Act 270 of 2009 provided for further reduced actuarial payments to provide an annual 2.5% cost of living adjustment commencing at age 55.

Funding Policy

The contribution requirements of plan members and the Public Defender are established and may be amended by state statute. Under Plan A, members are required by state statute to contribute 9.5% of their annual covered salary. According to state statute, contributions by the Public Defender are actuarially determined each year. For the plan year ended December 31, 2023, the actuarially determined contribution was 7.49% of member's compensation. However, the actual contribution rate for plan year ended December 31, 2023, was 11.50%, and the current rate at June 30, 2024 is 11.50%.

Also by state statute, the System receives one-fourth (1/4) of one percent (1%) of ad valorem taxes collected within the respective parishes, except Orleans and East Baton Rouge Parishes. The System also receives revenue sharing funds each year as appropriated by the Legislature. These tax dollars are divided between Plan A and Plan B based proportionately on the salaries of the active members of each plan.

The Public Defender's contributions to the System Under Plan A for the year ending June 30, 2024, were \$250,811, equal to the required contributions for that year. The Public Defender's proportionate share of employer's contributions for the measurement period (1/1/2023 to 12/31/2023) was \$251,906, and the proportionate share of non-employer contributions was \$29,862. Due to the fact that the difference

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11. Pension Plan (continued)

between the actual employer contributions during the measurement period and those in the plan was only \$364 (which is not being amortized), the actual contributions used for recording pension expense and reconciliation purposes was \$251,175.

Pension Liabilities, Pension Expense, and Deferred Outflows of Resources and Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to Pensions

At June 30, 2024, the Public Defender reported a liability of \$287,522 for its proportionate share of the net pension liability. The Public Defender's reported liability as of June 30, 2024 changed by \$914,582 from the prior year liability of \$1,202,104 because of changes in the System's net pension liability and the Public Defender's proportionate share of that liability. The net pension liability was measured as of December 31, 2023, and the total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of that date. The Public Defender's proportion of the net pension liability was based on the Public Defender's projected contribution effort to the System for the next fiscal year as compared to the long-term share of contributions to the pension plan relative to the projected contributions of all participating entities, actuarially determined. At December 31, 2023, the Public Defender's proportion was .301790%, which was a decrease of .010543% from the .312333% proportion measured as of December 31, 2022.

For the year ended June 30, 2024, the Public Defender recognized pension expense of \$119,579, net of employer's amortization of change in proportionate share and differences between employer contributions and proportionate share of contributions. At June 30, 2024, the Public Defender reported deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions from the following sources:

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11. Pension Plan (continued)

	Deferred Outflows of Resources	Deferred Inflows of Resources
Differences between expected and actual experience	\$ 136,150	\$ 77,177
Changes of assumptions	-	50,092
Net difference between projected and actual earnings on pension plan investments	463,383	-
Changes in proportion and differences between Public Defender contributions and proportionate share of contributions	5,384	118
Public Defender contributions made subsequent to the measurement date	125,294	-
	<u>\$ 730,211</u>	<u>\$ 127,387</u>

The Public Defender reported \$125,294, as deferred outflows of resources related to pensions resulting from Public Defender contributions subsequent to the measurement date, which will be recognized as a reduction of the net pension liability in the year ended June 30, 2025. Other amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions will be recognized in pension expense as follows:

Year ended June 30:	
2025	\$ 41,222
2026	234,475
2027	390,183
2028	(188,350)

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11. Pension Plan (continued)

Actuarial Assumptions

The total pension liability in the December 31, 2023, actuarial valuation was determined using the following actuarial assumptions, applied to all periods included in the measurement:

Valuation date	December 31, 2023
Actuarial cost method	Entry Age Normal
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	6.40%, net of investment expense
Expected remaining service lives	4 years
Projected salary increase	4.75%
Cost of living adjustment	The present value of future retirement benefits is based on benefits currently being paid by the System and includes previously granted cost of living increases. The present values do not include provisions for potential future increases not yet authorized by the Board of Trustees.
Mortality	Pub-2010 Public Retirement Plans Mortality Table for Health Retirees multiplied by 130% for males and 125% for females using MP2021 scale for annuitant and beneficiary mortality. For employees, the Pub-2010 Public Retirement Plans Mortality Table for General Employees multiplied by 130% for males and 125% for females using the MP2021 scale. Pub-2010 Public Retirement Plans Mortality Table for General Disabled Retirees multiplied by 130% for males and 125% for females using MP2021 scale for disabled annuitants.
Inflation rate	2.30%

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

Notes to the Financial Statements
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

11. Pension Plan (continued)

Long-term Expected Rate of Return

The long-term expected real rate of return on pension plan investments was determined using a triangulation method which integrated the CAPM pricing model (top-down), a treasury yield curve approach (bottom-up), and an equity building-block (bottom-up). Risk return and correlations are projected on a forward looking basis in equilibrium, in which best estimates of expected future real rates of return (expected returns, net pension plan investment expenses and inflation) are developed for each major asset class. These rates are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and by adding expected inflation of 2.4% and an adjustment for the effect of rebalancing/diversification. The resulting expected long term rate of return was 7.5% for the year ended December 31, 2023.

Best estimates of arithmetic real rates of return for each major asset class included in the System’s target asset allocation as of December 31, 2023, are summarized in the following table:

Asset Class	Target Asset Allocation	Long-term Expected Portfolio Real Rate of Return
Fixed income	33%	1.12%
Equity	51%	3.20%
Alternatives	14%	0.67%
Real assets	2%	0.11%
	100%	5.10%
Inflation		2.40%
Expected arithmetic nominal return		7.50%

Discount Rate

The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 6.40%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that contributions from plan members will be made at the current contribution rates and that contributions from participating employers and non-employer contributing entities will be made at the actuarially determined rates approved by PRSAC taking into consideration the recommendation of the System’s actuary. Based on these assumptions, the System’s fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments of current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability.

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

Notes to the Financial Statements
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

11. Pension Plan (continued)

Sensitivity to Change in Discount Rate

The following presents the net pension liability/asset of the participating employers calculated using the discount rate of 6.40%, as well as what the employers' net pension liability/asset would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is one percentage point lower (5.40%) or one percentage point higher (7.40%) than the current rate.

	Change in Discount Rate 2022		
	1% Decrease 5.40%	Current Discount Rate 6.40%	1% Increase 7.40%
Net Pension Liability (Asset)	\$ <u>2,051,522</u>	\$ <u>287,522</u>	\$ <u>(1,193,181)</u>

Pension Plan Fiduciary Net Position

Detailed information about the pension plan's fiduciary net position is available in the separately issued Parochial Employee's Retirement System of Louisiana financial report. Access to the audit report can be found on the System's website: www.persla.org, or on the Office of Louisiana Legislative Auditor's official website: www.la.gov.

Payables To The Pension Plan

At June 30, 2024, payables to the pension plan for contractually required employer contributions for the quarter totaled \$114,855.

12. Other Postemployment Benefits

The Public Defender offers a Retirement Group Insurance Plan to qualifying employees upon separation of services. The 21st PDO Retirement Group Insurance Plan includes employer provided health insurance benefits offered to current full-time employees. The 21st PDO Retirement Group Insurance Plan will be governed as follows:

1. In order to qualify for participation in the 21st PDO Retirement Group Insurance Plan, an employee must have at least twenty (20) years in the Parochial Employees' Retirement System with at least ten (10) being with the 21st Judicial District Public Defender. The participant must also have been covered under the Employee Group Insurance Plan for at least one year prior to retirement. A plan participant may only select coverage up to the extent that the participant had coverage under the Employee Group Insurance Plan for the year prior to retirement. The participant may reduce coverage but may not increase coverage.

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

Notes to the Financial Statements
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

2. The Public Defender will cover 50% of the total premium up to \$350 per month for a maximum of five years.
3. The retired employee may elect to continue coverage on dependents with the Public Defender paying no portion of the premiums.
4. If a plan participant and the spouse and dependents, if covered, become eligible for Medicare, the participant must make an election to remain covered under the current group health insurance plan or be covered under the medicare supplement plan. For participants in the medicare supplement plan, the Public Defender will pay 100% of the total premium up to \$350 per month for a maximum of five years. You may not participate in both plans concurrently. For example, you may not elect the medicare supplement plan for one family member and leave another on the group health insurance plan. Once the election is made it may not be changed. The Public Defender will not pay any portion of the premium for dependents. If the participant elects an individual medicare supplement plan, the district will reimburse the participant on a quarterly basis after verification of payment is provided.

Due to the number of employees eligible to participate at this time, no accrual for other postemployment benefits has been made as of June 30, 2024, as the amount is immaterial.

13. Risk Management

The Public Defender is exposed to various risks of losses related to torts; theft of, damage to, and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; injuries to employees; and natural disasters. The Public Defender attempts to minimize risk from significant losses through the purchase of commercial insurance.

14. Related Party Transactions

There were no related party transactions for the year ended June 30, 2024.

15. Litigation and Claims

At June 30, 2024, the Public Defender was not involved in any outstanding litigation or claims.

16. Subsequent Events and Management's Review

Management has evaluated subsequent events through December 30, 2024, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

Notes to the Financial Statements
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

17. Governmental Fund Revenues and Expenditures

For the year ended June 30, 2024, the major sources of governmental fund revenues and expenditures were as follows:

Revenues:

State Government

Grants	<u>\$ 2,303,183</u>	
Totals		\$ 2,303,183

Local Government

Appropriations - general	25,000	
Statutory fines, forfeitures, fees, court costs, and other	<u>1,575,721</u>	
Total		1,600,721

Investment Earnings 115,508

Miscellaneous 1,985

Total Revenues \$ 4,021,397

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

Notes to the Financial Statements
As Of and For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

17. Governmental Fund Revenues and Expenditures (continued)

Expenditures:

Personnel Services and Benefits

Salaries	\$ 2,197,913	
Retirement contributions	251,175	
Payroll taxes	31,966	
Insurance	<u>607,783</u>	
Total		\$ 3,088,837

Professional Development

Dues, license and registrations	<u>6,737</u>	
Total		6,737

Operating Costs

Contract services - attorney/legal	390,785	
Contract services - other	52,936	
Lease - office	34,130	
Lease - other	12,132	
Travel - transportation	25,036	
Insurance	29,870	
Supplies	45,394	
Repair and maintenance	8,692	
Utilities and telephone	14,006	
Other	<u>98,805</u>	
Total		<u>711,786</u>

Total Expenditures \$ 3,807,360

Required Supplemental Information (Part II)

Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Indigent Defender
Amite, Louisiana
Schedule Of Revenues, Expenditures, And Changes In Fund Balances
Budget and Actual
General Fund
Year Ended June 30, 2024

	Budgeted Amounts		Actual	Favorable
	Original	Final	Amounts: Budgetary Basis	(Unfavorable) Variance
Revenues				
Fees from indigents	\$ 156,000	\$ 156,000	\$ 205,395	\$ 49,395
Application fees	75,000	75,000	62,328	(12,672)
Court cost on fines and forfeitures	1,105,000	1,105,000	1,332,998	227,998
State grants	2,061,947	2,061,947	2,303,183	241,236
Interest earnings	50,000	50,000	115,508	65,508
Miscellaneous	300	300	1,985	1,685
Total revenues	3,448,247	3,448,247	4,021,397	573,150
Expenditures				
Salary and related benefits	3,108,800	3,108,800	3,088,837	19,963
Expert witness fee	1,500	1,500	-	1,500
Insurance	30,000	30,000	29,870	130
Other attorneys	365,000	365,000	390,785	(25,785)
Other expenditures	181,500	181,500	168,700	12,800
Professional fees	48,000	48,000	50,800	(2,800)
Publications	5,500	5,500	2,880	2,620
Rent	45,000	45,000	46,262	(1,262)
Travel	15,000	15,000	15,220	(220)
Utilities and telephone	16,000	16,000	14,006	1,994
Capital outlay	10,000	10,000	-	10,000
Total expenditures	3,826,300	3,826,300	3,807,360	18,940
Excess Of Revenues Over Expenditures	(378,053)	(378,053)	214,037	592,090
Fund Balances At Beginning Of Year	1,405,947	1,405,947	1,405,947	-
Fund Balances At End Of Year	\$ 1,027,894	\$ 1,027,894	\$ 1,619,984	\$ 592,090

**Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana**

Schedule of the Public Defender's Proportionate Share of Net Pension Liability
Year Ended June 30, 2024

Year Ended June 30,	Public Defender's Proportion Of the Net Pension Liability (Asset)	Public Defender's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability (Asset)	Public Defender's Covered-employee Payroll	Public Defender's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability (Asset) as a Percentage of its Covered-employee Payroll	Plan Fiduciary Net Position as a Percentage of the Total Pension Liability
Parochial Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana					
2015	0.266870%	\$ 72,964	\$ 1,622,481	4.50%	99.15%
2016	0.301729%	\$ 794,238	\$ 1,729,997	45.91%	92.23%
2017	0.310184%	\$ 638,828	\$ 1,839,561	34.73%	94.15%
2018	0.221873%	\$ (164,684)	\$ 1,822,529	-9.04%	101.98%
2019	0.299022%	\$ 1,327,167	\$ 1,838,268	72.20%	88.86%
2020	0.316382%	\$ 14,894	\$ 2,006,103	0.74%	99.89%
2021	0.324860%	\$ (569,614)	\$ 2,169,755	-26.25%	104.00%
2022	0.324325%	\$ (1,527,712)	\$ 2,176,010	-70.21%	110.46%
2023	0.312333%	\$ 1,202,104	\$ 2,118,823	56.73%	91.74%
2024	0.301790%	\$ 287,522	\$ 2,187,292	13.15%	98.03%

* The amounts presented were determined as of the measurement date (previous calendar year).

Notes to Required Supplementary Information

Changes of Benefit Terms

There were no changes of benefit terms for the year ended June 30, 2024.

Changes of Assumptions

The changes of benefit assumptions about future economic or demographic factors were recognized in pension expense using the straight-line amortization method over a closed period equal to the average of the expected remaining service lives of all employees that are provided with pensions

Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana
Schedule of the Public Defender's Contributions
Year Ended June 30, 2023

Year Ended June 30,	Public Defender's Proportion Of the Contractually Required Contribution	Contributions In Relation To Contractually Required Contribution	Public Defender's Contribution Deficiency (Excess)	Public Defender's Covered-employee Payroll	Contributions as a Percentage of Covered-employee Payroll
Parochial Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana					
2015	\$ 248,213	\$ 248,213	\$ -	\$ 1,628,870	15.24%
2016	\$ 251,827	\$ 251,827	\$ -	\$ 1,832,952	13.74%
2017	\$ 231,096	\$ 231,096	\$ -	\$ 1,812,385	12.75%
2018	\$ 220,428	\$ 220,428	\$ -	\$ 1,836,795	12.00%
2019	\$ 213,964	\$ 213,964	\$ -	\$ 1,860,555	11.50%
2020	\$ 255,914	\$ 255,914	\$ -	\$ 2,154,404	11.88%
2021	\$ 268,556	\$ 268,556	\$ -	\$ 2,192,293	12.25%
2022	\$ 251,776	\$ 251,776	\$ -	\$ 2,119,850	11.88%
2023	\$ 248,464	\$ 248,464	\$ -	\$ 2,160,556	11.50%
2024	\$ 251,175	\$ 251,175	\$ -	\$ 2,184,130	11.50%

* The amounts presented were determined as of the end of the fiscal year.

Other Supplementary Information

Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana
Year Ended June 30, 2024

Schedule of Compensation, Benefits and Other Payments to Agency Head,
Or Chief Executive Officer

The schedule of compensation, benefits and other payments to agency head, political subdivision head or chief executive officer is presented in compliance with Act 706 of the 2014 Session of the Louisiana Legislature.

Agency Head Name: Charles Reid

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Salary	\$ 129,515
Payroll taxes	1,843
Benefits - health insurance	14,726
Benefits - life insurance	77
Benefits - retirement	14,894
Benefits-critical care	106
Meals	21
Conference Lodging	142
Conference Fees	185
	<u>\$ 161,509</u>

Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana
 Justice System Funding Schedule - Receiving Entity
 (As required by Act 87 of the 2020 Regular Legislative Session)
 Year Ended June 30, 2024

LLA Entity ID# 1627

	<u>First Six Month Period Ended 12/31/2023</u>	<u>Second Six Month Period Ended 6/30/2024</u>
Receipts From:		
Jason Ard, Livingston Parish Sheriff Office - Criminal Bond Fees	108,330	106,016
Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff Office - Criminal Bond Fees	64,252	80,356
Nathaniel Williams, St. Helena Ph. - Criminal Bond Fees	5,879	2,938
Livingston Ph., 21st Judicial District Court Traffic Costs/Fees	155,266	98,684
Tangipahoa Ph., 21st Judicial District Court Traffic Costs/Fees	152,264	129,889
City of Hammond, City Court Traffic Cost/Fees	68,240	81,069
Denham Springs City Court Fees	59,825	46,343
City of Walker Court Cost/Fees	51,366	60,283
City of Ponchatoula City Court Fees	7,387	8,754
St. Helena Ph., 21st Judicial Distirct Court Traffic Costs/Fees	9,427	9,726
Subtotal Receipts	<u>682,236</u>	<u>624,058</u>

Note: Cash Basis Presentation

Other Reports and Findings

**Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting And
On Compliance and Other Matters Based On an Audit of Financial Statements
Performed In Accordance With *Government Auditing Standards***

To the Office of Twenty-First
Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana

We have audited, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the governmental activities and the general fund of the Office of the Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender (Public Defender) as of and for the year ended June 30, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Public Defender's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents, and have issued our report thereon dated December 30, 2024.

Report On Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit, we considered the Public Defender's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Public Defender's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Public Defender's internal control.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified.

Report On Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Public Defender’s financial statements are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. 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. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity’s internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity’s internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of management of the Public Defender and the Legislative Auditor for the State of Louisiana and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties. Under Louisiana Revised Statute 24:513, this report is distributed by the Legislative Auditor as a public document.

Pedelahore & Co, LLP

Metairie, Louisiana
December 30, 2024

Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana
Schedule of Findings and Questioned Cost
Year Ended June 30, 2024

Section I – Summary of Auditor’s Results

Type of auditor’s report issued:	Unmodified	
Internal control over financial reporting:		
Material weaknesses identified?	_____yes	___X___no
Significant deficiencies identified not considered to be material weaknesses?	_____yes	___X___none
Noncompliance material to financial statements noted?	_____yes	___X___no

Section II – Financial Statement Audit Findings

There are no financial statement findings.

Section III – Federal Award Findings and Questioned Costs

Not applicable

Section IV – Management Letter

None issued

Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender
Amite, Louisiana
Summary Schedule of Prior Year Audit Findings
Year Ended June 30, 2024

The Office of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender respectfully submits the following schedule of prior year audit findings for the year ended June 30, 2024.

Section I – Internal Control and Compliance Material to the Financial Statements

There are no prior year findings.

Section II – Internal Control and Compliance Material to Federal Awards

Not Applicable

Section III – Management Letter

None issued.



PEDELAHORE & CO

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES

To the Office Of Twenty-First Judicial District Public Defender, Amite, Louisiana and the Louisiana Legislative Auditor:

We have performed the procedures enumerated below on the control and compliance (C/C) areas identified in the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's (LLA's), Statewide Agreed-Upon Procedures (SAUPs) for the fiscal period July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. The Public Defender's management is responsible for those C/C areas identified in the SAUPs.

The Public Defender has agreed to and acknowledged that the procedures performed are appropriate to meet the intended purpose of the engagement, which is to perform specified procedures on the C/C areas identified in LLA's SAUPs for the fiscal period July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. Additionally, LLA has agreed to and acknowledged that the procedures performed are appropriate for its purposes. This report may not be suitable for any other purpose. The procedures performed may not address all the items of interest to a user of this report and may not meet the needs of all users of this report and, as such, users are responsible for determining whether the procedures performed are appropriate for their purposes.

The procedures and associated findings are as follows:

1) Written Policies and Procedures

- A. Obtain and inspect the entity's written policies and procedures and observe that they address each of the following categories and subcategories (if applicable to public funds and the entity's operations):
 - i. ***Budgeting***, including preparing, adopting, monitoring, and amending the budget
 - ii. ***Purchasing***, including (1) how purchases are initiated; (2) how vendors are added to the vendor list; (3) the preparation and approval process of purchase requisitions and purchase orders; (4) controls to ensure compliance with the Public Bid Law; and (5) documentation required to be maintained for all bids and price quotes.
 - iii. ***Disbursements***, including processing, reviewing, and approving
 - iv. ***Receipts/Collections***, including receiving, recording, and preparing deposits. Also, policies and procedures should include management's actions to determine the completeness of all collections for each type of revenue or agency fund additions (e.g. periodic confirmation with outside parties, reconciliation to utility billing after cutoff procedures, reconciliation of traffic ticket number sequences, agency fund forfeiture monies confirmation).

- v. **Payroll/Personnel**, including (1) payroll processing, and (2) reviewing and approving time and attendance records, including leave and overtime worked and (3) approval process for employee(s) rate of pay or approval and maintenance of pay rate schedules.
- vi. **Contracting**, including (1) types of services requiring written contracts, (2) standard terms and conditions, (3) legal review, (4) approval process, and (5) monitoring process.
- vii. **Travel and expense reimbursement**, including (1) allowable expenses, (2) dollar thresholds by category of expense, (3) documentation requirements, and (4) required approvers.
- viii. **Credit Cards (and debit cards, fuel cards, purchase cards, if applicable)**, including (1) how cards are to be controlled, (2) allowable business uses, (3) documentation requirements, (4) required approvers of statements, and (5) monitoring card usage (e.g., determining the reasonableness of fuel card purchases).
- ix. **Ethics**, including (1) the prohibitions as defined in Louisiana Revised Statute (R.S.) 42:1111-1121, (2) actions to be taken if an ethics violation takes place, (3) system to monitor possible ethics violations, and (4) requirement that documentation is maintained to demonstrate that all employees and officials were notified of any changes to the entity's ethics policy.
- x. **Debt Service**, including (1) debt issuance approval, (2) continuing disclosure/EMMA reporting requirements, (3) debt reserve requirements, and (4) debt service requirements.
- xi. **Information Technology Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity**, including (1) identification of critical data and frequency of data backups, (2) storage of backups in a separate physical location isolated from the network, (3) periodic testing/verification that backups can be restored, (4) use of antivirus software on all systems, (5) timely application of all available system and software patches/updates, and (6) identification of personal, processes, and tools needed to recover operations after a critical event.
- xii. **Prevention of Sexual Harassment**, including R.S. 42:342-344 requirements for (1) agency responsibilities and prohibitions, (2) annual employee training, and (3) annual reporting.

Results of Procedures: We noted no exceptions to the above procedures except as follows: the PDO does not use a purchase order system, and those specified functions listed above involving vendor list and purchase order processing are not included in the policy and procedures for purchasing or disbursements. Also, the prevention of sexual harassment policy and procedures does not mention the annual reporting requirement which the PDO has been reporting to the State Public Defenders Office (SPDO) as required.

Management's response: Regarding the purchase and disbursements policy, the PDO believes their policies in place are adequate for the volume of transactions and number of personnel and feels a purchase order system would not be cost beneficial. Also, the PDO will include the annual reporting procedures which they follow in their reporting to the SPDO annually.

2) **Board or Finance Committee**

- A. Obtain and inspect the board/finance committee minutes for the fiscal period, as well as the board's enabling legislation, charter, bylaws, or equivalent document in effect during the fiscal period, and:
- i. Observe that the board/finance committee met with a quorum at least monthly, or on a frequency in accordance with the board's enabling legislation, charter, bylaws, or other equivalent document.
 - ii. For those entities reporting on the governmental accounting model, observe whether the minutes referenced or included monthly budget-to-actual comparisons on the general fund, quarterly budget-to-actual, at a minimum, on all proprietary funds, and semi-annual budget-to-actual comparisons, at a minimum, on all special revenue funds. *Alternately, for those entities reporting on the non-profit accounting model, observe that the minutes referenced or included financial activity relating to public funds if those public funds comprised more than 10% of the entity's collections during the fiscal period.*
 - iii. For governmental entities, obtain the prior year audit report and observe the unassigned fund balance in the general fund. If the general fund had a negative ending unassigned fund balance in the prior year audit report, observe that the minutes for at least one meeting during the fiscal period referenced or included a formal plan to eliminate the negative unassigned fund balance in the general fund.
 - iv. Observe whether the board/finance committee received written updates of the progress of resolving audit finding(s), according to management's corrective action plan at each meeting until the findings are considered fully resolved.

Results of Procedures: N/A - The Public Defender does not have a board or a finance committee.

3) **Bank Reconciliations**

- A. Obtain a listing of client bank accounts for the fiscal period from management and management's representation that the listing is complete. Ask management to identify the entity's main operating account. Select the entity's main operating account and randomly select 4 additional accounts (or all accounts if less than 5). Randomly select one month from the fiscal period, obtain and inspect the corresponding bank statement and reconciliation for selected each account, and observe that:
- i. Bank reconciliations include evidence that they were prepared within 2 months of the related statement closing date (e.g., initialed and dated, electronically logged);
 - ii. Bank reconciliations include written evidence that a member of management/board member who does not handle cash, post ledgers, or issue checks has reviewed each bank reconciliation within 1 month of the date the reconciliation was prepared (e.g., initialed and dated, electronically logged); and
 - iii. Management has documentation reflecting it has researched reconciling items that have been outstanding for more than 12 months from the statement closing date, if applicable.

Results of Procedures: We noted no exceptions to the above procedures except as follows: Documentation shows that the bank statements have been reviewed and the cover page of the

packet of monthly financial statements, budget and bank reconciliations is initialed, however, the bank reconciliations themselves do not include initials or dates indicating review.

Management's response: The PDO holds monthly meetings with the external CPA who prepares the bank reconciliation and the PDO reviews the reconciliations at that time. In the future, the District Defender (DD) (or his assignee) will initial the reconciliations and keep in the files with the financial statement packet to denote that review.

4) Collections (excluding electronic funds transfers)

- A. Obtain a listing of deposit sites for the fiscal period where deposits for cash/checks/money orders (cash) are prepared and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select 5 deposit sites (or all deposit sites if less than 5).
- B. For each deposit site selected, obtain a listing of collection locations and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select one collection location for each deposit site (i.e. 5 collection locations for 5 deposit sites), obtain and inspect written policies and procedures relating to employee job duties (if no written policies or procedures, inquire of employees about their job duties) at each collection location, and observe that job duties are properly segregated at each collection location such that:
 - i. Employees that are responsible for cash collections do not share cash drawers/registers.
 - ii. Each employee responsible for collecting cash is not responsible for preparing/making bank deposits, unless another employee/official is responsible for reconciling collection documentation (e.g. pre-numbered receipts) to the deposit.
 - iii. Each employee responsible for collecting cash is not responsible for posting collection entries to the general ledger or subsidiary ledgers, unless another employee/official is responsible for reconciling ledger postings to each other and to the deposit; and
 - iv. The employee(s) responsible for reconciling cash collections to the general ledger and/or subsidiary ledgers, by revenue source and/or custodial fund additions are not responsible for collecting cash, unless another employee verifies the reconciliation.
- C. Obtain from management a copy of the bond or insurance policy for theft covering all employees who have access to cash. Observe the bond or insurance policy for theft was enforced during the fiscal period.
- D. Randomly select two deposit dates for each of the 5 bank accounts selected for Bank Reconciliations procedure #3A (select the next deposit date chronologically if no deposits were made on the dates randomly selected and randomly select a deposit if multiple deposits are made on the same day). *Alternately, the practitioner may use a source document other than bank statements when selecting the deposit dates for testing, such as a cash collection log, daily revenue report, receipt book, etc.* Obtain supporting documentation for each of the 10 deposits and:
 - i. Observe that receipts are sequentially pre-numbered.
 - ii. Trace sequentially pre-numbered receipts, system reports, and other related collection documentation to the deposit slip.
 - iii. Trace the deposit slip total to the actual deposit per the bank statement.

- iv. Observe that the deposit was made within one business day of receipt at the collection location (within one week if the depository is more than 10 miles from the collection location or the deposit is less than \$100 and the cash is stored securely in a locked safe or drawer).
- v. Trace the actual deposit per the bank statement to the general ledger.

Results of Procedures: We noted no exceptions to the above procedures.

5) Non-Payroll Disbursements (excluding card purchases/payments, travel reimbursements, and petty cash purchases)

- A. Obtain a listing of locations that process payments for the fiscal period and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select 5 locations (or all locations if less than 5).
- B. For each location selected under #5A above, obtain a listing of those employees involved with non-payroll purchasing and payment functions. Obtain written policies and procedures relating to employee job duties (if the agency has no written policies and procedures, inquire of employees about their job duties), and observe that job duties are properly segregated such that:
 - i. At least two employees are involved in initiating a purchase request, approving a purchase, and placing an order/making the purchase.
 - ii. At least two employees are involved in processing and approving payments to vendors;
 - iii. The employee responsible for processing payments is prohibited from adding/modifying vendor files, unless another employee is responsible for periodically reviewing changes to vendor files;
 - iv. Either the employee/official responsible for signing checks mails the payment or gives the signed checks to an employee to mail who is not responsible for processing payments; and
 - v. Only employees/officials authorized to sign checks approve the electronic disbursement (release) of funds, whether through automated clearinghouse (ACH), electronic funds transfer (EFT), wire transfer, or some other electronic means.
- C. For each location selected under #5A above, obtain the entity's non-payroll disbursement transaction population (excluding cards and travel reimbursements) and obtain management's representation that the population is complete. Randomly select 5 disbursements for each location, obtain supporting documentation for each transaction, and
 - i. Observe whether the disbursement, whether by paper or electronic means, matched the related original itemized invoice and supporting documentation indicates deliverables included on the invoice were received by the entity, and
 - ii. Observe whether the disbursement documentation included evidence (e.g., initial/date, electronic logging) of segregation of duties tested under #5B above, as applicable.
- D. Using the entity's main operating account and the month selected in Bank Reconciliations procedure #3A, randomly select 5 non-payroll-related electronic disbursements (or all if less than 5) and observe that each electronic disbursement was (a) approved by only those persons authorized to disburse funds (e.g. sign checks) per the entity's policy, and (b) approved by the

required number of authorized signers per the entity's policy. *Note: If no electronic payments were made from the main operating account during the month selected the practitioner should select an alternative month and/or account for testing that does include electronic disbursements.*

Results of Procedures: We noted no exceptions to the above procedures.

6) Credit Cards/Debit Cards/Fuel Cards/P-Cards

- A. Obtain from management a listing of all active credit cards, bank debit cards, fuel cards, and purchase cards (cards) for the fiscal period, including the card numbers and the names of the persons who maintained possession of the cards. Obtain management's representation that the listing is complete.
- B. Using the listing prepared by management, randomly select 5 cards (or all cards if less than 5) that were used during the fiscal period. Randomly select one monthly statement or combined statement for each card (for a debit card, randomly select one monthly bank statement), obtain supporting documentation, and
 - i. Observe whether there is evidence that the monthly statement or combined statement and supporting documentation (e.g., original receipts for credit/debit card purchases, exception reports for excessive fuel card usage) was reviewed and approved, in writing, (or electronically approved), by someone other than the authorized card holder. (those instances requiring such approval that may constrain the legal authority of certain public officials, such as the mayor of a Lawrason Act municipality, should not be reported); and
 - ii. Observe that finance charges and late fees were not assessed on the selected statements.
- C. Using the monthly statements or combined statements selected under #7B above, excluding fuel cards, randomly select 10 transactions (or all transactions if less than 10) from each statement, and obtain supporting documentation for the transactions (i.e. each card should have 10 transactions subject to testing). For each transaction, observe that it is supported by (1) an original itemized receipt that identifies precisely what was purchased, (2) written documentation of the business/public purpose, and (3) documentation of the individuals participating in meals (for meal charges only). For missing receipts, the practitioner should describe the nature of the transaction and note whether management had a compensating control to address missing receipts, such as a "missing receipt statement" that is subject to increased scrutiny.

Results of Procedures: We noted no exceptions to the above procedures.

7) Travel and Travel-Related Expense Reimbursements (excluding card transactions)

- A. Obtain from management a listing of all travel and travel-related expense reimbursements during the fiscal period and management's representation that the listing or general ledger is complete. Randomly select 5 reimbursements, obtain the related expense reimbursement forms/prepaid expense documentation of each selected reimbursement, as well as the supporting documentation. For each of the 5 reimbursements selected:

- i. If reimbursed using a per diem, observe that the approved reimbursement rate is no more than those rates established either by the State of Louisiana or the U.S. General Services Administration (www.gsa.gov);
- ii. If reimbursed using actual costs, observe that the reimbursement is supported by an original itemized receipt that identifies precisely what was purchased;
- iii. Observe that each reimbursement is supported by documentation of the business/public purpose (for meal charges, observe that the documentation includes the names of those individuals participating) and other documentation required by Written Policy and Procedures procedure #1A(vii); and
- iv. Observe that each reimbursement was reviewed and approved, in writing, by someone other than the person receiving reimbursement.

Results of Procedures: We noted no exceptions to the above procedures.

8) Contracts

- A. Obtain from management a listing of all agreements/contracts for professional services, materials and supplies, leases, and construction activities that were initiated or renewed during the fiscal period. *Alternately, the practitioner may use an equivalent selection source, such as an active vendor list.* Obtain management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select 5 contracts (or all contracts if less than 5) from the listing, excluding the practitioner's contract, and:
 - i. Observe that the contract was bid in accordance with the Louisiana Public Bid Law (e.g., solicited quotes or bids, advertised), if required by law;
 - ii. Observe that the contract was approved by the governing body/board, if required by policy or law (e.g. Lawrason Act, Home Rule Charter);
 - iii. If the contract was amended (e.g. change order), observe the original contract terms provided for such an amendment and that amendments were made in compliance with the contract terms (e.g., if approval is required for any amendment, the documented approval); and
 - iv. Randomly select one payment from the fiscal period for each of the 5 contracts, obtain the supporting invoice, agree the invoice to the contract terms, and observe the invoice and related payment agreed to the terms and conditions of the contract.

Results of Procedures: We noted no exceptions to the above procedures.

9) Payroll and Personnel

- A. Obtain a listing of employees/elected officials employed during the fiscal period and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select 5 employees/officials, obtain related paid salaries and personnel files, and agree paid salaries to authorized salaries/pay rates in the personnel files.

- B. Randomly select one pay period during the fiscal period. For the 5 employees or officials selected under #9A above, obtain attendance records and leave documentation for the pay period, and
- i. Observe that all selected employees/officials documented their daily attendance and leave (e.g., vacation, sick, compensatory);
 - ii. Observe whether supervisors approved the attendance and leave of the selected employees or officials;
 - iii. Observe any leave accrued or taken during the pay period is reflected in the entity's cumulative leave records; and
 - iv. Observe the rate paid to the employees or officials agree to the authorized salary/pay rate found within the personnel file.
- C. Obtain a listing of those employees/officials that received termination payments during the fiscal period and management's representation that the list is complete. Randomly select two employees or officials, obtain related documentation of the hours and pay rates used in management's termination payment calculations and the entity's policy on termination payments. Agree the hours to the employee or officials' cumulative leave records, agree the pay rates to the employee or officials' authorized pay rates in the employee/officials' personnel files, and agree the termination payment to entity policy.
- D. Obtain management's representation that employer and employee portions of third-party payroll related amounts (e.g., payroll taxes, retirement contributions, health insurance premiums, garnishments, workers' compensation premiums, etc.) have been paid, and associated forms have been filed, by required deadlines.

Results of Procedures: We noted no exceptions to the above procedures except as follows: The in-house staff attendance timesheets were not signed by a supervisor; however all semi-monthly payrolls for both attorneys and staff were approved by management. Also, one of the five employees had no time sheets for the PR period selected; and for another employee, although vacation was noted in the time sheets and cumulative record, there was no approval request for that leave in the employee's personnel file.

Management's response: Management will design a cover sheet to use for approval of in-house staff attendance timesheets in addition to the currently approved leave requests and approved payroll. Management will also continue their monitoring of both time sheet documentation and vacation request and approval documentation.

10) Ethics

- A. Using the 5 randomly selected employees/officials from the Payroll and Personnel procedure #9A obtain ethics documentation from management, and
- i. Observe that the documentation demonstrates each employee/official completed one hour of ethics training during the calendar year as required by R.S. 42:1170; and.

- ii. Observe whether the entity maintains documentation which demonstrates each employee and official were notified of any changes to the entity's ethics policy during the fiscal period, as applicable.
- B. Inquire and/or observe whether the agency has appointed an ethics designee as required by R.S. 42:1170

Results of Procedures: We noted no exceptions to the above procedures.

11) Debt Service

- A. Obtain a listing of bonds/notes and other debt instruments issued during the fiscal period and management's representation that the listing is complete. Select all debt instruments on the listing, obtain supporting documentation, and observe that State Bond Commission approval was obtained for each debt instrument issued as required by Article VII, Section 8 of Louisiana Constitution; and
- B. Obtain a listing of bonds/notes outstanding at the end of the fiscal period and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select one bond/note, inspect debt covenants, obtain supporting documentation for the reserve balance and payments, and agree actual reserve balances and payments to those required by debt covenants (including contingency funds, short-lived asset funds, or other funds required by the debt covenants).

Results of Procedures: N/A - These procedures were not performed as the PD has no debt.

12) Fraud Notice

- A. Obtain a listing of misappropriations of public funds and assets during the fiscal period and management's representation that the listing is complete. Select all misappropriations on the listing, obtain supporting documentation, and observe that the entity reported the misappropriation(s) to the legislative auditor and the district attorney of the parish in which the entity is domiciled as required by R.S. 24:523.
- B. Observe that the entity has posted on its premises and website, the notice required by R.S. 24:523.1 concerning the reporting of misappropriation, fraud, waste, or abuse of public funds.

Results of Procedures: We noted no exceptions to the above procedures and Management has reported that there had not been any misappropriation of public funds or assets.

13) Information Technology Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity

- A. Perform the following procedures, **verbally discuss the results with management, and report "We performed the procedure and discussed the results with management."**
 - i. Obtain and inspect the entity's most recent documentation that it has backed up its critical data (if no written documentation, inquire of personnel responsible for backing up critical

- data) and observe that such backup (a) occurred within the past week, (b) was not stored on the government's local server or network, and was encrypted.
- ii. Obtain and inspect the entity's most recent documentation that it has tested/verified that its backups can be restored (if not written documentation, inquire of personnel responsible for testing/verification backup restoration) and observe evidence that the test/verification was successfully performed within the past 3 months.
 - iii. Obtain a listing of the entity's computers currently in use and their related locations, and management's representation that the listing is complete. Randomly select 5 computers and observe while management demonstrates that the selected computers have current and active antivirus software and that the operating system and accounting system software in use are currently supported by the vendor.
- B. Randomly select 5 terminated employees (or all if less than 5) using the list of terminated employees obtained in Payroll and Personnel procedure #9C. Observe that the selected terminated employees have been removed or disabled from the network.
- C. Using the 5 randomly selected employees/officials from Payroll and Personnel procedure #9A, obtain cybersecurity training documentation from management, and observe that the documentation demonstrates that the following employees/officials with access to the agency's information technology assets have completed cybersecurity training as required by R.S. 42:1267. The requirements are as follows:
- Hired before June 9, 2020 – completed the training; and
 - Hired on or after June 9, 2020 – completed the training within 30 days of initial service or employment.

Results of Procedures: We performed the procedures and discussed the results with management.

14) Prevention of Sexual Harassment

- A. Using the 5 randomly selected employees/officials from Payroll and Personnel procedure #9A, obtain sexual harassment training documentation from management, and observe the documentation demonstrates each employee/official completed at least one hour of sexual harassment training during the calendar year as required by R.S. 42:343.
- B. Observe the entity has posted its sexual harassment policy and complaint procedure on its website (or in a conspicuous location on the entity's premises if the entity does not have a website).
- C. Obtain the entity's annual sexual harassment report for the current fiscal period, observe that the report was dated on or before February 1, and observe it includes the applicable requirements of R.S. 42:344:
- i. Number and percentage of public servants in the agency who have completed the training requirements:
 - ii. Number of sexual harassment complaints received by the agency:
 - iii. Number of complaints which resulted in a finding that sexual harassment occurred:

- iv. Number of complaints in which the finding of sexual harassment resulted in discipline or corrective action: and
- v. Amount of time it took to resolve each complaint.

Results of Procedures: We noted no exceptions to the above procedures.

We were engaged by the Public Defender to perform this agreed-upon procedures engagement and conducted our engagement in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and applicable standards of *Government Auditing Standards*. We were not engaged to and did not conduct an examination or review engagement, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion or conclusion, respectively, on those C/C areas identified in the SAUPs. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion or conclusion. Had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you.

We are required to be independent of the Public Defender and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements related to our agreed-upon procedures engagement.

This report is intended solely to describe the scope of testing performed on those C/C areas identified in the SAUPs, and the result of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on control or compliance. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose. Under Louisiana Revised Statute 24:513, this report is distributed by the LLA as a public document.

Peddlahore & Co, LLP

Metairie, Louisiana
December 30, 2024