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Financial Report

Lafourche Parish Assessor

Thibodaux, Louisiana

December 31, 1999

Under provisions of state law, this report is a public document. A copy of the report has been submitted to the entity and other appropriate public officials. The report is available for public inspection at the Baton Rouge office of the Legislative Auditor and, where appropriate, at the office of the parish clerk of court.

Release Date APR 1 9 2000

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Lafourche Parish Assessor

December 31, 1999

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FINANCIAL SECTION



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Lafourche Parish Assessor, Thibodaux, Louisiana.

We have audited the accompanying general-purpose financial statements of the Lafourche Parish Assessor (the Assessor), as of and for the year ended December 31, 1999, as listed in the table of contents. These general-purpose financial statements are the responsibility of the Assessor. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these general-purpose financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by the Assessor, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the general-purpose financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Lafourche Parish Assessor as of December 31, 1999, and the results of its operations for the year then ended in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued our report dated February 15, 2000 on our consideration of the Lafourche Parish Assessor's internal control over financial reporting and our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grants.

Certified Public Accountants.

Bourgeoir Bennett, L.L.C.

Thibodaux, La., February 15, 2000.

COMBINED BALANCE SHEET GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPE AND ACCOUNT GROUP

Lafourche Parish Assessor

December 31, 1999

	Governmental Fund Type General	Account Group General Fixed Assets	Total (Memorandum Only)
Assets			
Cash	\$ 45,248	\$ -	\$ 45,248
Investments	1,170,064	_	1,170,064
Receivables - taxes	70,730	-	70,730
Due from other governmental units	586,395	-	586,395
Deposits	1,000	-	1,000
Fixed assets		182,824	182,824
Total assets	\$ 1,873,437	\$ 182,824	\$ 2,056,261
Liabilities Accounts payable and accrued expenditures	\$ 649		\$ 649
onpondituros			<u> </u>
Equity and Other Credits			
Investment in general fixed assets	-	\$ 182,824	182,824
Fund balance - unreserved	1,872,788	-	1,872,788
Total equity and other credits	1,872,788	182,824	2,055,612
Total liabiities, equity and other credits	\$ 1,873,437	\$ 182,824	\$ 2,056,261

STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE - BUDGET AND ACTUAL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPE - GENERAL FUND

Lafourche Parish Assessor

For the year ended December 31, 1999

	Budget	Actual	Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)
Revenues			
Taxes	\$ 569,398	\$ 567,281	\$ (2,117)
Intergovernmental:			
State of Louisiana:			
State revenue sharing	58,200	58,171	(29)
Charges for services	36,902	36,902	- 4 5 1 0
Miscellaneous - interest	60,000	74,713	14,713
Total revenues	724,500	737,067	12,567
Expenditures			
Current:			
General government:			
Ad valorem tax adjustment	14,000	13,678	322
Ad valorem tax deduction	_	573	(573)
Personal services	536,025	516,225	19,800
Supplies and materials	18,700	20,875	(2,175)
Other services and charges	69,200	51,523	17,677
Repairs and maintenance	15,800	23,174	(7,374)
Capital expenditures	17,000	27,220	(10,220)
Total expenditures	670,725	653,268	17,457
Excess of Revenues Over			
Expenditures	\$ 53,775	83,799	\$ 30,024
Fund Balance			
Beginning of year		1,788,989	
End of year		\$ 1,872,788	

See notes to financial statements.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Lafourche Parish Assessor

December 31, 1999

Note 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

As provided by Article VII, Section 24 of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974, the assessors are elected by the voters of each parish, Orleans Parish excepted, and serve terms of four years. The assessors assess property, prepare tax rolls and submit the rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission as prescribed by law.

The accounting policies of the Lafourche Parish Assessor (the Assessor) conform to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) as applied to governmental units. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is the accepted standard-setting body for establishing governmental accounting and financial reporting principles. The following is a summary of significant accounting policies:

a) Reporting Entity

The Assessor for Lafourche Parish is a separately elected official and is not included as a component unit in any other financial statements. The Assessor has reviewed all of its activities and determined that there are no potential component units which should be included its financial statements.

b) Fund Accounting

The Assessor uses funds and account groups to report on its financial position and the results of its operations. Fund accounting is designed to demonstrate legal compliance and to aid financial management by segregating transactions related to certain government functions or activities,

A fund is a separate accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. An account group, on the other hand, is a financial reporting device designed to provide accountability for certain assets and liabilities that are not recorded in the funds because they do not directly affect net expendable available financial resources.

Note 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

b) Fund Accounting (Continued)

Governmental Funds

Governmental Funds are those through which the governmental functions of the Assessor are financed. The acquisition, use and balances of the Assessor's expendable financial resources and the related liabilities are accounted for through Governmental Funds. The measurement focus is upon determination of changes in financial position, rather than upon net income determination. The following is the Governmental Fund of the Assessor:

General Fund - The General Fund is the general operating fund of the Assessor. It is used to account for all financial resources except those that are required to be accounted for in another fund.

Account Group

An account group is used to establish accounting control and accountability. The Assessor's Account Group is as follows:

General Fixed Assets Account Group - This account group is used to account for fixed assets not accounted for in proprietary or trust funds.

c) Basis of Accounting

Basis of accounting refers to when revenues and expenditures are recognized in the accounts and reported in the financial statements. Basis of accounting relates to the timing of the measurements made, regardless of the measurement focus applied.

All Governmental Funds are accounted for using the modified accrual basis of accounting. Their revenues are recognized when they become measurable and available as net current assets. Ad valorem taxes and the related state revenue sharing (Intergovernmental revenue) are considered "measurable" at the time of levy. Interest income on investments is recorded when the investments have matured and the income is available. Charges for service, primarily administrative fees, are recorded when carned since they are measurable and available. Miscellaneous revenues are recorded as revenues when received in cash by the Assessor because they are generally not measurable until actually received.

Note 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

c) Basis of Accounting (Continued)

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

d) Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts and disclosures. Accordingly, actual results could differ from those estimates.

e) Operating Budgetary Data

As required by Louisiana Revised Statute 39:1303, the Assessor adopted and amended a budget for its General Fund. The budgetary practices included public notice of the proposed budget, public inspection of the proposed budget and public hearings on the budget prior to adoption. Any amendment involving the transfer of monies from one function to another or increases in expenditures must be approved by the Assessor. All budgeted amounts, which are not expended, or obligated through contracts, lapse at year end.

The General Fund budget is adopted on a basis materially consistent with generally accepted accounting principles.

f) Accounts Receivable

The financial statements for the Assessor contain no allowance for uncollectible accounts. Uncollectible amounts due for ad valorem taxes and other receivables are recognized as bad debts at the time information becomes available which would indicate the uncollectibility of the particular receivable. These amounts are not considered to be material in relation to the financial position or operation of the General Fund.

g) Investments

Investments consist of certificates of deposit, which are stated at cost and approximates market value.

Note 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

h) Fixed Assets

Fixed assets used in governmental fund type operations (fixed assets) are accounted for in the General Fixed Assets Account Group, rather than in governmental funds. The Account Group is not a fund. It is concerned only with the measurement of financial position.

It is not involved with the measurement of results of operations. Public domain ("infrastructure") fixed assets consisting of certain improvements other than building, including roads, bridges, curbs and gutters, streets and sidewalks, drainage systems and lighting systems, are not capitalized along with other fixed assets. No depreciation has been provided on fixed assets. All fixed assets are valued at historical cost.

i) Vacation and Sick Leave

Employees are entitled to two weeks of non-cumulative vacation and sick leave each year after one year of employment. Leave for extended hospital confinements may be granted at the discretion of the Assessor.

j) Encumbrances

Encumbrance accounting, under which purchase orders, contracts and other commitments are recorded in the fund general ledgers, is not utilized by the Assessor.

k) Memorandum Only - Total Column

The total column on the combined balance sheet is captioned "Memorandum Only" because it does not represent consolidated financial information and is presented only to facilitate financial analysis. The column does not present information that reflects financial position or results of operations in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Interfund eliminations have not been made in the aggregation of this data.

Note 2 - DEPOSITS

Louisiana state law allows all political subdivisions to invest excess funds in obligations of the United States, certificates of deposit of state or national banks having their principal office in Louisiana or any other federally insured investment.

State law requires deposits (cash and certificates of deposit) of all political subdivisions to be fully collateralized at all times. Acceptable collateralization includes FDIC insurance and the market value of securities purchased and pledged to the political subdivision. Obligations of the United States, the State of Louisiana and certain political subdivisions are allowed as security for deposits. Obligations furnished as security must be held by the political subdivision or with an unaffiliated bank or trust company for the account of the political subdivision.

Cash and deposits are categorized into three categories of credit risk.

Category 1 includes deposits covered by federal depository insurance or by collateral held by the Assessor or its agent in the Assessor's name.

Category 2 includes deposits covered by collateral held by the pledging financial institution's trust department or its agent in the Assessor's name.

Category 3 includes deposits covered by collateral held by the pledging financial institution or its trust department or agent but not in the Assessor's name and deposits which are uninsured or uncollateralized.

The year end bank balances of deposits and the carrying amount as shown on the combined balance sheet are as follows:

	Bar	nk Balan	ces	
		Categor	У	Book
	1	2	3	Balance
Cash	\$ 55,235	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 45,248
Investments: Certificates of deposit	500,000		670,064	1,170,064
Totals	\$555 , 235	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$670,064</u>	\$1,215,312

Note 2 - DEPOSITS (Continued)

At December 31, 1999, certificates of deposit in excess of the FDIC insurance were collateralized by securities held by unaffiliated banks for the account of the Assessor. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), which promulgates the standards for accounting and financial reporting for state and local governments, considers these securities uncollateralized. Even though the pledged securities are considered uncollateralized under the provisions of GASB Statement 3, Louisiana Revised Statute 39:1229 imposes a statutory requirement on the custodial bank to advertise and sell the pledged securities within 10 days of being notified by the depositor that the fiscal agent has failed to pay deposited funds upon demand.

Note 3 - PROPERTY TAXES

Property taxes are levied each November 1 on the assessed value listed as of the prior January 1 for all real property, merchandise and movable property located in the Parish. Assessed values are established by the Lafourche Parish Assessor's Office and the State Tax Commission at percentages of actual value as specified by Louisiana law. A reevaluation of all property is required to be completed no less than every four years. The last reevaluation was completed for the list of January 1, 1996. Taxes are due and payable December 31 with interest being charged on payments after January 1. Taxes can be paid through the tax sale date, which is the last Wednesday in June. Properties for which the taxes have not been paid are sold for the amount of the taxes. The tax rate for the year ended December 31, 1999 was \$2.09 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation on property within Lafourche Parish for the purpose of assessing property, preparing tax rolls and submitting the rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission.

Note 4 - DUE FROM OTHER GOVERNMENTAL UNITS

Amounts due from other governmental units at December 31, 1999 consisted of the following:

State of Louisiana - State Revenue Sharing	\$ 58,171
Lafourche Parish Tax Collector - December, 1999 collections remitted to the Assessor in January, 2000:	
Ad valorem taxes	491,322
Charges for services	35,402
City of Thibodaux	1,500
Total	\$586,395

Note 4 - DUE FROM OTHER GOVERNMENTAL UNITS (Continued)

The amount due from the City of Thibodaux consists of the Assessor's fee for preparation of the City of Thibodaux's 1999 tax roll.

Note 5 - CHANGES IN FIXED ASSETS

A summary of changes in fixed assets follows:

	Balance January 1, 1999	Additions	Deletions	Balance December 31, 1999
Automobiles Office furniture and equipment	\$ 25,511 134,538	\$ _27,220	\$ _4,445	\$ 25,511 _157,313
Totals	\$160,049	\$27 <u>,220</u>	<u>\$4,445</u>	\$182,824

Note 6 - DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLAN

Plan Description - The Assessor contributes to the Louisiana Assessors' Retirement Fund (System), a cost-sharing multiple-employer defined benefit public employee retirement system (PERS), which is controlled and administered by a separate Board of Trustees. The System provides retirement, deferred and disability benefits, survivor's benefits and cost of living adjustments to plan members and beneficiaries. Act 91 of the 1950 Louisiana Legislative Session established the plan. Provisions of the plan are set forth in the Louisiana Revised Statutes 11:1401 through 11:1483. The System issues a publicly available financial report that includes financial statements and required supplementary information for the System. That report may be obtained by writing to Louisiana Assessors' Retirement Fund, P.O. Box 1786, Shreveport, Louisiana 71166-1786.

Funding Policy - Plan members are required to contribute 7.00% of their annual salary and the Assessor is required to contribute at an actuarially determined rate. The rate used during 1999 was 5.75% of eligible payroll. In addition, the fund receives .25% of the taxes shown to be collected on the tax rolls of each parish excluding Orleans and revenue sharing funds as appropriated each year by the legislature. The Assessor's contributions to the System for the years ending December 31, 1999, 1998 and 1997 were \$22,348, \$19,357 and \$17,439, respectively, equal to the required contributions for each year.

Note 7 - LEASE COMMITMENTS

The Assessor has entered into operating lease agreements for two vehicles with monthly payments of \$492 and \$490, respectively. The lease agreements are for 36 months each and expire February 17, 2000 and January 16, 2002 with residual values on the vehicles of \$16,298 and \$12,174, respectively.

Rental expense incurred on the leases for the year ended December 31, 1999 was \$11,805. The future minimum lease payments are as follows:

Year	Amount
2000 2001	\$ 5,877 5,877
Total	\$11,754

Note 8 - RISK MANAGEMENT

The Assessor is exposed to various risks of loss related to workers' compensation; torts; theft of, damage to and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; and natural disasters for which the Assessor carries commercial insurance. No settlements were made during the year that exceeded the Assessor's insurance coverage.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION SECTION



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To the Lafourche Parish Assessor, Thibodaux, Louisiana.

Our report on our audit of the general-purpose financial statements of the Lafourche Parish Assessor (the Assessor) for the year ended December 31, 1999, appears on page 1. That audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on such financial statements taken as a whole. The information contained in the schedule of revenues and expenditures and graphs of revenues and expenditures for the year ended December 31, 1999 is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the general-purpose financial statements. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the general-purpose financial statements and, in our opinion, is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the general-purpose financial statements for the year ended December 31, 1999, taken as a whole.

We also have previously audited, in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in <u>Government Auditing Standards</u>, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the balance sheets of the Lafourche Parish Assessor as of December 31, 1998 and 1997, and the related statements of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance for each of the two years in the period ended December 31, 1998 (none of which is presented herein), and we expressed unqualified opinions on those financial statements. In our opinion, the information presented in the schedule of revenues and expenditures and graphs of revenues and expenditures for the years ended December 31, 1998 and 1997 is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the general-purpose financial statements from which it has been derived.

Bourgeoir Bennett, L.L.C.

Certified Public Accountants.

Thibodaux, La., February 15, 2000.

SCHEDULE OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

Lafourche Parish Assessor

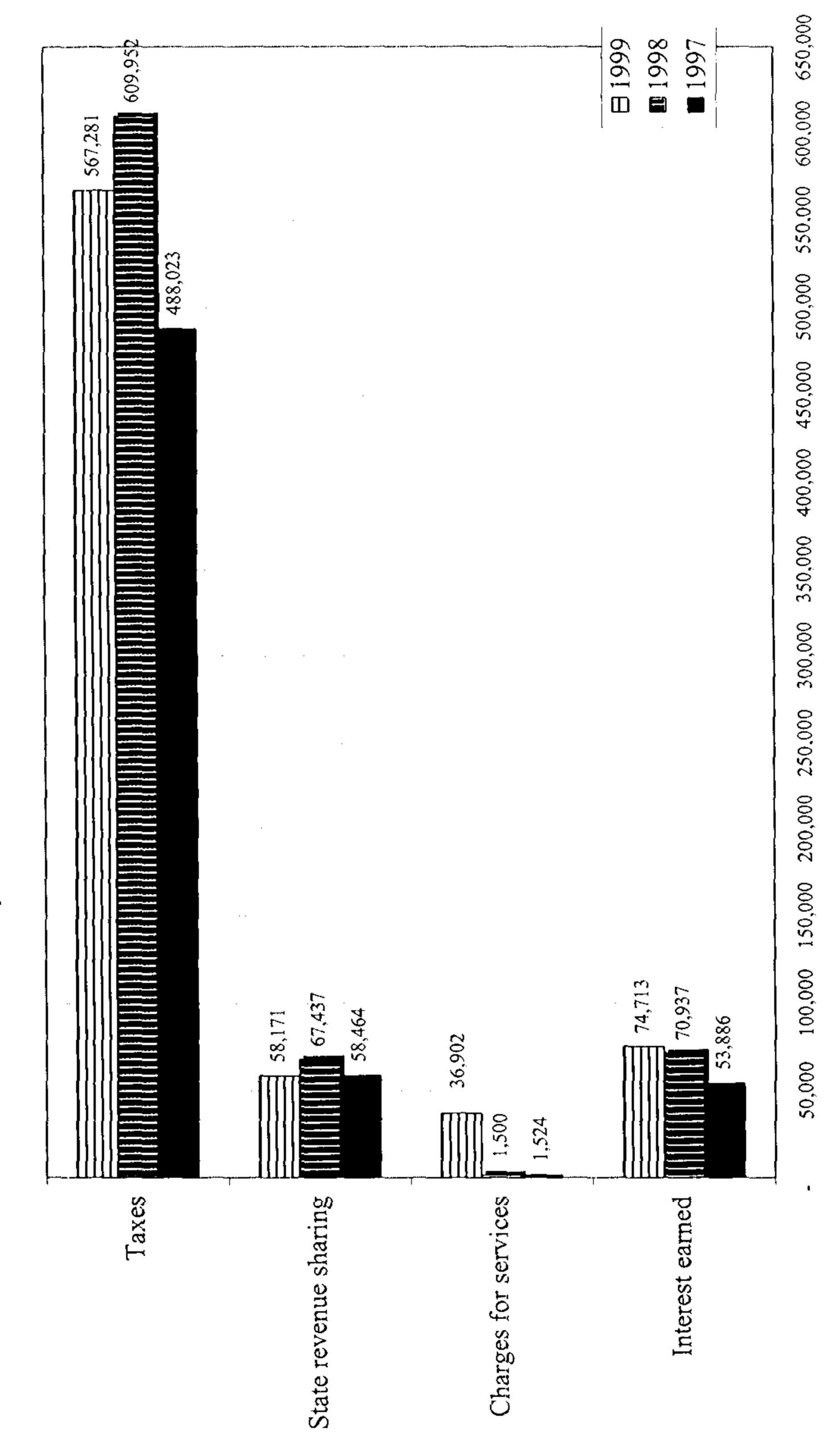
For the years ended December 31, 1999, 1998 and 1997

	1999	1998	1997
Revenues			
Taxes	\$ 567,281	\$ 609,952	\$ 488,023
State revenue sharing	58,171	67,437	58,464
Charges for services	36,902	1,500	1,524
Interest earned	74,713	70,937	53,886
Total revenues	\$ 737,067	\$ 749,826	\$ 601,897
Expenditures			
Ad valorem tax adjustment	\$ 13,678	\$ 6,706	\$ 8,563
Ad valorem tax deduction	573	-	•
Personal services	516,225	459,299	425,657
Supplies and materials	20,875	18,843	17,248
Other services and charges	51,523	45,063	42,260
Repairs and maintenance	23,174	11,400	10,983
Capital expenditures	27,220	41,735	7,562
Total expenditures	\$ 653,268	\$ 583,046	\$ 512,273

REVENUES

Lafourche Parish Assessor

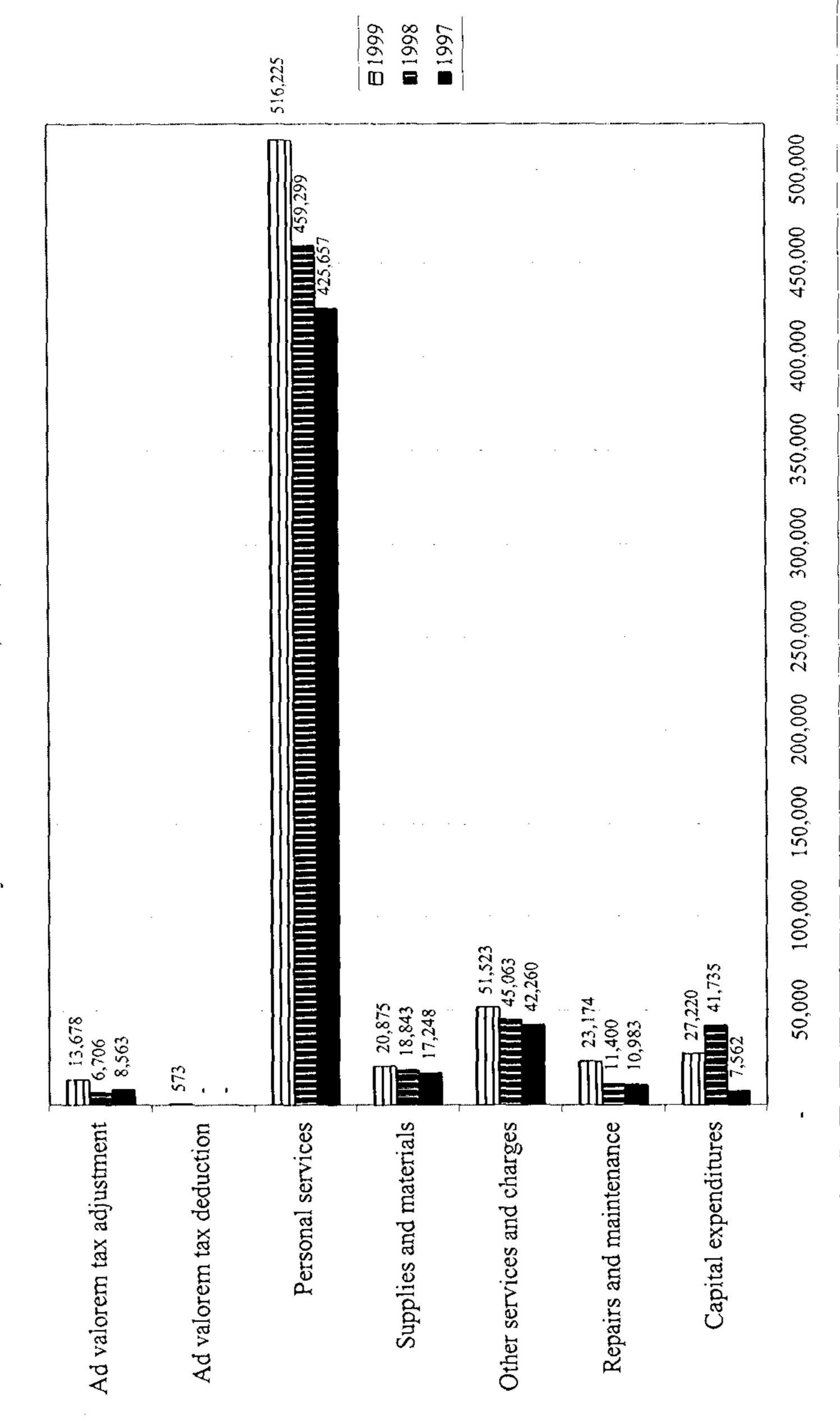
For the years ended December 31, 1999, 1998 and 1997



EXPENDITURES

Lafourche Parish Assessor

For the years ended December 31, 1999, 1998 and 1997



SPECIAL REPORTS OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS



REPORT ON COMPLIANCE AND ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING BASED ON AN AUDIT OF GENERAL-PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS

To the Lafourche Parish Assessor, Thibodaux, Louisiana.

We have audited the general-purpose financial statements of the Lafourche Parish Assessor (the Assessor), as of and for the year ended December 31, 1999, and have issued our report thereon dated February 15, 2000. We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Compliance

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Assessor's general-purpose financial statements are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grants, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. 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 that are required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit, we considered the Assessor's internal control over financial reporting in order to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the general-purpose financial statements and not to provide assurance on the internal control over financial reporting. However, we noted a certain matter involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operation that we consider to be a reportable condition. Reportable conditions involve matters coming to our attention relating to significant deficiencies in the design or operation of the internal control over financial reporting that, in our judgment, could adversely affect the Assessor's ability to record, process, summarize and report financial data consistent with the assertions of management in the financial statements. The reportable condition is described in the Schedule of Findings as item 99-1.

A material weakness is a condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial statements being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions. Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control that might be reportable conditions and, accordingly, would not necessarily disclose all reportable conditions that are also considered to be material weaknesses. However, we believe the reportable condition described above is not a material weakness.

This report is intended for the information of the Assessor, the State of Louisiana 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.

Certified Public Accountants.

Bourgeoir Bennett, L.L.C.

Thibodaux, La., February 15, 2000.

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS

Lafourche Parish Assessor

For the year ended December 31, 1999

S

ection	I Summary of Auditor's Results		
a) Fir	nancial Statements		
Ty	pe of auditor's report issued: unqualified		
]	Internal control over financial reporting:		
	 Material weakness(es) identified? Reportable condition(s) identified that are not considered to be material weaknesses? 		no none reported
•	Noncompliance material to financial statements noted?	yes	_X_ no
b) Fe	deral Awards		
	e Lafourche Parish Assessor did not receive federa	ıl awards du	ring the year ended
ection	II Financial Statement Findings		
99-1	Criteria - The internal control structure should be segregation of duties to provide reasonable assuran properly recorded in the accounting records.	~	•
	Condition - All accounting functions of the Assess Assessor. The Assessor also signs all checks.	sor's office a	re performed by the
	Questioned Costs - None		
	Context - Not applicable		

irregularities and fraud not being detected in a timely manner.

Effect - A weak system of internal controls over financial reporting may result in errors,

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS (Continued)

Lafourche Parish Assessor

For the year ended December 31, 1999

Section II Financial Statement Findings (Continued)

99-1 (Continued)

Cause - The Assessor performs all accounting functions.

Recommendation - The Assessor should consider having other personnel involved in the accounting functions.

Views of Responsible Officials of the Auditee when there is a Disagreement with the Finding, to the Extent Practical - None

Section III Federal Award Findings and Questioned Costs

Not applicable.

REPORTS BY MANAGEMENT

SCHEDULE OF PRIOR YEAR FINDINGS

Lafourche Parish Assessor

For the year ended December 31, 1999

Section I Internal Control and Compliance Material to the General-Purpose Financial Statements

Internal Control

No material weaknesses were reported during the audit for the year ended December 31, 1998.

98 - 1 Recommendation - The Assessor should consider having other personnel involved in the accounting functions.

Management's Response - The Assessor's office has neither the qualified personnel nor the funds to hire additional personnel to assist in the accounting functions. Unresolved, see finding 99-1.

Compliance

No compliance findings material to the general-purpose financial statements were noted during the audit for the year ended December 31, 1998.

Section II Internal Control and Compliance Material to Federal Awards

The Lafourche Parish Assessor did not receive federal awards during the year ended December 31, 1998.

Section III Management Letter

A management letter was not issued in connection with the audit for the year ended December 31, 1998.

MANAGEMENT'S CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

Lafourche Parish Assessor

For the year ended December 31, 1999

Section I Internal Control and Compliance Material to the General-Purpose Financial Statements

Internal Control

No material weaknesses were reported during the audit for the year ended December 31, 1999.

99 - 1 Recommendation - The Assessor should consider having other personnel involved in the accounting functions.

Management's Response - The Assessor's office has neither the qualified personnel nor the funds to hire additional personnel to assist in the accounting functions.

Compliance

No compliance findings material to the general-purpose financial statements were noted during the audit for the year ended December 31, 1999.

Section II Internal Control and Compliance Material to Federal Awards

The Lafourche Parish Assessor did not receive federal awards during the year ended December 31, 1999.

Section III Management Letter

A management letter was not issued in connection with the audit for the year ended December 31, 1999.