

INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL
MEMBER ACCOUNTS
FOR THE THREE FISCAL YEARS
ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 1998

MAY 5, 1999

REPORT NUMBER 494

OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL AUDITOR
Suite 200, St. James Building



May 5, 1999

Report Number 494

Honorable Members of the City Council
City of Jacksonville

In 1995, the Jacksonville City Council passed an ordinance which provided for the establishment of individual council accounts. A Council member who chose to operate his(her) office in this manner (an optional choice) was funded \$50,000 per year to fund the expenses and equipment of that office. The Ordinance also provided that the Council member could employ executive assistants and pay their salaries from the above established accounts. The City Council also passed a Resolution (96-303-66) which governed the pay of the executive assistants. The Council Auditor is required to audit these accounts. For the three fiscal years ending September 30, 1998, our findings are noted below.

FINDINGS:

Overall, we noted various degrees of compliance with City Human Resources, Procurement and Supply and Accounting rules and regulations in the administration of the individual accounts.

Recommendation

We recommend that the Director of Staff Services and the Chief of Council Administration be assigned the task of providing assistance to all Executive Council Assistants to assure compliance with City rules and regulations. This would entail the education of Assistants regarding City policies and procedures and the review of subsequent documentation. Specific comments of our review are discussed below.

Vouchers Paid

Finding 1

We noted many cases in which required documentation for travel taken by a Council member did not meet the City Travel Regulations. Included in the noted exceptions were instances where travel advances were made and not followed by submission of completed travel forms and supporting documentation, as required by City travel regulations. When properly completed, these forms and supporting documentation serve to document the actual expenses of travel.

Recommendation

We recommend that careful attention be given to the submission of travel forms and related documentation necessary to account for official City travel expenses.

Finding 2

Council Staff Services purchased new computers in fiscal year 1997/98 for all Council members. Computer purchases totaling \$7,612.86 were not charged to the Council members who maintain individual accounts. A decision was made by the Council leadership at the time of purchase to give all Council persons the upgraded computers and not charge this upgrade to the Council persons maintaining separate operating accounts.

Finding 3

We documented four instances in which Council Direct or Council Staff Service activities were charged for expenditures made by Council Members maintaining separate accounts.

Finding 4

We noted payments totaling \$2,177.07 for the rental of a Council office outside City Hall. Municipal Code Section 10.104 prohibits the establishment of office space outside City Hall not located in a Public Building or a building under lease to the City.

Recommendation

We recommend that the Council clearly define in ordinance form and modify from time to time the expenditures to be made from the individual council accounts.

Telecommunications

Finding 5

Monthly bills for mobile phones ranged from \$0.00 to \$694.49. Reimbursement of personal calls is done on an honor system basis and were noted from several Council members. Currently no city wide policies regarding mobile phone usage exist.

Recommendation

We suggest that a City wide policy be adopted relative to the use of mobile phones.

Salaries and Benefits

Finding 6

A council assistant received \$10,000 in bonuses for the 1997/98 fiscal year. This resulted in an adjusted salary of \$41,261.93. The assistant's total adjusted salary exceeds the maximum allowed by \$2,261.93 when bonuses are included. Per the Employment Plan Resolution, 96-303-66, the salary range for Executive Assistants is \$23,000-\$39,000. This assistant provided services to two district council members and was awarded bonuses from both member's accounts.

Recommendation

Council should readdress the issue of salary and bonuses for Executive Council Assistants. The General Counsel's Office has stated that as presently written, the total annual compensation of an executive assistant could not exceed \$39,000 during 1997-98.

Finding 7

Employee Status Records (ESRs) were not available within the department for all current and previous employees.

Recommendation

The Director of Staff Services and the Chief of Council Administration should provide direction for the processing and maintenance of all Executive Assistants' ESRs. This would ensure consistent compliance with City rules and regulations regardless of changes in Executive Council Assistants.

Finding 8

Salary for an Executive Council Assistant position was paid from the Council Staff Services activity for approximately a two month period after being appointed by a Council Member. Human Resources made an error processing the employee's ESR. No request to General Accounting to correct the result of Human Resource's error was made.

Finding 9

Council Aides for two districts received the benefit of paid parking not provided in the employee contract.

Recommendation

We recommend that benefits such as paid parking be addressed within the employee contract.

Respectfully Submitted,



Robert O. Johnson, C.P.A.
Council Auditor

The following exhibits are attached to and form a part of this report:

Exhibit A - Total Expenditures by District for Fiscal Year 1997-98

Exhibit B - Total Expenditures by District for Fiscal Year 1996-97

Exhibit C - Total Expenditures by District for Fiscal Year 1995-96

**COUNCIL ACCOUNTS
TOTAL EXPENDITURES
BY DISTRICT FOR FY 1997/98**

DISTRICT	Salaries	Benefits	Telecom.	Travel & Training	Capital Outlay	Other	TOTAL
2	\$41,206.35	\$6,144.69	\$3,804.70	\$0.00	\$2,919.12	\$371.29	\$54,446.15 (3)
5	29,643.26	4,829.04	550.67	2,400.02	135.00	3,782.71	41,340.70
6	29,199.09	2,791.68	2,639.29	1,355.45	135.00	1,780.41	37,900.92
7	16,317.91	1,347.91	3,569.30	6,026.74	0.00	10,981.89 (1)	38,243.75
8	19,439.58	2,651.42	3,479.25	3,517.47	0.00	1,737.82	30,825.54
12	32,739.74	2,802.89	38.50	0.00	135.00	10,927.38 (2)	46,643.51
14	28,580.18	4,315.51	1,256.42	5,277.70	135.00	792.46	40,357.27
AL-4	32,018.81	4,984.31	1,012.35	2,515.55	135.00	578.56	41,244.58
AL-5	28,832.87	2,494.11	1,561.40	6,652.61	421.53	2,957.60	42,920.12
							<u>373,922.54</u>

(1) Includes payments of \$6,560.40 made to agency for creation and distribution of district newsletter.

(2) Includes advertising expense of \$4,942.24 and postage expense of \$2,665.86.

(3) Includes transfer of \$6,000 from District 7 for payment of bonus to Executive Assistant.

**COUNCIL ACCOUNTS
TOTAL EXPENDITURES
BY DISTRICT FOR FY 1996/97**

DISTRICT	Salaries	Benefits	Telecom.	Travel & Training	Capital Outlay	Other	TOTAL
2	\$33,747.15	\$5,719.72	\$3,694.67	\$604.00	\$352.45	705.62	\$44,823.61
5	25,049.42	3,026.64	433.69	5,016.02	0.00	1,902.07	35,427.84
6	10,961.51	779.81	948.26	0.00	0.00	1,560.77	14,250.35
7	31,876.68	5,064.21	3,221.23	3,205.50	0.00	2,058.89	45,426.51
8	15,798.45	2,219.88	3,187.28	829.30	0.00	675.52	22,710.43
12	29,623.10	2,382.07	0.00	0.00	513.92	4,208.50	36,727.59
14	9,130.74	640.87	888.57	0.00	0.00	359.87	11,020.05
AL-4	29,773.05	2,392.32	798.07	149.00	0.00	4,706.75	37,819.19
AL-5	26,567.43	2,135.04	1,524.21	4,824.03	5,291.51	2,876.74	43,218.96
							<u>291,424.53</u>

**COUNCIL ACCOUNTS
TOTAL EXPENDITURES
BY DISTRICT FOR FY 1995/96**

DISTRICT	Salaries	Benefits	Telecom.	Travel & Training	Capital Outlay	Other	TOTAL
1	\$4,441.93	\$1,245.34	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$75.30	\$5,762.57
2	1,921.66	354.55	356.68	0.00	0.00	68.62	2,701.51
7	15,384.50	1,534.14	1,936.64	1,217.56	499.99	1,779.26	22,352.09
10	4,049.25	1,379.77	56.76	0.00	0.00	197.25	5,683.03
12	12,167.27	1,096.61	0.00	144.00	0.00	929.01	14,336.89
13	3,516.90	979.64	95.12	365.00	0.00	170.30	5,126.96
14	0.00	0.00	209.76	0.00	0.00	0.00	209.76
AL-4	12,167.27	1,096.61	384.12	1,113.19	3,988.41	470.43	19,220.03
AL-5	10,000.01	934.18	337.33	3,458.19	472.88	2,419.27	17,621.86
							\$93,014.70