City of Detroit

# OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

# Department of Elections Financial Related Audit

## August 2003

**Department of Elections**
Financial Related Audit
August 2003

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# MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** August 14, 2003

**TO:** Honorable City Council

**FROM:** Joseph L. Harris
Auditor General

**RE:** Financial Related Audit of the Department of Elections

**CC:** Mayor Kwame M. Kilpatrick

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Attached for your review is our report on the financial related audit of the Department of Elections.

This report contains our audit purpose, scope, objective, and methodology; background; and audit results.

The Department's cooperation and professionalism during the audit were outstanding. The staff that we interviewed, worked with, and observed was very cooperative and demonstrated a high degree of professionalism and dedication to the mission of the Department. We appreciate the cooperation and assistance that we received from the employees of the Department of Elections.

## AUDIT PURPOSE, SCOPE, OBJECTIVE, AND METHODOLOGY

### Audit Purpose

This financial related audit was performed under our Charter mandate to audit financial transactions of all City agencies. The Office of the Auditor General performed the audit of the Department of Elections' control procedures to test their adequacy to properly record transactions of cash receipts, payroll, disbursements, and imprest cash and to make any recommendations, if warranted, to improve the control procedures.

### Audit Scope

We performed an assessment of the Department of Elections' control procedures for transactions of cash receipts, payroll, disbursements, and imprest cash and determined that the control procedures are adequate. Therefore, we focused our audit on the status of the prior audit finding to determine whether the Department implemented the prior audit recommendations or otherwise resolved the finding.

Our audit was conducted in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, except for the completion of an external quality review of the Office of the Auditor General within the last three years, and accordingly, included such tests of the records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary under the circumstances. No information is withheld from this report.

### Audit Objective

Our audit objective was to determine whether the Department implemented the prior audit recommendations or otherwise resolved the finding.

### Audit Methodology

To accomplish our audit objective, our audit work included the following:

- Interviews with appropriate personnel of the City of Detroit Department of Elections and the State of Michigan Bureau of Elections.
- A review of the Department's information technology system.

## BACKGROUND

The Department of Elections has the responsibility of planning, monitoring and conducting all (Federal, State, County and City) elections in the City and maintaining the voter registration records of the City's electorate.

As provided by City Charter, the Department of Elections is headed by the City Election Commission composed of the City Clerk (as the chairperson), the President of the City Council, and the Corporation Counsel.

The duties of the Commission are as follows:

1. Supervise all elections in the City.
2. Provide places for voting.
3. Provide ballots for voting devices for all City offices as required by law.
4. Prevent fraud and corruption in registration, voting, or counting of votes, and purge the registration records of names of persons who are not qualified voters.
5. Change, from time to time, the boundaries of election precincts so that the number of voters in each precinct shall not exceed the number provided for by State Law.
6. Appoint qualified individuals as elections officers for each election.
7. Provide for the examination of all applicants, when necessary, for the position of an election officer.
8. Prosecute anyone believed guilty of violation of election laws.

The Commission may hire assistants, inspectors, and other election personnel necessary to achieve its election responsibilities. Precinct election officers and temporary employees, required from time to time, may be appointed for periods not to exceed 30 business days. These appointments are exempt from the hiring policies and practices set forth in the City Charter.

The Department of Elections is a general fund agency with a budget for both fiscal years 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 of approximately $10 million.

## AUDIT RESULTS

The result of our review of the prior audit finding and related recommendations follows. The date shown indicates the audit report in which the recommendation or part thereof first appeared.

### 1. Computer Security – Need for Additional Measures:

(June 30, 1995) We recommend the Department of Elections:

A. Make arrangements to secure off-site storage for its backup data files.

B. Purchase a dedicated anti-virus software program and update it, as updates become available.

C. Take steps to ensure the Voter Registration System's applications are Y2K compliant, and prepare a contingency plan to address situations where lack of Y2K compliance could occur.

**Results:**

The Department of Elections has implemented two of the three recommendations.

The Department of Elections uses the State of Michigan's Voter Registration System and has updated its anti-virus software program for its operating system.

The Department does not have off-site backup storage for its data files. Although, the City's registered voter database can be reconstructed from the Michigan Secretary of State's database, the Department of Elections has no written assurances that the Secretary of State's disaster recovery plan includes fireproof off-site storage for its back-up data files. The Department should request written documentation from the Secretary of State regarding its disaster recovery plan. Moreover, the Department of Elections should take action to adequately protect the backup of its own files off-site. The Department of Elections has funding for an off-site storage of back-up data in its budget request for fiscal year 2003-2004.

# City of Detroit

**ATTACHMENT A**

DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS

GLORIA C. WILLIAMS, *Director*

JACKIE L. CURRIE, *City Clerk*
*Chairperson, Election Commission*

ISA AZZOUZ, *Deputy Director*

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August 6, 2003

Joseph L. Harris, Auditor General
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2 Woodward Avenue
Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, Room 208
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Dear Mr. Harris:

The following presents the Election Department's response for the indicated finding and related recommendation in the August 2003 financial related audit of the Department, as prepared by the Office of the Auditor General.

**Finding No. 1. Computer Security – Need for Additional Measures**

We recommend the Department of Elections make arrangements to secure off-site for its backup data files.

Department's Response:

We received the backup software and hardware equipment during the week of July 28, 2003. We are in the process of inventorying and installing it now and should have it tested by the end of the week. Full implementation will include documentation and training of staff on the new backup procedures.

Once we have obtained a city approved/certified vendor for storage of off-site computer files, we will begin at minimum a weekly transport of files to the designated off-site location. The implementation of the process should take less than ninety days. We will then be in complete compliance with your recommendation.

Sincerely,

Gloria C. Williams

Gloria C. Williams, Director of Elections

Cc: Jackie L. Currie, City Clerk
Isa Azzouz, Deputy Director
Willard Davis, IT Manager