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800 114 Audit Finds Substantial Gentry County Violations

Grant City – An audit report was filed in November by the Missouri State Auditor's Office regarding the operations of Gentry County, Missouri.

The following are the findings of that report:

- Administrative service fee transfers from the Special Road and Bridge (SRB) Fund to the General Revenue Fund were excessive. While the actual transfers made equaled 5 percent of SRB Fund budgeted disbursements, they exceeded 5 percent of the actual disbursements by approximately \$40,000 for the 3 years ended December 31, 2007.
- Several problems were identified with the County Commission's handling of closed session meetings. The specific reason for closing a meeting is not always documented in open minutes, and minutes for some closed sessions were not taken or were not maintained. In addition, the County Commission did not document how some topics discussed in closed meetings complied with the Sunshine Law, and the final disposition of matters discussed and voted on in closed session was not always properly disclosed in open session. Procedures and records to account for capital assets are not adequate. Physical inventories are not performed annually. Records

and monitoring procedures for county vehicles and fuel are not sufficient.

- The Prosecuting Attorney frequently reduces charges on traffic tickets by requiring the defendants to make a "donation" of up to \$300 to the Gentry County Law Enforcement Restitution (GCLER) Fund as a condition of reducing the charges. Per a review of cases where defendants were required to make a donation to the GCLER Fund, we identified numerous cases of speeding, which are specifically excluded as violations where a donation can be required. Additionally, improvements are needed in the system to account for all bad check complaints received by the Prosecuting Attorney's office, as well as the subsequent disposition of these complaints. Money orders received for repayment of bad checks are not deposited but forwarded directly to the victim and documentation is not obtained from the victim to ensure payments are received. During the period of this report, Roger Combs was the Gentry County Prosecuting Attorney. Combs resigned for health reasons in early 2009. Jerry Biggs of Savannah, is currently acting as the Special Prosecuting Attorney for Gentry County, as there has been no official appointment by Governor Jay Nixon at this time.