

FINANCIAL SECTION



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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Charleston County Council
County of Charleston, South Carolina

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinions

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information, other than the financial statements of the aggregate discretely presented component units, and the budgetary comparison schedule of the general fund of the County of Charleston, South Carolina (the "County"), as of and for the year ended June 30, 2023, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the County's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents. We have also audited the financial statements of each of the County's non-major governmental, enterprise, internal service, and fiduciary funds (custodial funds), and the respective budgetary comparison schedules for the special revenue funds, presented as supplementary information in the accompanying combining financial statements and schedules, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2023, as listed in the table of contents.

In our opinion, based upon our audit and the reports of other auditors, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, the aggregate discretely presented component units, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the County as of June 30, 2023, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows thereof and the budgetary comparison schedule for the general fund for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. In addition, in our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of each non-major governmental, enterprise, internal service, and fiduciary funds (custodial funds) of the County as of June 30, 2023, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows thereof and the respective budgetary comparison schedules for the special revenue funds, for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

We did not audit the financial statements of the aggregate presented component units, which represent 100 percent, of all the assets, net position, and revenues of the aggregate discretely presented component units as of June 30, 2023, and the respective changes in financial position for the year then ended. Those statements were audited by other auditors whose reports have been furnished to us, and our opinion, insofar as it relates to the amounts included for aggregate discretely presented component units of Charleston County, South Carolina, is based solely on the report of the other auditors.

Basis for Opinions

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the County and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Responsibility of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the County's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards*, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the County's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the County's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the Management's Discussion and Analysis, Schedule of Changes in the County's Total OPEB Liability and Related Ratios, Budgetary Comparison Schedule – General Fund, Notes to Budgetary Comparison Schedule, Schedule of the County's Contributions – Pension, and Schedule of the County's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability, as listed in the table of contents, be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our

inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise the County's basic financial statements. The victim notification schedule of fines, assessments, and surcharges collected as well as the schedules of capital assets used in the operation of governmental funds, as listed in the table of contents, are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements.

The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements or to the basic financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the victim notification schedule of fines, assessments, and surcharges collected as well as the schedules of capital assets used in the operation of governmental funds are fairly stated, in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information comprises the introductory and statistical sections, as listed in the table of contents, but does not include the basic financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinions on the basic financial statements do not cover the other information, and we do not express an opinion or any form of assurance thereon.

In connection with our audit of the basic financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and consider whether a material inconsistency exists between the other information and the basic financial statements, or the other information otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work performed, we conclude that an uncorrected material misstatement of the other information exists, we are required to describe it in our report.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated December 20, 2023, on our consideration of the County's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the County's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Emphasis of Matter

As discussed in Note 18., to the financial statements, the County has adopted the provisions of GASB Statement No. 96, *Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITAs)*, as of July 1, 2022. Our opinions are not modified with respect to this matter.



Columbia, South Carolina
December 20, 2023