



P A T T I L L O , B R O W N & H I L L , L . L . P .  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS ■ BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

To the Honorable County Judge and  
Commissioners' Court  
Van Zandt County, Texas

We have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Van Zandt County, Texas, for the year ended September 30, 2013. Professional standards require that we provide you with information about our responsibilities under generally accepted auditing standards, as well as certain information related to the planned scope and timing of our audit. We have communicated such information in our letter to you dated January 30, 2014. Professional standards also require that we communicate to you the following information related to our audit.

### **Significant Audit Findings**

#### ***Qualitative Aspects of Accounting Practices***

Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. The significant accounting policies used by the Van Zandt County, Texas are described in Note 1 to the financial statements. No new accounting policies were adopted and the application of existing policies was not changed during the year ended September 30, 2013. We noted no transactions entered into by the governmental unit during the year for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus. All significant transactions have been recognized in the financial statements in the proper period.

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ significantly from those expected. The most sensitive estimates affecting the financial statements were:

Management's estimate of the accumulated depreciation and the related estimated useful lives of capital assets. We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop the estimate of useful lives in determining that it is reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

Management's estimate of the allowance for uncollectible property taxes and adjudicated fines receivables is based on a percentage of the receivable balance depending on the age of the receivable. We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop the allowance for uncollectible property taxes in determining that it is reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

The financial statement disclosures are neutral, consistent, and clear.

### ***Difficulties Encountered in Performing the Audit***

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management in performing and completing our audit.

### ***Corrected and Uncorrected Misstatements***

Professional standards require us to accumulate all known and likely misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that are clearly trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. Management has corrected all such misstatements. In addition, none of the misstatements detected as a result of audit procedures and corrected by management were material, either individually or in the aggregate, to each opinion unit's financial statements taken as a whole.

### ***Disagreements with Management***

For purposes of this letter, a disagreement with management is a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, that could be significant to the financial statements or the auditor's report. We are pleased to report that no such disagreements arose during the course of our audit.

### ***Management Representations***

We have requested certain representations from management that are included in the management representation letter dated November 6, 2014.

### ***Management Consultations with Other Independent Accountants***

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, similar to obtaining a "second opinion" on certain situations. If a consultation involves application of an accounting principle to the governmental unit's financial statements or a determination of the type of auditor's opinion that may be expressed on those statements, our professional standards require the consulting accountant to check with us to determine that the consultant has all the relevant facts. To our knowledge, there were no such consultations with other accountants.

## ***Other Audit Findings or Issues***

We generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, with management each year prior to retention as the governmental unit's auditors. However, these discussions occurred in the normal course of our professional relationship and our responses were not a condition to our retention.

## **Other Matters**

With respect to the supplementary information accompanying the financial statements, we made certain inquiries of management and evaluated the form, content, and methods of preparing the information to determine that the information complies with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the method of preparing it has not changed from the prior period, and the information is appropriate and complete in relation to our audit of the financial statements. We compared and reconciled the supplementary information to the underlying accounting records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves.

## **Significant Forthcoming Accounting Standards**

### *Financial Reporting of Deferred Outflows of Resources, Deferred Inflows of Resources, and Net Position*

Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 65 ("GASB 65"), *Items Previously Reported as Assets and Liabilities*, is effective for periods beginning after December 15, 2012. This Statement establishes accounting and financial reporting standards that reclassify, as deferred outflows of resources or deferred inflows of resources, certain items that were previously reported as assets and liabilities and recognizes, as outflows of resources or inflows of resources, certain items that were previously reported as assets and liabilities.

Concepts Statement No. 4, *Elements of Financial Statements*, introduced and defined the elements included in financial statements, including deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources. In addition, Concepts Statement 4 provides that reporting a deferred outflow of resources or a deferred inflow of resources should be limited to those instances identified in authoritative pronouncements that are established after applicable due process. Prior to the issuance of this Statement, only two such pronouncements have been issued. Statement No. 53, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Derivative Instruments*, requires the reporting of a deferred outflow of resources or a deferred inflow of resources for the changes in fair value of hedging derivative instruments, and Statement No. 60, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Service Concession Arrangements*, requires a deferred inflow of resources to be reported by a transferor government in a qualifying service concession arrangement. This Statement amends the financial statement element classification of certain items previously reported as assets and liabilities to be consistent with the definitions in Concepts Statement 4.

This Statement also provides other financial reporting guidance related to the impact of the financial statement elements deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources, such as changes in the determination of the major fund calculations and limiting the use of the term *deferred* in financial statement presentations.

*Accounting and Financial Reporting for Pensions—an amendment of GASB Statement No. 27*

Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 68 (“GASB 68”), *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Pensions—an amendment of GASB Statement No. 27*, is effective for periods beginning after June 15, 2014. The primary objective of this Statement is to improve accounting and financial reporting by state and local governments for pensions. The new standards are intended to provide more comparable and visible information within the annual financial statements of governments that provide defined benefit pensions.

Notably, GASB 68 requires employers to report the difference between the actuarial total pension liability and the fair value of the legally restricted plan assets as the net pension liability on the statement of net position. Previously, a liability was only recorded if the actual contributions made to the plan were less than the actuarial calculated contributions for the year. These new standards relate only to the *accounting and reporting* of defined benefit pensions within the GAAP based financial statements of governmental entities. They do not establish requirements as to the actual funding of these benefits. These decisions are left to management and the governing body. This Statement may have a material impact on recorded pension liabilities compared to application of current standards. Your processes should be updated to incorporate the new information requirements and begin gathering information now to determine the future impacts on financial reporting.

This information is intended solely for the use of the Commissioner’s Court and management of Van Zandt County and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties.

*Pattillo, Brown + Hill, L.L.P.*

November 6, 2014