



**Jason E. Mumpower, Comptroller of the Treasury**

*November 15, 2023*

## **Hancock County Leaders Must Commit to Fixing Problems**

The annual audit of Hancock County for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2023 includes 10 findings of noncompliance or deficiencies within county government offices.

The Tennessee Comptroller's audit report notes that four of the 10 findings were also reported last year but had not been corrected. Importantly, auditors could not find documented evidence that Hancock County's Audit Committee met in fiscal year 2023. This committee should be providing oversight, reviewing various risks, and working to correct audit issues.

Some of the findings within the new report show that Hancock County had expenditures that exceeded the appropriations approved by the county commission; purchasing deficiencies; and accounting deficiencies.

Auditors also noted the county mayor had a direct conflict of interest due to the county's payment of \$4,800 to his spouse for rent payments on the Hancock County Soil Conservation District Office. The County Mayor and his spouse own the building. These payments violate the state conflict of interest statute.

In addition to the findings related to the Office of County Mayor, auditors also noted findings for the Office of Director of Schools, and the Office of Sheriff.

"The number of findings in Hancock County has exceeded the state average for many years," said Comptroller Mumpower. "It's time for the county's elected leaders and officials to dedicate themselves to resolving audit issues. I also encourage the Audit Committee to hold regular meetings to provide oversight and accountability."

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