



**Jefferson Parish Office of Inspector General**



# **Inspector General Report**

**March 2024**

**Kim Raines Chatelain, Inspector General**

**INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT  
TO THE ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE COMMISSION  
Wednesday, March 27, 2024**

**I. JPOIG Operations**

- A. Budget
  - 1. Budget to actual report through 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter will be presented at our next ECC meeting.
  
- B. Compliance
  - 1. UPDATE: Status of proposed amendments to the Inspector General ordinance, presentation of Digest and proposed motion provided to Council.
  
- C. Procurement

None.
  
- D. Recruitment and retention

Hailey L. Lovell joined the office in February 5, 2024. She is from Marrero. She received a B.S. in Accounting from the University of Holy Cross, and she is currently a candidate for a Master of Science in Accounting from the University of New Orleans.



- E. Professional Development

None.

## II. JPOIG Reports

| JPOIG      | Type  | Description        | Draft(s)   | Published  |
|------------|-------|--------------------|------------|------------|
| #2022-0029 | Audit | Marrero Harvey VFC | 10/17/2023 | 01/18/2024 |
| #2022-2024 | Audit | Live Oak VFC       | 11/20/2023 | 02/01/2024 |



February 1, 2024

### Why We Did This Audit

The purpose of the audit was to determine if the Live Oak Manor Volunteer Fire Company's (LOM VFC) internal controls were properly designed and implemented effectively to ensure that funds were spent in accordance with governing laws and the fire district millage restrictions. The JPOIG also assessed the LOM VFC's compliance with the Fire Protection Agreement. The scope period was 01/01/2021 through 12/31/2021 and included all public fund expenditures during that period.

### What We Recommend

LOM VFC should revise their:

- length of service policy and discontinue using public funds for bonuses.
- payroll policy so that all employees and supervisors document their approval on their timesheets.
- expenditure policy and require that purchases be approved and documented prior to purchasing.
- fuel purchase policy to be consistent with the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's Best Practices.

The LOM VFC should also transfer titles of the vehicles worth \$181,500 to District 7, locate the missing titles, and submit an annual vehicle inventory to the OFS.

### What We Found

The audit identified payments that may violate the Louisiana Constitution and/or the Fire Protection Agreement. The LOM VFC paid \$4,230 in bonuses to full-time employees. The audit also revealed the LOM VFC did not comply with the Parish Fire Protection Agreement:

- ❖ The LOM VFC did not submit a current vehicle inventory report to the Office of Fire Services (OFS).
- ❖ The LOM VFC did not title vehicles worth \$181,500 to District 7. No title documentation was maintained for vehicles worth \$303,500. Without proper titles, \$485,000 in vehicles purchased with District 7 funds could be sold, donated or disposed without knowledge or notice to the Parish.

The audit also revealed numerous areas that lacked basic internal controls over payroll, expenditures, vehicles, and fuel:

- ❖ The LOM VFC lacked internal controls over payroll because none of the 55 timecards tested contained evidence of the employee signing the timecard attesting to their hours worked. Employees could be paid for hours not worked, and/or it could result in erroneous payroll satisfied with public funds.
- ❖ The LOM VFC lacked basic expenditure controls which could result in unauthorized or unlawful expenditures. The JPOIG noted that of the 25 expenditures tested:
  - Twenty-three of the expenditures (totaling \$67,833) did not contain evidence of the required written approval by a board member prior to purchase.
  - Employees did not put accurate odometer readings in the fuel management system which could result in fuel being dispensed for personal or unauthorized purposes.

Overall, the audit identified \$687,911 in Funds-At-Risk. These are funds that could be lost, misappropriated, and/or misspent due to error or fraud.

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# JPOIG Overview

Marrero-Harvey Volunteer Fire Company #2022-0029

## What We Found

January 18, 2024

### Why We Did This Audit

The purpose of the audit was to determine if the Marrero-Harvey Volunteer Fire Company's (MH VFC) internal controls were properly designed and implemented effectively to ensure that funds were spent in accordance with governing laws and the fire district millage restrictions. The JPOIG also assessed the MH VFC's compliance with the Fire Protection Agreement. The scope period was 01/01/2021 through 12/31/2021 and included all public fund expenditures during that period.

### What We Recommend

The MH VFC should:

- gain an understanding of its policies and procedures, the Louisiana Constitution, and the Fire Protection Agreement.
- improve its internal controls over (1) cash; (2) operating expenditures and budgeting; (3) payroll; (4) fuel expenditures, and (5) vehicles.

The MH VFC should also: (1) develop a policy that requires the Fire Chief to submit vehicle listing reports to the OFS; (2) record necessary information to determine fuel usage in their fuel storage tank; (3) transfer title of the vehicles worth \$3,160,437 to District 8; and (4) prepare annual budgets in accordance with the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's best practices.

The audit identified payments that may violate the Louisiana Constitution and/or the Fire Protection Agreement. The MH VFC paid \$21,200 in bonuses to full-time employees.

The audit also revealed numerous areas that lacked basic internal controls over payroll, fuel, and expenditures:

- ❖ The MH VFC lacked internal controls over payroll that resulted in inaccurate payroll totaling \$1,094.
- ❖ The MH VFC did not prepare a budget with adequate information and lacked basic expenditure controls which could result in unauthorized or unlawful expenditures. The JPOIG noted that of the 41 expenditures tested:
  - 34 expenditures, totaling \$160,193, did not contain written approval prior to purchase.
  - 39 expenditures, totaling \$196,701, did not contain a documented signature on the invoice indicating board approval after the purchase.
- ❖ The MH VFC did not design nor implement proper internal controls over fuel transactions because the MH VFC did not consistently record odometer readings in the fuel pump systems or when they filled up vehicles from the storage tank. This could result in firefighters dispensing fuel for personal or unauthorized purposes.

The audit also revealed the MH VFC was not complying with the Parish Fire Protection Agreement's terms regarding vehicles and inventory:

- ❖ The MH VFC did not submit a current vehicle inventory report to the Office of Fire Services (OFS).
- ❖ The MH VFC did not title vehicles worth \$3,160,437 to District 8.

Vehicles purchased with District 8 funds could be sold, donated or disposed without knowledge or notice to the Parish.

On a positive note, the MH VFC maintained an accurate inventory of vehicles and prepared/reviewed their bank reconciliations properly.

Both the Parish, through the Parish President, and MH VFC responded to the JPOIG report. The Parish did not agree with our findings. However, the MH VFC agreed to several findings.

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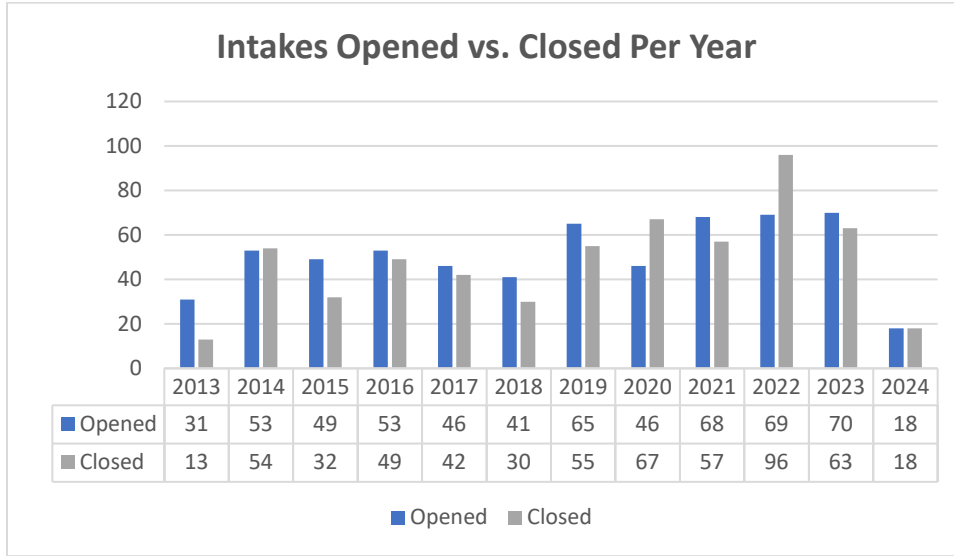


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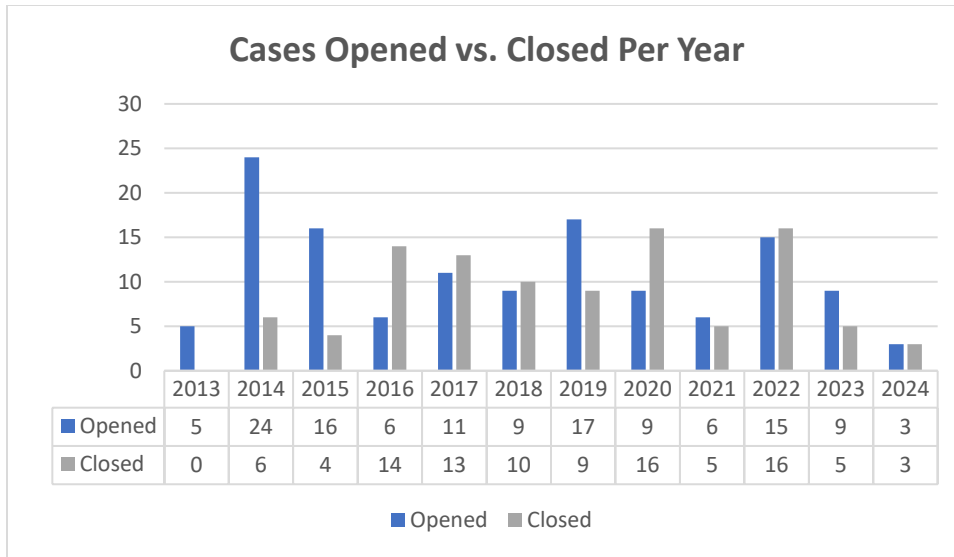


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### III. Milestones



| 1/12/2024 through 3/24/2024 |                             |                |                        |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Intakes Opened              | Date Complaint was Received | Intakes Closed | Date Intake was Closed |
| 2024-000000007              | 1/13/2024                   | 2021-000000042 | 3/5/2024               |
| 2024-000000008              | 1/15/2024                   | 2022-000000054 | 3/15/2024              |
| 2024-000000009              | 1/16/2024                   | 2023-000000041 | 3/5/2024               |
| 2024-000000010              | 1/19/2024                   | 2023-000000062 | 2/29/2024              |
| 2024-000000011              | 1/23/2024                   | 2023-000000064 | 3/5/2024               |
| 2024-000000012              | 1/30/2024                   | 2023-000000066 | 1/22/2024              |
| 2024-000000013              | 1/25/2024                   | 2023-000000068 | 1/22/2024              |
| 2024-000000014              | 1/31/2024                   | 2023-000000070 | 2/29/2024              |
| 2024-000000015              | 2/6/2024                    | 2024-000000001 | 3/5/2024               |
| 2024-000000016              | 2/6/2024                    | 2024-000000003 | 1/22/2024              |
| 2024-000000017              | 3/4/2024                    | 2024-000000004 | 1/22/2024              |
| 2024-000000018              | 3/4/2024                    | 2024-000000006 | 1/22/2024              |
|                             |                             | 2024-000000009 | 3/5/2024               |
|                             |                             | 2024-000000010 | 1/22/2024              |
|                             |                             | 2024-000000011 | 2/29/2024              |
|                             |                             | 2024-000000016 | 3/1/2024               |
|                             |                             | 2024-000000017 | 3/15/2024              |
|                             |                             | 2024-000000018 | 3/15/2024              |



| 1/12/2024 through 3/24/2024 |                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Cases Closed                | Date Case was Closed |
| 2018-000000013              | 1/22/2024            |
| 2022-000000029              | 2/28/2024            |
| 2023-000000001              | 2/29/2024            |

#### IV. Audits

| JPOIG #                   | Description  | Planning | Field Work | Report/ Review | Draft Report | Non-Parish Draft | Public |
|---------------------------|--|----------|------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|--------|
| <i>Follow-up Audits</i>   |  |          |            |                |              |                  |        |
| <i>Audits</i>             |  |          |            |                |              |                  |        |
| 2023-0006                 | East Bank Consolidated Fire (Payroll-Sick Leave)             |          |            |                |              |                  |        |
| <i>Examination/Review</i> |  |          |            |                |              |                  |        |
| 2024-0001                 | Jefferson Facilities, Inc. and Jefferson Redevelopment, Inc. |          |            |                |              |                  |        |

**V. Evaluations/Inspections**

| JPOIG #   | Description                             | Planning | Field Work | Report/ Review | Draft Report | Non-Parish Draft | Public |
|-----------|---|----------|------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|--------|
| 2021-0019 | VFC and EBCFC Drug Policies and Testing |          |            |                |              |                  |        |
| 2022-0020 | Personnel: Classified Service           |          |            |                |              |                  |        |
| 2024-0002 | West Jefferson Medical Center           |          |            |                |              |                  |        |

**VI. Investigations**

| <b>Investigations (As of 3/24/2024)</b> |    |
|---|----|
| Open Intakes:                           | 33 |
| Open Cases:                             | 22 |

**VII. Implementation of Recommendations/Findings Tracker**

Previously, we reported that we will be deploying a Findings Tracker. Deploying as a Findings Tracker is our best option for capturing important historical data, while focusing on resolution of Findings going forward. We are in our final stages of integrating and validating data which has been related to individual cases in our Case Management System and validated across the following fields:

- Individual findings
- Status of individual findings
- Costs association with individual findings
- Individual recommendations
- Total recommendations per case
- Total responses per case
- Total costs associated per case

We hope to have this ready to deploy in the first half of 2024.

## VIII. Public outreach and engagement

### Grand Isle firefighter facing payroll fraud accusations formally charged

Share    **WDSU 6** Updated: 7:25 PM CDT Mar 14, 2024




Infinite Scroll Enabled 

 **Aubry Killion**     
Investigative Reporter



## IX. Social Media

The status for social media is presented below for the period 1/12/2024-3/24/2024, with engagement since last ECC meeting on 01/17/2024.

| Social Media Platform  | Engagement   |
|--|--|
| <b>Facebook</b><br>719 Total Followers<br>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gained 13 Followers</li> <li>• 9 Posts/Re-Posts</li> <li>• Reached a total of 1,742 viewers across app posts</li> <li>• Page Visits: 542</li> </ul> |
| <b>Twitter</b><br>142 Total Followers<br>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gained 23 Followers</li> <li>• 5 Tweets</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Linked-In</b><br>288 Total Followers<br> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gained 8 Followers</li> <li>• 4 Posts/Reposts</li> <li>• 1,493 Post Impressions</li> </ul>  |



## **REPORT FRAUD, WASTE, OR ABUSE**

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Call our tip line at (504) 528-4444

### **BY MAIL:**

990 N. Corporate Drive, Suite 300  
Jefferson, LA 70123

### **IN PERSON:**

Contact us at (504) 736-8962 to schedule an appointment

## **JPOIG Social Media**



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**990 N. Corporate Drive Suite 300**

**Jefferson, LA 70123**

**Phone (504) 736-8962**