PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED
DECEMBER 31, 2023

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

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INTRODUCTORY SECTION

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

PRINCIPAL COUNTY OFFICIALS
DECEMBER 31, 2023

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Neal Bennett, Commission Chairman
Troy Mattox, Commissioner
Graham Raley, Commissioner
Randy Dixon, Commissioner
David Lowman, Commissioner

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Ramsey Bennett – Sheriff
Melissa Howard – Clerk of Courts
Moye Howard – Probate Judge
Nicole Scurry – Tax Commissioner
Shelly Herndon – Magistrate Court Judge
William Wilson - Coroner

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

Raphel Maddox – County Manager
Lana Blankenship – Finance Officer

DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS

Bruce Carter – Road Superintendent
Chris Bond – Facilities, Buildings, & Codes Director
Bill Rozier – Chief Appraiser
Daniel Royal – EMS Director
Chris Todd – Fire/EMA Director
Maureen Brown – Parks & Recreation Director

FINANCIAL SECTION

MAULDIN & JENKINS
CPAs & ADVISORS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Board of Commissioners
of Pierce County, Georgia
Blackshear, Georgia

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinions

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, business-type activities, the discretely presented component unit, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of **Pierce County, Georgia** (the "County"), as of and for the year ended December 31, 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.

In our opinion, based on our audit and the report of the other auditors, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, business-type activities, the discretely presented component unit, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the County, as of December 31, 2023, and the respective changes in financial position, and, where applicable, cash flows thereof, and the budgetary comparisons for the General Fund and the Recreation Fund, for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

We did not audit the financial statements of the Pierce County Health Department (the "Health Department"), a discretely presented component unit, which represents 100% of the assets, net position and revenues of the discretely presented component unit as of December 31, 2023, and the respective changes in financial position for the year then ended. Those statements were audited by other auditors whose report has been furnished to us, and our opinions, insofar as it relates to the amounts included for the Health Department, are 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.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for 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 Responsibilities 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

Management has omitted the Management's Discussion and Analysis that accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require to be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such missing information, 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 the financial reports for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic or historical context. Our opinions on the basic financial statements are not affected by this missing information.

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 Combining and Individual Nonmajor Fund Statements and Schedules, the accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards as required by Title 2 *U.S. Code of Federal Regulations* Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*, and the Schedules of Expenditures of Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax ("SPLOST") Proceeds as required by the Official Code of Georgia Annotated §48-8-121 are presented for the purpose of additional analysis and are not required parts 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 Combining and Individual Nonmajor Fund Statements and Schedules, the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards, and the Schedules of Expenditures of Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax Proceeds are fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the basic 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 section, 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 any 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 May 1, 2025 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 solely 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 the effectiveness of the County's 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 Pierce County, Georgia's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC

Savannah, Georgia
May 1, 2025

BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

STATEMENT OF NET POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Primary Government			Component Unit
	Governmental Activities	Business-Type Activities	Total	Health Department
ASSETS				
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 15,408,427	$ 160,999	$ 15,569,426	$ 503,688
Taxes receivable, net	5,477,896	-	5,477,896	-
Accounts receivable, net	599,734	6,300	606,034	-
Due from other governments	270,265	-	270,265	272,692
Inventory	11,100	-	11,100	-
Prepaid items	92,899	-	92,899	-
Capital assets, non-depreciable	2,090,912	656,311	2,747,223	-
Capital assets, depreciable, net of accumulated depreciation	31,255,430	478,835	31,734,265	48,318
Total assets	55,206,663	1,302,445	56,509,108	824,698
DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES				
Pension	-	-	-	371,613
OPEB	-	-	-	68,433
Total deferred outflows of resources	-	-	-	440,046
LIABILITIES				
Accounts payable	320,960	9,269	330,229	-
Accrued liabilities	1,157,225	1,825	1,159,050	-
Unearned revenues	2,394,734	-	2,394,734	-
Compensated absences due within one year	181,608	-	181,608	5,582
Compensated absences due in more than one year	-	-	-	22,330
Notes payable due within one year	-	42,584	42,584	-
Notes payable due in more than one year	190,171	193,175	383,346	-
Financed purchases due within one year	108,010	-	108,010	-
Financed purchases due in more than one year	438,251	-	438,251	-
Leases due within one year	111,598	-	111,598	-
Leases due in more than one year	331,267	-	331,267	-
Net pension liability	-	-	-	822,319
Net OPEB liability	-	-	-	18,152
Total liabilities	5,233,824	246,853	5,480,677	868,383
DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES				
Pension	-	-	-	14,975
OPEB	-	-	-	63,983
Total deferred inflows of resources	-	-	-	78,958
NET POSITION				
Net investment in capital assets	32,609,910	899,387	33,509,297	48,318
Restricted for:				
Capital projects	3,844,277	156,205	4,000,482	-
Judicial	32,801	-	32,801	-
Public safety	101,958	-	101,958	289,284
Unrestricted	13,383,893	-	13,383,893	(20,199)
Total net position	$ 49,972,839	$ 1,055,592	$ 51,028,431	$ 317,403

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

Functions/Programs	Expenses	Program Revenues: Charges for Services	Program Revenues: Operating Grants and Contributions	Program Revenues: Capital Grants and Contributions
Primary government				
Governmental activities:				
General government	$ 2,336,707	$ 418,951	$ 77,258	$ -
Judicial	1,606,965	462,209	-	-
Public safety	7,215,767	1,449,430	-	-
Public works	6,187,513	-	-	952,703
Health and welfare	521,325	-	-	-
Community development	1,039,097	173,285	-	-
Interest on long-term debt	23,382	-	-	-
Total governmental activities	18,930,756	2,503,875	77,258	952,703
Business-type activities:				
Industrial Dev. Auth.	218,451	72,303	-	-
Total business-type activities	218,451	72,303	-	-
Total primary government	$ 19,149,207	$ 2,576,178	$ 77,258	$ 952,703
Component unit				
Board of Health	$ 853,246	$ 289,791	$ 475,563	$ -
Total component unit	$ 853,246	$ 289,791	$ 475,563	$ -
		General revenues:		
		Property taxes		
		Sales taxes		
		Unrestricted investment earnings		
		Gain on sale of capital assets		
		Other revenues		
		Transfers		
		Total general revenues		
		Change in net position		
		Net position, beginning of year		
		Net position, end of year		

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Net (Expenses) Revenues and Changes in Net Position			
Governmental Activities	Business-Type Activiies	Total	Component Unit Board of Health
$ (1,840,498)	$ -	$ (1,840,498)	$ -
(1,144,756)	-	(1,144,756)	-
(5,766,337)	-	(5,766,337)	-
(5,234,810)	-	(5,234,810)	-
(521,325)	-	(521,325)	-
(865,812)	-	(865,812)	-
(23,382)	-	(23,382)	-
(15,396,920)	-	(15,396,920)	-
-	(146,148)	(146,148)	-
-	(146,148)	(146,148)	-
(15,396,920)	(146,148)	(15,543,068)	-
-	-	-	(87,892)
-	-	-	(87,892)
11,170,505	-	11,170,505	-
3,728,435	-	3,728,435	-
167,916	1,403	169,319	-
6,668	-	6,668	-
313,065	166	313,231	89,160
(175,000)	175,000	-	-
15,211,589	176,569	15,388,158	89,160
(185,331)	30,421	(154,910)	1,268
50,158,170	1,025,171	51,183,341	316,135
$ 49,972,839	$ 1,055,592	$ 51,028,431	$ 317,403

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

BALANCE SHEET
GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS
DECEMBER 31, 2023

	General Fund	2020 SPLOST Fund	TSPLOST Fund	Grants Fund	Recreation Fund	ARP Fund	Nonmajo Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
ASSETS								
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 7,509,818	$ 2,401,065	$ 249,586	$ 206,966	$ 795,269	$ 2,576,610	$ 1,669,113	$ 15,408,427
Taxes receivable, net	5,477,896	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,477,896
ccounts receivable, net	593,202	-	-	-	6,532	-	-	599,734
Due from other governments	-	270,265	-		-	-	-	270,265
Due from other funds	1,414,923	106,000	-	51,104	-	-	16,222	1,588,249
Inventory	11,100	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,100
Prepaid items	92,899	-	-	-	-	-	-	92,899
Total assets	$ 15,099,838	$ 2,777,330	$ 249,586	$ 258,070	$ 801,801	$ 2,576,610	$ 1,685,335	$ 23,448,570
LIABILITIES, DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES AND FUND BALANCE								
LIABILITIES								
ccounts payabl	$ 208,000	$ 43,592	$ 880	$ -	$ 68,077	$ -	$ 411	$ 320,960
ccrued liabilities	1,066,475	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,066,475
Due to other governments	-	82,920	-	-	-	-	-	82,920
Unearned revenue	-	-	-	-	-	2,394,734	-	2,394,734
Due to other funds	67,326	25	25	-	661,021	175,319	684,533	1,588,249
Total liabilities	1,341,801	126,537	905	-	729,098	2,570,053	684,944	5,453,338
DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES								
Unavailable revenues:								
Taxes	1,642,169	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,642,169
Total deferred inflows of resources	1,642,169	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,642,169
FUND BALANCE								
Fund balances:								
Non-spendable:								
Inventory	11,100	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,100
Prepaid items	92,899	-	-	-	-	-	-	92,899
Restricted for:								
Capital projects	-	2,650,793	248,681	258,070	-	6,557	680,176	3,844,277
Public safety	-	-	-	-	-	-	101,958	101,958
Judicial	-	-	-	-	-	-	32,801	32,801
ssigned for:								
Public safety	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,381	8,381
Recreation	-	-	-	-	72,703	-	-	72,703
Capital projects	-	-	-	-	-	-	219,561	219,561
Unassigned	12,011,869	-	-	-	-	-	(42,486)	11,969,383
Total fund balances	12,115,868	2,650,793	248,681	258,070	72,703	6,557	1,000,391	16,353,063
Total liabilities, deferred inflows of resources and fund balances	$ 15,099,838	$ 2,777,330	$ 249,586	$ 258,070	$ 801,801	$ 2,576,610	$ 1,685,335	$ 23,448,570

Amounts reported for governmental activities in the Statement of Net Position are different because:		
Capital and lease assets used in governmental activities are not financial resources and, therefore, are not reported in the funds.		$ 33,346,342
Other long-term assets are not available to pay for current period expenditures and, therefore, are unavailable in the funds.		1,642,169
Long-term liabilities are not due and payable in the current period and, therefore, are not reported in the funds.		
Financed purchases	$ (546,261)	
Leases	(442,865)	
Compensated absences	(181,608)	
Notes payabl	(190,171)	
ccrued interest	(7,830)	(1,368,735)
Net position of governmental activities		$ 49,972,839

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	General Fund	2020 SPLOST Fund	TSPLOST Fund	Grants Fund	Recreation Fund	ARP Fund	Nonmajo Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
Revenues								
Taxes	$ 10,886,092	$ 2,805,813	922,622	-	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 14,614,527
Fines and forfeitures	259,757	-	-	-	-	-	61,447	321,204
Licenses and permits	194,774	-	-	-	-	-	-	194,774
Intergovernmental	77,258	-	-	78,024	-	684,182	187,594	1,027,058
Charges for services	1,492,270	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,492,270
E911 charge	-	-	-	-	-	-	322,342	322,342
Recreation	-	-	-	-	173,285	-	-	173,285
Interest income	162,101	1,785	437	1,331	772	2,860	1,533	170,819
Other revenue	181,547	-	-	-	-	-	131,518	313,065
Total revenues	13,253,799	2,807,598	923,059	79,355	174,057	687,042	704,434	18,629,344
Expenditures								
Current:								
General government	2,021,391	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,021,391
Judicial	1,458,250	-	-	-	-	-	3,047	1,461,297
Public safet	6,307,989	-	-	-	-	409,526	576,581	7,294,096
Public work	1,780,084	-	-	-	-	-	182,594	1,962,678
Health and welfar	484,515	-	-	-	-	-	-	484,515
Community development	78,289	-	-	-	561,059	-	-	639,348
Capital outla	-	344,500	1,885,376	2,136,096	324,000	274,656	-	4,964,628
Debt service:								
Principal	-	231,000	162,989	-	32,400	-	-	426,389
Interest and other charges	-	1,461	21,921	-	-	-	-	23,382
Intergovernmental	-	996,795	-	-	-	-	-	996,795
Total expenditures	12,130,518	1,573,756	2,070,286	2,136,096	917,459	684,182	762,222	20,274,519
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over (under) expenditures	1,123,281	1,233,842	(1,147,227)	(2,056,741)	(743,402)	2,860	(57,788)	(1,645,175)
Other financing sources (uses)								
Financed purchases	-	-	-	-	324,000	-	-	324,000
Leases	-	-	532,683	-	-	-	-	532,683
Sale of capital assets	-	45,058	-	-	-	-	-	45,058
Transfers in	436,514	-	-	-	302,990	-	34,047	773,551
Transfers out	(512,037)	(436,514)	-	-	-	-	-	(948,551)
Total other financing sources (uses)	(75,523)	(391,456)	532,683	-	626,990	-	34,047	726,741
Net change in fund balances	1,047,758	842,386	(614,544)	(2,056,741)	(116,412)	2,860	(23,741)	(918,434)
Fund balances, beginning of year	11,068,110	1,808,407	863,225	2,314,811	189,115	3,697	1,024,132	17,271,497
Fund balances, end of year	$ 12,115,868	$ 2,650,793	$ 248,681	$ 258,070	$ 72,703	$ 6,557	$ 1,000,391	$ 16,353,063

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

RECONCILIATION OF THE STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES OF GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS TO THE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

Amounts reported for governmental activities in the Statement of Activities are different because:		
Net change in fund balances - total governmental funds		$ (918,434)
Governmental funds report capital outlays as expenditures. However, in the Statement of Activities, the cost of those assets is allocated over their estimated useful lives and reported as depreciation expense. This is the amount by which capital outlay exceeded depreciation expense in the current period.		
Capital outlay	$ 2,823,149	
Depreciation expense	(1,883,794)	939,355
The net effect of various miscellaneous transactions involving capital assets (i.e., sales, trade-ins, and donations) is to decrease net position.		(38,390)
Revenues in the Statement of Activities that do not provide current financial resources are not reported as revenues in the funds. This is the change in unavailable revenue.		284,413
The issuance of long-term debt provides current financial resources to governmental funds, while the repayment of the principal of long-term debt consumes the current financial resources of governmental funds. Neither transaction, however, has any effect on net position. Also, governmental funds report the effect of premiums, discounts and similar items when debt is first issued, whereas these amounts are deferred and amortized in the Statement of Activities. This amount is the net effect of these differences in the treatment of long-term debt and related items.		
Financed purchases	$ (324,000)	
Leases	(532,683)	
Principal payments on debt	426,389	(430,294)
Some expenses reported in the Statement of Activities do not require the use of current financial resources and, therefore, are not reported as expenditures in governmental funds.		
Accrued interest	$ (3,683)	
Compensated absences	(18,298)	(21,981)
Change in net position of governmental activities		$ (185,331)

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

GENERAL FUND
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES - BUDGET AND ACTUAL
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Budget			Variance With
	Original	Final	Actual	Final Budget
Revenues				
Taxes	$ 8,851,000	$ 8,851,000	$ 10,886,092	$ 2,035,092
Licenses and permits	130,950	130,950	194,774	63,824
Charges for services	1,528,800	1,528,800	1,492,270	(36,530)
Fines and forfeitures	169,530	169,530	259,757	90,227
Interest income	4,000	4,000	162,101	158,101
Intergovernmental	64,600	64,600	77,258	12,658
Other revenue	85,000	85,000	181,547	96,547
Total revenues	10,833,880	10,833,880	13,253,799	2,419,919
Expenditures				
Current:				
General government	2,065,113	2,065,113	2,021,391	43,722
Judicial	1,290,385	1,290,385	1,458,250	(167,865)
Public safety	5,828,749	5,828,749	6,307,989	(479,240)
Public works	1,114,417	1,114,417	1,780,084	(665,667)
Health and welfare	633,111	633,111	484,515	148,596
Community development	77,000	77,000	78,289	(1,289)
Total expenditures	11,008,775	11,008,775	12,130,518	(1,121,743)
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over (under) expenditures	(174,895)	(174,895)	1,123,281	1,298,176
Other financing sources (uses)				
Transfers in	724,762	724,762	436,514	(288,248)
Transfers out	(551,967)	(551,967)	(512,037)	39,930
Total other financing sources (uses)	172,795	172,795	(75,523)	(248,318)
Net change in fund balance	(2,100)	(2,100)	1,047,758	1,049,858
Fund balance, beginning of year	11,068,110	11,068,110	11,068,110	-
Fund balance, end of year	$ 11,066,010	$ 11,066,010	$ 12,115,868	$ 1,049,858

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

RECREATION FUND
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES - BUDGET AND ACTUAL
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Budget			Variance With
	Original	Final	Actual	Final Budget
Revenues				
Recreation	$ 120,350	$ 120,350	$ 173,285	$ 52,935
Interest income	-	-	772	772
Total revenues	120,350	120,350	174,057	53,707
Expenditures				
Current:				
Community development	499,145	499,145	561,059	(61,914)
Capital outlay	324,000	324,000	324,000	-
Debt service:				
Principal	-	-	32,400	(32,400)
Total expenditures	823,145	823,145	917,459	(94,314)
Deficiency of revenues under expenditures	(702,795)	(702,795)	(743,402)	(40,607)
Other financing sources				
Financed purchases	324,000	324,000	324,000	-
Transfers in	378,795	378,795	302,990	75,805
Total other financing sources	702,795	702,795	626,990	75,805
Net change in fund balance	-	-	(116,412)	35,198
Fund balance, beginning of year	189,115	189,115	189,115	-
Fund balance, end of year	$ 189,115	$ 189,115	$ 72,703	$ 35,198

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

STATEMENT OF NET POSITION
PROPRIETARY FUND
DECEMBER 31, 2023

ASSETS	Industrial Development Authority
CURRENT ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 160,999
Accounts receivable	6,300
Total current assets	167,299
NON-CURRENT ASSETS	
Capital assets:	
Nondepreciable	656,311
Depreciable, net of accumulated depreciation	478,835
Total non-current assets	1,135,146
Total assets	1,302,445
LIABILITIES	
CURRENT LIABILITIES	
Accounts payable	9,269
Accrued liabilities	1,825
Current portion - notes payable	42,584
Total current liabilities	53,678
LONG-TERM LIABILITIES	
Notes payable, net of current portion	193,175
Total long-term liabilities	193,175
Total liabilities	246,853
NET POSITION	
Net investment in capital assets	899,387
Restricted for:	
Capital projects	156,205
Total net position	$ 1,055,592

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND CHANGES IN FUND NET POSITION
PROPRIETARY FUND
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Industrial Development Authority
OPERATING REVENUES	
Charges for services	$ 72,303
Total operating revenues	72,303
OPERATING EXPENSES	
Personnel services and employee benefits	86,006
Purchased and contractual services	14,825
Supplies	1,640
Depreciation	17,367
Other	89,949
Total operating expenses	209,787
Operating loss	(137,484)
NON-OPERATING INCOME (EXPENSES)	
Interest and fiscal charges	(8,664)
Other revenue	166
Interest income	1,403
Total non-operating expenses, net	(7,095)
Loss before transfers	(144,579)
TRANSFERS IN	175,000
Change in net position	30,421
NET POSITION, beginning of year	1,025,171
NET POSITION, end of year	$ 1,055,592

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
PROPRIETARY FUND
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Industrial Development Authority
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	
Receipts from customers and users	$ 76,754
Payments to suppliers	(99,031)
Payments to employees	(87,306)
Net cash used in operating activities	(109,583)
CASH FLOWS FROM NONCAPITAL FINANCING ACTIVITIES	
Transfers in	175,000
Net cash provided by noncapital financing activities	175,000
CASH FLOWS FROM CAPITAL AND RELATED FINANCING ACTIVITIES	
Proceeds from sale of capital assets	31,458
Purchase of capital assets	(121,138)
Principal payments on notes payable	(298,252)
Interest paid	(8,664)
Proceeds from issuance of long-term debt	365,000
Other revenue	166
Net cash used in capital and related financing activities	(31,430)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	
Interest on investments	1,403
Net cash provided by investing activities	1,403
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	35,390
Cash and cash equivalents	
Beginning of year	125,609
End of year	$ 160,999
Reconciliation of operating loss to net cash used in operating activities	
Operating loss	$ (137,484)
Adjustments to reconcile operating loss to net cash used in operating activities	
Depreciation expense	17,367
Change in assets and liabilities:	
Decrease in accounts receivable	4,451
Increase in accounts payable	7,383
Decrease in accrued liabilities	(1,300)
Net cash used in operating activities	$ (109,583)

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

STATEMENT OF FIDUCIARY NET POSITION
FIDUCIARY FUNDS
DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Custodial Funds
ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 1,415,933
Total assets	1,415,933
LIABILITIES	
Due to others	40,136
Total liabilities	40,136
NET POSITION	
Restricted:	
Individuals, organizations and other governments	1,375,797
Total net position	$ 1,375,797

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FIDUCIARY NET POSITION FIDUCIARY FUNDS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Custodial Funds
ADDITIONS	
Taxes	$ 11,891,019
Fines and fees	1,637,439
Total additions	13,528,458
DEDUCTIONS	
Taxes and fees paid to other governments	16,211,439
Other custodial disbursements	1,621,308
Total deductions	17,832,747
Change in fiduciary net position	(4,304,289)
NET POSITION, beginning of year	5,680,086
NET POSITION, end of year	$ 1,375,797

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements of Pierce County, Georgia (the "County") have been prepared in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America ("GAAP") as applied to governments. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board ("GASB") is the accepted standard-setting body for establishing governmental accounting and financial reporting principles. The more significant of the County's accounting policies are described below.

A. The Reporting Entity

Pierce County was established under the provisions of an act of the General Assembly of Georgia in 1857. The County operates under a County Commissioner form of government and provides the following services as authorized by state law: public safety (police and fire), highways and streets, sanitation, health and social services, community development, public improvements, planning and zoning, and general administrative services.

As required by GAAP, the financial statements of the reporting entity include those of Pierce County, Georgia (the primary government) and its component unit. The component unit discussed below is included in the County's reporting entity because of the significance of its operational or financial relationship with the County. In conformity with GAAP, as set forth in GASB Statement No. 14, as amended, the financial statements of the component unit are discretely presented in the government-wide financial statements.

Pierce County Health Department

The Pierce County Health Department (the "Health Department") provides public healthcare services and health education to the residents of the County. The Health Department receives financial support from Pierce County, Georgia, the State of Georgia and the Federal Government. The County Commission appoints a majority of the Board of Directors, and the Health Department issues separately audited financial statements. Although the County does not have the authority to approve or modify the budget of the Health Department, the County is obligated to provide financial support to the Health Department. The Health Department has a June 30th year-end. The Health Department's statements have been prepared separately and can be obtained by writing to:

Pierce County Health Department
Blackshear, Georgia 31516

NOTE 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

B. Government-wide and Fund Financial Statements

The government-wide financial statements (i.e., the Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities) report information on all of the non-fiduciary activities of the government. For the most part, the effect of interfund activity has been removed from these statements. *Governmental activities*, which normally are supported by taxes and intergovernmental revenues, are reported separately from *business-type activities*, which rely to a significant extent on fees and charges for support.

The Statement of Activities demonstrates the degree to which the direct expenses of a given function or segment are offset by program revenues. *Direct expenses* are those that are clearly identifiable with a specific function or segment. *Program revenues* include: 1) charges to those who purchase, use or directly benefit from goods, services or privileges provided by a given function or segment, and 2) grants and contributions that are restricted to meeting the operational or capital requirements of a particular function or segment. Taxes and other items not properly included among program revenues are reported instead as *general revenues*.

Separate financial statements are provided for governmental funds, proprietary funds and fiduciary funds, even though the latter are excluded from the government-wide financial statements. Major individual governmental funds and major individual enterprise funds are reported as separate columns in the fund financial statements.

C. Measurement Focus, Basis of Accounting and Financial Statement Presentation

The government-wide financial statements are reported using the *economic resources measurement focus* and the *accrual basis of accounting*, as are the proprietary fund and the fiduciary fund financial statements. Revenues are recorded when earned and expenses are recorded when a liability is incurred, regardless of the timing of the related cash flows. Property taxes are recognized as revenues in the year for which they are levied. Grants and similar items are recognized as revenue as soon as all eligibility requirements imposed by the provider have been met.

Governmental fund financial statements are reported using the *current financial resources measurement focus* and the *modified accrual basis of accounting*. Revenues are recognized as soon as they are both measurable and available. Revenues are considered to be available when they are collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to pay liabilities of the current period. For this purpose, the County considers revenues to be available if they are collected within 60 days of the end of the current fiscal period. Expenditures generally are recorded when a liability is incurred, as under accrual accounting. However, debt service expenditures including those related to leases, as well as expenditures related to compensated absences and claims and judgments, are recorded only when payment is due.

NOTE 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

C. Measurement Focus, Basis of Accounting, and Financial Statement Presentation (Continued)

Property taxes, franchise fees, licenses, and investment income associated with the current fiscal period are all considered to be susceptible to accrual and so have been recognized as revenues of the current fiscal period. All other revenue items are considered to be measurable and available only when cash is received by the County.

The County reports the following major governmental funds:

The ***General Fund*** is the County's primary operating fund. It accounts for all financial resources of the general government, except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

The ***2020 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax ("SPLOST") Fund*** accounts for the proceeds of a SPLOST. Funds are used for the purchase of equipment and construction of County buildings, roads and bridge projects, recreational facilities, and cultural facilities.

The ***Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax*** ("***TSPLOST") Fund*** accounts for the proceeds of a transportation SPLOST. Funds are used for various transportation projects in the County.

The ***Grants Fund*** accounts for the revenues and expenditures of various County grant funds.

The ***Recreation Fund*** accounts for the revenues and expenditures of the recreation activities.

The ***American Rescue Plan Act ("ARPA") Fund*** accounts for the revenues and expenditures associated with the U.S. Department of Treasury's Coronavirus State and Local Recovery Funds established by the ARPA of 2021.

Additionally, the County reports the following fund types:

The ***special revenue funds*** account for specific revenues that are legally restricted to expenditures for particular purposes.

The ***capital project funds*** account for financial resources that are legally restricted to acquisition or construction of major capital facilities.

The ***custodial funds*** are used to account for the collection and disbursement of monies by the County on behalf of other governments and individuals, such as cash bonds, traffic fines, support payments and ad valorem and property taxes.

NOTE 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

C. Measurement Focus, Basis of Accounting, and Financial Statement Presentation (Continued)

Amounts reported as *program revenues* include: 1) charges for services provided, 2) operating grants and contributions, and 3) capital grants and contributions. Internally dedicated resources are reported as *general revenues* rather than as program revenues. Likewise, general revenues include all taxes.

When both restricted and unrestricted resources are available for use, it is the County's policy to use restricted resources first, then unrestricted resources as they are needed.

D. Cash and Cash Equivalents

The County's cash and cash equivalents are considered to be cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments with original maturities of three months or less from the date of acquisition.

E. Prepaid Items

Payments made to vendors for services that will benefit periods beyond December 31, 2023, are recorded as prepaid items using the consumption method by recording an asset for the prepaid amount and reflecting the expenditure/expense in the year in which services are consumed. At the fund reporting level, an equal amount of fund balance is reserved as this amount is not available for general appropriation.

F. Interfund Receivables and Payables

During the course of operations, numerous transactions occur between individual funds for goods provided or services rendered. For the most part, the effect of interfund activity has been removed from the government-wide Statement of Net Position. In the fund financial statements, these receivables and payables are classified as "due from other funds" or "due to other funds."

In the government-wide financial statements, any residual balances outstanding between the governmental activities and business-type activities are reported as "internal balances".

NOTE 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

G. Capital Assets

Capital assets and right-to-use lease assets, which include property, plant, equipment, and infrastructure assets (e.g., roads, bridges, sidewalks, and similar items), are reported in the applicable governmental or business-type activities column in the government-wide financial statements. Capital assets are defined by the County as assets with an initial, individual cost of more than $5,000 and an estimated useful life in excess of two years. Such assets are recorded at historical cost or estimated historical cost if purchased or constructed. Donated capital assets are recorded at acquisition value. The County has retroactively reported major general infrastructure assets. In this case, the County chose to include all items regardless of their acquisition date. The County was able to estimate the historical cost for the initial reporting of these assets through back trending.

The costs of normal maintenance and repairs that do not add to the value of the assets or materially extend assets' lives are not capitalized.

Capital assets of the primary government are depreciated using the straight-line method over the following useful lives:

Asset Category	Years
Improvements other than buildings	10 – 60
Buildings	40 – 60
Machinery and equipment	3 – 10
Infrastructure	40
Right-to-use lease assets	3 – 10

H. Compensated Absences

Vacation benefits are accrued as a liability as the benefits are earned if the employees' rights to receive compensation are attributable to services already rendered and it is probable the employer will compensate the employees for the benefits paid through paid time off. Sick leave benefits are accrued as a liability using the termination payment method. An accrual for earned sick leave is made to the extent it is probable that the benefits will result in termination payments.

Compensated absences are recorded in the government-wide financial statements and proprietary fund. Governmental funds report compensated absences only when due.

NOTE 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

I. Long-Term Obligations

In the government-wide financial statements, and proprietary fund types in the fund financial statements, long-term debt and other long-term obligations are reported as liabilities in the applicable governmental activities, business-type activities, or proprietary fund type Statement of Net Position.

In the fund financial statements, governmental fund types recognize the face amount of debt issued as other financing sources. Payments made on debt are reported as debt service expenditures.

J. Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Resources

In addition to assets, the Statement of Net Position will sometimes report a separate section for deferred outflows of resources. This separate financial statement element, *deferred outflows of resources*, represents a consumption of net assets that applies to a future period(s) and so will not be recognized as an outflow of resources (expense/expenditure) until then. The County has no items that require reporting in this category.

In addition to liabilities, the governmental funds Balance Sheet will sometimes report a separate section for deferred inflows of resources. This separate financial statement element, *deferred inflows of resources*, represents an acquisition of fund balance that applies to a future period(s) and so will not be recognized as an inflow of resources (revenue) until that time. The County has one item that qualifies for reporting in this category, which arises only under the modified accrual basis of accounting. Accordingly, the item, *unavailable revenue*, is reported only in the governmental funds Balance Sheet. The governmental funds report unavailable revenues from property taxes and these amounts are deferred and will be recognized as an inflow of resources in the period in which the amounts become available.

K. Leases

The County is a lessee for noncancellable leases of equipment and vehicles. The County recognizes a lease liability and an intangible right-to-use lease asset in the government-wide financial statements. The County recognizes lease liabilities with an initial, individual value of $5,000 or more.

At the commencement of a lease, the County initially measures the lease liability at the present value of payments expected to be made during the lease term. Subsequently, the lease liability is reduced by the principal portion of lease payments made. The lease asset is initially measured as the initial amount of the lease liability, adjusted for lease payments made at or before the lease commencement date, plus certain initial direct costs. Subsequently, the lease asset is amortized on a straight-line basis over its useful life.

NOTE 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

K. Leases (Continued)

Key estimates and judgments related to leases include how the County determines: 1) the discount rate it uses to discount the expected lease payments to present value, 2) lease term, and 3) lease payments:

- The County uses the interest rate charged by the lessor as the discount rate. When the interest rate charged by the lessor is not provided, the County generally uses its estimated incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate for leases.
- The lease term includes the noncancellable period of the lease. Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability are composed of fixed payments and purchase option prices that the County is reasonably certain to exercise.

The County monitors changes in circumstances that would require a remeasurement of its lease and will remeasure the lease asset and liability if certain changes occur that are expected to significantly affect the amount of the lease liability.

Lease assets are reported with capital assets and lease liabilities are reported with long-term debt on the Statement of Net Position.

L. Fund Equity

Fund equity at the governmental fund financial reporting level is classified as “fund balances.” Fund equity for all other reporting is classified as “net position.”

Fund Balances – Generally, fund balances represent the difference between the assets and liabilities under the current financial resources measurement focus of accounting. In the fund financial statements, governmental funds report fund balance classifications that comprise a hierarchy based primarily on the extent to which the County is bound to honor constraints on the specific purposes for which amounts in those funds can be spent. Fund balances are classified as follows:

- ***Nonspendable*** – Fund balances are reported as nonspendable when amounts cannot be spent because they are either: (a) not in spendable form (i.e., items that are not expected to be converted to cash), or (b) legally or contractually required to be maintained intact.

- ***Restricted*** – Fund balances are reported as restricted when there are limitations imposed on their use either through the enabling legislation adopted by the County or through external restrictions imposed by creditors, grantors or laws or regulations of other governments.

NOTE 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

L. Fund Equity (Continued)

Fund Balances (Continued)

- ***Committed*** – Fund balances are reported as committed when they can be used only for specific purposes pursuant to constraints imposed by formal action of the Board of County Commissioners through the adoption of a resolution. The Board of County Commissioners also may modify or rescind the commitment.

- ***Assigned*** – Fund balances are reported as assigned when amounts are constrained by the County's intent to be used for specific purposes, but are neither restricted nor committed. Through resolution, the Board of County Commissioners has authorized the County Manager to assign fund balances.

- ***Unassigned*** – Fund balances are reported as unassigned as the residual amount when the balances do not meet any of the above criterion. The County reports positive unassigned fund balance only in the General Fund. Negative unassigned fund balance may be reported in all funds.

Flow Assumptions – When both restricted and unrestricted amounts of fund balances are available for use for expenditures incurred, it is the County's policy to use restricted amounts first and then unrestricted amounts as they are needed. For unrestricted amounts of fund balances, it is the County's policy to use fund balances in the following order: 1) committed, 2) assigned, and 3) unassigned.

Net Position – Net position represents the difference between assets and liabilities in reporting which utilizes the economic resources measurement focus. Net investment in capital assets consists of capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation, reduced by the outstanding balances of any borrowing used (i.e., the amount that the County has spent) for the acquisition, construction or improvement of those assets. Net position is reported as restricted using the same definition as used for restricted fund balance as described in the section above. All other net position is reported as unrestricted.

The County applies restricted resources first when an expense is incurred for purposes for which both restricted and unrestricted net position are available.

M. Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenditures/expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

NOTE 2. LEGAL COMPLIANCE – BUDGETS

A. Budgets and Budgetary Accounting

Budgetary Data. The County adopts an annual operating budget for the General Fund and each Special Revenue Fund. A project budget is adopted for each Capital Projects Fund. The budget resolution reflects the total of each department's appropriation in each fund.

The General Fund budget is adopted on a basis consistent with GAAP. Budgets for the Special Revenue Funds are adopted on a basis consistent with GAAP. Budgets for Capital Projects Funds are adopted on a basis consistent with GAAP except the budget period is a project period rather than an annual period.

The legal level of control (the level at which expenditures may not legally exceed appropriations) for each adopted annual operating budget generally is the department level within each individual fund. Any change in total to a fund or departmental appropriation within a fund requires approval of the Board of County Commissioners.

Either the County Chairman or County Administrator may approve budget transfers within departments, except those related to personnel or capital expenditures. The Board of County Commissioners must approve transfers of personnel or capital appropriations. During the year, the Board of County Commissioners approved budget revisions.

All unexpended annual appropriations lapse at year-end.

B. Excess of Expenditures over Appropriations

For the year ended December 31, 2023, expenditures exceeded appropriations at the legal level of budgetary control as follows:

Department		Excess
General Fund		
Judicial	$	167,865
Public safety		479,240
Public works		665,667
Community development		1,289
Recreation Fund		
Community development		61,914
Debt service - principal		32,400

These over expenditures were funded primarily by underspending in other departments and excess revenues.

NOTE 3. DEPOSITS AND INVESTMENTS

Credit risk. State statutes authorize the County to invest in obligations of the State of Georgia or other states; obligations issued by the U.S. government; obligations fully insured or guaranteed by the U.S. government or by a government agency of the United States; obligations of any corporation of the U.S. government; prime bankers' acceptances; the local government investment pool established by state law; repurchase agreements; and obligations of other political subdivisions of the State of Georgia. It is the County's policy to limit its investments to those allowed and authorized by state law. As of December 31, 2023, the County held no investments.

Custodial credit risk – deposits. Custodial credit risk for deposits is the risk that, in the event of the failure of a depository financial institution, a government will not be able to recover deposits or will not be able to recover collateral securities that are in the possession of an outside party. State statutes require all deposits and investments (other than federal or state government instruments) to be collateralized by depository insurance, obligations of the U.S. government, or bonds of public authorities, counties, or municipalities. As of December 31, 2023, the deposits of the County and its component units were properly insured and collateralized as defined by GASB pronouncements and the Official Code of Georgia Annotated ("O.C.G.A.").

Interest rate risk. The County's investment policy is a means of managing its exposure to fair value losses arising from increasing interest rates. As such, they adhere to the following criteria regarding investments as outlined in the County's policies and procedures manual: the investment must always be concerned with the preservation of principal; all investments must be relatively liquid; and there must be a realization of competitive interest rates relative to the risk assumed. The County Manager is authorized to make all investment decisions on behalf of the County.

NOTE 4. RECEIVABLES

Receivables at December 31, 2023 consist of the following:

	General Fund	2020 SPLOST Fund	Recreation Fund	Total
Receivables:				
Taxes	$ 5,477,896	$ -	-	$ 5,477,896
Accounts	593,202	-	6,532	599,734
Due from other governments	-	270,265	-	270,265
Total receivables	$ 6,071,098	$ 270,265	$ 6,532	$ 6,347,895

NOTE 4. RECEIVABLES (CONTINUED)

The Board of County Commissioners levies property taxes by or about August 25th of each year. Property taxes attach as an enforceable lien on property as of January 1. Property taxes are billed on or about September 15th of each year and are payable within 60 days. The County bills and collects its own property taxes and also collects property taxes for the Pierce County Board of Education, the State of Georgia, and the City of Blackshear. Collection of the County's taxes, and for the other government agencies, is the responsibility of the Tax Commissioner's Office, which is accounted for as a Custodial Fund. County property tax revenue at the fund reporting level are recognized when levied to the extent that they result in current receivables (i.e., collectible in 60 days). For 2023, property tax bills were mailed on November 30, 2023, and were due on February 20, 2024.

NOTE 5. CAPITAL ASSETS

Capital asset activity for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2023 is as follows:

	Beginning Balance	Increases	Decreases	Transfers	Ending Balance
Governmental activities					
Capital assets, not being depreciated:					
Land	$ 496,401	$ 324,000	$ -	$ -	$ 820,401
Construction in progress	567,406	703,105	-	-	1,270,511
Total	1,063,807	1,027,105	-	-	2,090,912
Capital assets, being depreciated/amortized:					
Buildings	23,016,619	-	-	-	23,016,619
Machinery and equipment	11,030,753	1,263,361	(40,310)	-	12,253,804
Infrastructure	17,233,785	-	-	-	17,233,785
Intangible right-to-use lease assets	-	532,683	-	-	532,683
Total	51,281,157	1,796,044	(40,310)	-	53,036,891
Less accumulated depreciation/amortization for:					
Buildings	(6,676,705)	(604,245)	-	-	(7,280,950)
Machinery and equipment	(8,062,122)	(592,210)	1,920	-	(8,652,412)
Infrastructure	(5,160,760)	(584,071)	-	-	(5,744,831)
Intangible right-to-use lease assets	-	(103,268)	-	-	(103,268)
Total	(19,899,587)	(1,883,794)	1,920	-	(21,781,461)
Total capital assets, being depreciated/amortized, net	31,381,570	(87,750)	(38,390)	-	31,255,430
Governmental activities capital assets, net	$ 32,445,377	$ 939,355	$ (38,390)	$ -	$ 33,346,342

NOTE 5. CAPITAL ASSETS (CONTINUED)

	Beginning Balance	Increases	Decreases	Transfers	Ending Balance
Business-type activities					
Capital assets, not being depreciated:					
Land	$ 635,519	$ 52,250	$ (31,458)	$ -	$ 656,311
Total	635,519	52,250	(31,458)	-	656,311
Capital assets, being depreciated:					
Buildings	347,064	-	-	-	347,064
Machinery and equipment	22,742	-	-	-	22,742
Infrastructure	186,900	68,888	-	-	255,788
Total	556,706	68,888	-	-	625,594
Less accumulated depreciation for:					
Buildings	(61,783)	(11,570)	-	-	(73,353)
Machinery and equipment	(22,742)	-	-	-	(22,742)
Infrastructure	(44,867)	(5,797)	-	-	(50,664)
Total	(129,392)	(17,367)	-	-	(146,759)
Total capital assets, being depreciated, net	427,314	51,521	-	-	478,835
Business-type activities capital assets, net	$ 1,062,833	$ 103,771	$ (31,458)	$ -	$ 1,135,146

Depreciation expense was charged to functions/programs of the County as follows:

Governmental activities:	
General government	$ 29,956
Judicial	147,636
Public safety	420,143
Public works	972,144
Health and welfare	44,812
Community development	269,103
Total depreciation expense - governmental activities	$ 1,883,794
Business-type activities:	
Industrial Development Authority	$ 17,367

NOTE 6. LONG-TERM DEBT

The following is a summary of long-term debt activity for the primary government for the year ended December 31, 2023:

	Beginning Balance	Additions	Reductions	Ending Balance	Due Within One Year
Governmental activities:					
Notes payable	$ 421,171	$ -	$ (231,000)	$ 190,171	$ -
Financed purchases	327,832	324,000	(105,571)	546,261	108,010
Capital leases	-	532,683	(89,818)	442,865	111,598
Compensated absences	163,310	343,548	(325,250)	181,608	181,608
Governmental activities Long-term liabilities	$ 912,313	$ 1,200,231	$ (751,639)	$ 1,360,905	$ 401,216
Business-type activities:					
Notes payable	$ 169,011	$ 365,000	$ (298,252)	$ 235,759	$ 42,584

For governmental activities, compensated absences are liquidated by the General Fund.

Notes Payable – Governmental Activities. In March 2017, the County refinanced the outstanding amount of their United States Department of Agriculture ("USDA") note payable with a bank note payable in the amount of $2,472,000. The note payments were due monthly through July 2023 and carried an interest rate of 1.898%. The note has a zero balance as of December 31, 2023.

In April 2021, the County entered into a note payable agreement with the Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank ("GTIB") through the State Road and Tollway Authority ("SRTA") for the purpose of paving and drainage improvements within the County. The total principal portion of the note once fully drawn will be $500,000. Of this amount, $190,171 had been drawn as of December 31, 2023. Upon completion of the draw down period, an amortization schedule will be provided, as such there is no maturity schedule for notes payable yet.

Financed Purchases – Governmental Activities. The County entered into financed purchase agreements with a bank to purchase certain equipment. The agreements require monthly payments through May 2027 and bear interest at rates of 2.78% and 3.75%.

NOTE 6. LONG-TERM DEBT (CONTINUED)

Financed Purchases – Governmental Activities (Continued).

Debt service requirements to maturity on the governmental activities financed purchases are as follows:

Year ended December 31,	Principal	Interest	Total
2024	$ 108,010	$ 7,312	$ 115,322
2025	150,955	4,076	155,031
2026	74,769	1,545	76,314
2027	50,527	170	50,697
2028	32,400	-	32,400
2029 – 2032	129,600	-	129,600
	$ 546,261	$ 13,103	$ 559,364

Leases – Governmental Activities. During the year ended December 31, 2023, the County entered into lease agreements with a bank for three pieces of equipment. The agreements require monthly payments through August 2028 and bear interest at a rate of 2.99%.

Debt service requirements to maturity on the governmental activities leases are as follows:

Year ended December 31,	Principal	Interest	Total
2024	$ 111,598	$ 11,721	$ 123,319
2025	114,981	8,338	123,319
2026	142,912	4,565	147,477
2027	60,094	1,275	61,369
2028	13,280	66	13,346
	$ 442,865	$ 25,965	$ 468,830

Note Payable – Business-type Activities. The Industrial Development Authority (“IDA”) entered into a note payable agreement with a bank in August 2017 for the purchase of a building. The note is paid in equal monthly installments through 2031 and bears interest at a rate of 3.95%.

The IDA entered into a note payable agreement with a bank during the year ended December 31, 2023 for the purchase of a building. The note is paid in equal monthly installments through 2027 and bears interest at a rate of 3.97%.

NOTE 6. LONG-TERM DEBT (CONTINUED)

Note Payable – Business-type Activities (Continued).

Debt service requirements to maturity on the IDA notes payable are as follows:

Year ended December 31,	Principal	Interest	Total
2024	$ 42,584	$ 6,811	$ 49,395
2025	43,811	5,584	49,395
2026	45,077	4,318	49,395
2027	46,384	3,011	49,395
2028	21,446	1,901	23,347
2029 and 2030	36,457	1,235	37,692
	$ 235,759	$ 22,860	$ 258,619

NOTE 7. INTERFUND RECEIVABLES, PAYABLES AND TRANSFERS

Interfund receivable and payable balances as of December 31, 2023 are as follows:

Due To	Due From	Amount
General Fund	2020 SPLOST Fund	$ 25
General Fund	ARPA	74,319
General Fund	Nonmajor Governmental Funds	679,533
General Fund	TSPLOST	25
General Fund	Recreation Fund	661,021
Nonmajor Governmental Funds	General Fund	16,222
Grants	General Fund	51,104
2020 SPLOST Fund	ARPA	101,000
2020 SPLOST Fund	Nonmajor Governmental Funds	5,000
		$ 1,588,249

These balances resulted from the time lag between the dates that: 1) interfund goods and services are provided or reimbursable expenditures occur, 2) transactions are recorded in the accounting system, and 3) payments between funds are made.

Interfund transfers as of December 31, 2023 are as follows:

Transfers In	Transfers Out	Amount
General Fund	2020 SPLOST Fund	$ 436,514
Recreation Fund	General Fund	302,990
Industrial Dev Auth	General Fund	175,000
Nonmajor Governmental Funds	General Fund	34,047
		$ 948,551

NOTE 7. INTERFUND RECEIVABLES, PAYABLES AND TRANSFERS (CONTINUED)

Transfers are used to: 1) move revenues from the fund that statute or budget requires to collect them to the fund that the statute or budget requires to expend them, 2) use unrestricted revenues collected in the General Fund to finance various programs accounted for in other funds in accordance with budgetary authorizations, and 3) transfer funds for debt service.

NOTE 8. JOINT VENTURES

Under Georgia law, the County is a participating member of the Southern Georgia Regional Commission ("RC") and is required to pay annual dues thereto. During its year ended December 31, 2023, the County paid $19,116 in such dues. Membership in an RC is required by the Official Code of Georgia Annotated ("O.C.G.A.") §50-8-34 which provides for the organizational structure of the RC in Georgia. The RC Board membership includes the chief elected official of each county and municipality of the area. O.C.G.A. §50-8-39.1 provides that the member governments are liable for any debts and obligations of an RC. Separate financial statements may be obtained from:

Southern Georgia Commission
3395 Harris Road
Waycross, Georgia 31503

The Pierce County Industrial Development Authority, in conjunction with the Development Authorities of Appling, Jeff Davis, and Bacon, formed the Southern Georgia Regional Development Authority. The Pierce County Industrial Development Authority is not required to pay annual dues to the Southern Georgia Regional Development Authority. Pierce County Industrial Development Authority made a one-time transfer of 58.12 acres in the Pierce County Industrial Park to the Southern Georgia Regional Development Authority. Membership in the Southern Georgia Regional Development Authority is made up of the Directors of the Appling, Jeff Davis, Bacon, and Pierce County Development Authorities. The member Industrial Development Authorities are not responsible for any debts or obligations of the Southern Georgia Regional Development Authority. Separate financial statements may be obtained from:

Southern Georgia Regional Development Authority
S. Central Avenue
P.O. Box 47
Blackshear, Georgia 31516

NOTE 9. DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PENSION PLAN

The Pierce County Retirement Plan (the “Plan”) is a defined contribution plan which was adopted by the Pierce County Board of County Commissioners and was effective July 1, 1990. The Plan is administered by Mass Mutual Financial Group. The Plan is open to all full-time employees with more than one year of service. Employees are 100% vested in the County contribution after seven years of service. The contribution for 2023 to the County funded plan was $138,313. Employees do not contribute to this Plan and the County does not have a required contribution. Contributions are established by the County Commission on an annual basis.

NOTE 10. RISK MANAGEMENT

The County is exposed to various risks of losses related to torts, thefts of, damage to, and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; injuries to employees; and natural disaster. The County has joined the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (“ACCG”) Interlocal Risk Management Agency (“IRMA”). The membership allows the County to share liability, crime, motor vehicle and property damage risks. The County is also a part of the ACCG Workers' Compensation Self Insurance Fund.

As part of these risk pools, the County is obligated to pay all contributions and assessments as prescribed by the pools: To cooperate with the pool's agents and attorneys; To follow loss reduction procedures established by the funds; To report as promptly as possible, and in accordance with any coverage descriptions issued, all incidents which could result in the funds being required to pay any claim of loss. The County is also to allow the pool's agents and attorneys to represent the County in investigation, settlement discussions and all levels of litigation arising out of any claim against the County within the scope of loss protection furnished by the funds.

The funds are to defend and protect the members of the funds against liability or loss as prescribed in the member government contract and in accordance with the workers' compensation law of Georgia. The funds are to pay all costs taxed against members in any legal proceeding defended by the members, all interest accruing after entry of judgment and all expenses incurred for investigation, negotiation or defense.

Settled claims in the past three years have not exceeded coverage.

NOTE 11. CONTINGENCIES AND COMMITMENTS

Grant Contingencies: The County has received federal and state grants for specific purposes that are subject to review and audit by the grantor agencies or their representatives. Such audits could lead to the disallowance of certain expenditures previously reimbursed by those agencies. Based upon prior experience, County management believes such disallowances, if any, will not be significant.

NOTE 11. CONTINGENCIES AND COMMITMENTS (CONTINUED)

Litigation: From time to time, the County is involved in pending lawsuits. Liability, if any, which might result from these proceedings, would not, in the opinion of management and legal counsel, have a material adverse effect on the financial position of the County.

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

COMBINING AND INDIVIDUAL NONMAJOR FUND STATEMENTS AND SCHEDULES

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

NONMAJOR GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS

SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS

Juvenile Program Fund is used to account for revenue and expenditures of juvenile program projects.

Sheriff's Confiscation Fund is used to account for revenues received as a result of cash confiscations or sales of capital items acquired through confiscation and the associated Sheriff related expenditures of these receipts.

E911 Fund is used to account for revenue and expenditures for the provision of emergency telephone services.

Law Library Fund is used to account for revenue and expenditures associated with the operation of the law library.

Drug Abuse Treatment and Education Fund is used to account for fines and forfeitures to be used for drug abuse treatment and education.

Sheriff's Grants Fund is used to account for revenues and expenditures in accordance with the grant agreement.

CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND

Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") Fund accounts for the revenues and expenditures associated with the Community Development Block Grant.

Neighborhood Facilities Center ("NFC") Fund accounts for the revenues and expenditures related to the Neighborhood Facilities Center.

2014 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax ("SPLOST") Fund accounts for the revenues and expenditures of the 2014 SPLOST referendum.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

COMBINING BALANCE SHEET
NONMAJOR GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS
DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Special Revenue Funds				
	Juvenile Program Fund	Sheriff's Confiscation Fund	E911 Fund	Law Library Fund	Drug Abuse Treatment & Education Fund
ASSETS					
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 1,192	$ 76,501	$ 641,227	$ 32,801	$ 9,235
Due from other funds	-	-	-	-	16,222
Total assets	$ 1,192	$ 76,501	$ 641,227	$ 32,801	$ 25,457
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES					
LIABILITIES					
Accounts payable	$ -	$ -	$ 411	$ -	$ -
Due to other funds	-	-	683,302	-	-
Total liabilities	-	-	683,713	-	-
FUND BALANCES					
Restricted for:					
Public safety	-	76,501	-	-	25,457
Judicial	-	-	-	32,801	-
Capital projects	-	-	-	-	-
Assigned for:					
Public safety	1,192	-	-	-	-
Capital projects	-	-	-	-	-
Unassigned	-	-	(42,486)	-	-
Total fund balances	1,192	76,501	(42,486)	32,801	25,457
Total liabilities and fund balances	$ 1,192	$ 76,501	$ 641,227	$ 32,801	$ 25,457

Special Revenue Funds	Capital Projects Funds			
Sheriff's Grants Fund	CDBG Fund	NFC Fund	2014 SPLOST Fund	Total Nonmajor Governmental Funds
$ 7,189	$ 25	$ 219,561	$ 681,382	$ 1,669,113
-	-	-	-	16,222
$ 7,189	$ 25	$ 219,561	$ 681,382	$ 1,685,335
$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 411
-	25	-	1,206	684,533
-	25	-	1,206	684,944
-	-	-	-	101,958
-	-	-	-	32,801
-	-	-	680,176	680,176
7,189	-	-	-	8,381
-	-	219,561	-	219,561
-	-	-	-	(42,486)
7,189	-	219,561	680,176	1,000,391
$ 7,189	$ 25	$ 219,561	$ 681,382	$ 1,685,335

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

COMBINING STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES
NONMAJOR GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Special Revenue Funds				
	Juvenile Program Fund	Sheriff's Confiscation Fund	E911 Fund	Law Library Fund	Drug Abuse Treatment & Education Fund
Revenues					
Fines and forfeitures	$ 700	$ 33,841	$ -	$ 6,760	$ 20,146
E911 charge	-	-	322,342	-	-
Intergovernmental	-	-	-	-	-
Interest income	-	-	553	80	-
Other revenue	-	-	131,518	-	-
Total revenues	700	33,841	454,413	6,840	20,146
Expenditures					
Current:					
Public safety	-	40,474	530,946	-	2,006
Public works	-	-	-	-	-
Judicial	-	-	-	3,047	-
Total expenditures	-	40,474	530,946	3,047	2,006
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over (under) expenditures	700	(6,633)	(76,533)	3,793	18,140
Other financing sources					
Transfers in	-	-	34,047	-	-
Total other financing sources	-	-	34,047	-	-
Net change in fund balances	700	(6,633)	(42,486)	3,793	18,140
Fund balances, beginning of year	492	83,134	-	29,008	7,317
Fund balances (deficit), end of year	$ 1,192	$ 76,501	$ (42,486)	$ 32,801	$ 25,457

Special Revenue Funds	Capital Projects Funds			
Sheriff's Grants Fund	CDBG Fund	NFC Fund	2014 SPLOST Fund	Total Nonmajor Governmental Funds
$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 61,447
-	-	-	-	322,342
5,000	182,594	-	-	187,594
-	-	219	681	1,533
-	-	-	-	131,518
5,000	182,594	219	681	704,434
3,155	-	-	-	576,581
-	182,594	-	-	182,594
-	-	-	-	3,047
3,155	182,594	-	-	762,222
1,845	-	219	681	(57,788)
-	-	-	-	34,047
-	-	-	-	34,047
1,845	-	219	681	(23,741)
5,344	-	219,342	679,495	1,024,132
$ 7,189	$ -	$ 219,561	$ 680,176	$ 1,000,391

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

CUSTODIAL FUNDS

Tax Commissioner – To account for the collection and payment to the County and other taxing units of the property taxes levied, billed, and collected by the Tax Commissioner on behalf of the County and other taxing units.

Sheriff – To account for all monies received by the Sheriff's Department on behalf of individuals, private organizations, other governmental units, and other funds.

Clerk of Court – To account for all monies received by the Clerk of Superior Court on behalf of individuals, private organizations, other governmental units, and other funds.

Probate Court – To account for all monies received by the Probate Court on behalf of individuals, private organizations, other governmental units, and other funds.

Magistrate Court – To account for all monies received by the Magistrate Court on behalf of individuals, private organizations, other governmental units, and other funds.

Commissary – To account for all monies received by the Jail that are custodial in nature.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

COMBINING STATEMENT OF FIDUCIARY NET POSITION
CUSTODIAL FUNDS
DECEMBER 31, 2023

ASSETS	Tax Commissioner	Sheriff	Clerk of Court	Probate Court
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 1,220,149	$ 7,529	$ 66,085	$ 5,088
Total assets	1,220,149	7,529	66,085	5,088
LIABILITIES				
Due to others	-	-	9,395	4,603
Total liabilities	-	-	9,395	4,603
NET POSITION				
Restricted:				
Individuals, organizations and other governments	1,220,149	7,529	56,690	485
Total net position	$ 1,220,149	$ 7,529	$ 56,690	$ 485

Magistrate Court	Commissary	Total
$ 10,291	$ 106,791	$ 1,415,933
10,291	106,791	1,415,933
4,640	21,498	40,136
4,640	21,498	40,136
5,651	85,293	1,375,797
$ 5,651	$ 85,293	$ 1,375,797

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

COMBINING STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FIDUCIARY NET POSITION
CUSTODIAL FUNDS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Tax Commissioner	Sheriff	Clerk of Court	Probate Court
ADDITIONS				
Taxes	$ 11,891,019	$ -	$ -	$ -
Fines and fees	-	28,004	1,022,091	58,453
Total additions	11,891,019	28,004	1,022,091	58,453
DEDUCTIONS				
Taxes and fees paid to other governments	16,211,439	-	-	-
Other custodial disbursements	-	23,604	1,049,506	59,658
Total deductions	16,211,439	23,604	1,049,506	59,658
Change in fiduciary net position	(4,320,420)	4,400	(27,415)	(1,205)
Net position, beginning of year	5,540,569	3,129	84,105	1,690
Net position, end of year	$ 1,220,149	$ 7,529	$ 56,690	$ 485

Magistrate Court	Commissary	Total
$ -	$ -	$ 11,891,019
125,974	402,917	1,637,439
125,974	402,917	13,528,458
-	-	16,211,439
124,426	364,114	1,621,308
124,426	364,114	17,832,747
1,548	38,803	(4,304,289)
4,103	46,490	5,680,086
$ 5,651	$ 85,293	$ 1,375,797

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF
SPECIAL PURPOSE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX PROCEEDS - 2014 ISSUE
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

Project Description	Original Estimated Cost	Revised Estimated Cost	Expenditures		
			Prior Years	Current Year	Total
Pierce County:					
Pay Revenue Bonds	$ 3,004,000	$ 3,004,000	$ 2,403,442	$ -	$ 2,403,442
Building and Maintaining Road, Bridges and Streets	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,155,561	-	1,155,561
Public Safety	900,000	900,000	773,691	-	773,691
Law Enforcement Capital Improvements	100,000	100,000	229,232	-	229,232
Public Works	1,000,000	1,000,000	816,694	-	816,694
Cultural and Recreational Facilities	691,700	671,700	399,357	-	399,357
City of Blackshear:					
Water and Sewer Infrastructure	1,773,200	1,773,200	1,400,388	-	1,400,388
Public Safety	220,000	220,000	179,951	-	179,951
Road Maintenance	561,000	561,000	701,503	-	701,503
Recreational	138,600	138,600	107,847	-	107,847
Downtown Development Facilities	24,200	24,200	19,359	-	19,359
Road and Street Construction and Maintenance	495,000	495,000	581,064	-	581,064
City of Patterson:					
Road and Street Construction	80,034	80,034	75,685	-	75,685
Recreational Facility	97,314	97,314	92,326	-	92,326
Public Safety	23,192	23,192	17,876	-	17,876
Capital Outlay for Eagle Station	557,360	557,360	527,079	-	527,079
City of Offerman:					
Roads and Streets	275,000	275,000	260,062	-	260,062
Cultural and Recreational Facilities	59,400	59,400	46,547	-	46,547
Total	$ 11,000,000	$ 10,980,000	$ 9,787,664	$ -	$ 9,787,664

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF
SPECIAL PURPOSE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX PROCEEDS - 2020 ISSUE
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

Project Description	Original Estimated Cost	Revised Estimated Cost	Expenditures		
			Prior Years	Current Year	Total
Pierce County:					
Pay Revenue Bonds (through July 2023)	$ 1,320,000	$ 1,320,000	$ 1,025,562	$ 232,461	$ 1,258,023
Facility Construction and Capital Improvements					
Through July 2023	1,269,600	1,269,600	216,215	438,770	654,985
From August 2023 through March 2026	2,071,680	2,071,680	-	-	-
Road Construction and Maintenance	1,728,000	1,728,000	227,580	247,243	474,823
Public Safety Capital Improvements	1,872,000	1,872,000	445,382	95,000	540,382
Cultural and Recreational Facilities	1,152,000	1,152,000	61,008	-	61,008
City of Blackshear:					
Road Maintenance and Construction	889,200	889,200	394,917	171,356	566,273
Water and Sewer Construction and Maintenance	1,991,808	1,991,808	910,583	383,837	1,294,420
Public Safety	335,680	335,680	162,605	68,542	231,147
Recreational - History - Downtown	320,112	320,112	146,337	61,688	208,025
City of Patterson:					
Road and Street Construction	49,608	49,608	22,679	9,560	32,239
Downtown Development Facilities	148,824	148,824	68,037	28,680	96,717
Recreational Facility	19,843	19,843	9,071	3,831	12,902
Public Safety	148,824	148,824	68,034	28,680	96,714
Eagle Station	128,981	128,981	58,963	24,856	83,819
Water and Sewer Infrastructure	496,080	496,080	226,780	95,599	322,379
City of Offerman:					
Roads and Streets	218,800	218,800	105,856	77,994	183,850
Recreation and Cultural	218,800	218,800	105,856	42,173	148,029
Total	$ 14,379,840	$ 14,379,840	$ 4,255,465	$ 2,010,270	$ 6,265,735

COMPLIANCE SECTION

MAULDIN & JENKINS
CPAs & ADVISORS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH *GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS*

Board of Commissioners
of Pierce County, Georgia
Blackshear, Georgia

We have audited, 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, the financial statements of the governmental activities, business-type activities, the discretely presented component unit, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Pierce County, Georgia (the "County") as of and for the year ended December 31, 2023, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the County's basic financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated May 1, 2025. Our report includes a reference to other auditors who audited the financial statements of the Pierce County Health Department (the "Health Department") as described in our report on the County's financial statements. This report does not include the results of the other auditors' testing of internal control over financial reporting or compliance and other matters that are reported on separately by those auditors.

Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the County's internal control over financial reporting ("internal control") as a basis for designing the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the County's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the County's internal control.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and, therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. We identified a certain deficiency in internal control described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs as item 2023-001 that we consider to be a material weakness.

Report on Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the County's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. 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 an instance of noncompliance or other matter that is required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* which is described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs as item 2023-002.

Pierce County, Georgia's Responses to the Findings

Government Auditing Standards requires the auditor to perform limited procedures on the County's responses to the findings identified in our audit as described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs. The County's responses were not subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and, accordingly, we express no opinion on it.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC

Savannah, Georgia
May 1, 2025

MAULDIN & JENKINS
CPAs & ADVISORS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON COMPLIANCE FOR EACH MAJOR PROGRAM AND ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER COMPLIANCE REQUIRED BY THE UNIFORM GUIDANCE

Board of Commissioners
of Pierce County, Georgia
Blackshear, Georgia

Report on Compliance for Each Major Federal Program

Opinion on Each Major Federal Program

We have audited Pierce County, Georgia's (the "County") compliance with the types of compliance requirements identified as subject to audit in the OMB *Compliance Supplement* that could have a direct and material effect on each of the County's major federal programs for the year ended December 31, 2023. The County's major federal programs are identified in the Summary of Auditor's Results section of the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs.

In our opinion, the County complied, in all material respects, with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on each of its major federal programs for the year ended December 31, 2023.

Basis for Opinion on Each Major Federal Program

We conducted our audit of compliance in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and the audit requirements of Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* ("Uniform Guidance"). Our responsibilities under those standards and the Uniform Guidance are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance section of our report.

We are required to be independent of the County and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with 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 opinion on compliance for each major federal program. Our audit does not provide a legal determination of the County's compliance with the compliance requirements referred to above.

Responsibilities of Management for Compliance

Management is responsible for compliance with the requirements referred to above and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of effective internal control over compliance with the requirements of laws, statutes, regulations, rules, and provisions of contracts or grant agreements applicable to the County's federal programs.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether material noncompliance with the compliance requirements referred to above occurred, whether due to fraud or error, and express an opinion on the County's compliance based on our audit. 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, *Government Auditing Standards*, and the Uniform Guidance will always detect material noncompliance when it exists. The risk of not detecting material noncompliance resulting from fraud is higher than for that resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Noncompliance with the compliance requirements referred to above is considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, it would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user of the report on compliance about the County's compliance with the requirements of each major federal program as a whole.

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

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material noncompliance, 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 County's compliance with the compliance requirements referred to above and performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.
- Obtain an understanding of the County's internal control over compliance relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances and to test and report on internal control over compliance in accordance with the Uniform Guidance, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the County's internal control over compliance. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and any significant deficiencies and material weaknesses in internal control over compliance that we identified during the audit.

Report on Internal Control Over Compliance

A *deficiency in internal control over compliance* exists when the design or operation of a control over compliance does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program on a timely basis. A *material weakness in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance, such that there is a reasonable possibility that material noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program that is less severe than a material weakness in internal control over compliance, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control over compliance was for the limited purpose described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Compliance section above and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over compliance that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control over compliance. Given these limitations, during our audit, we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control over compliance that we consider to be material weaknesses, as defined above. However, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal control over compliance may exist that were not identified.

Our audit was not designed for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over compliance. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

The purpose of this report on internal control over compliance is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over compliance and the results of that testing based on the requirements of the Uniform Guidance. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC

Savannah, Georgia
May 1, 2025

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

Federal Grantor/Pass-Through Grantor/Program Title	Federal AL Number	Contract or Project Number	Total Expenditures
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY:			
Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds - COVID 19	21.027	NA	$ 684,183
Total U.S. Department of Treasury			684,183
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY:			
Assistance to Firefighters Grant	97.044	EMW-2021-FG-07266	70,141
Total U.S. Department of Homeland Security			70,141
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT			
Passed through Georgia Department of Community Affairs			
Community Development Block Grant	14.228	20-p-y-113-1-6155	182,594
Total U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development			182,594
Total Expenditures of Federal Awards			$ 936,918

See accompanying notes to Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

NOTES TO SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS
DECEMBER 31, 2023

NOTE 1. BASIS OF PRESENTATION

The accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards includes the federal grant activity of Pierce County, Georgia (the "County"), and is presented on the modified accrual basis of accounting.

The information in this schedule is presented in accordance with the requirements of Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.* Therefore, some amounts presented in the schedule may differ from amounts presented in, or used in the preparation of, the basic financial statements.

NOTE 2. DE MINIMIS INDIRECT COST RATE

The County chose not to use the 10% de minimis cost rate for the year ended December 31, 2023.

NOTE 3. NON-CASH AWARDS

The County did not receive non-cash federal awards during the year ended December 31, 2023.

NOTE 4. SUBRECIPIENTS

The County did not pass through any funds to subrecipients during the year ended December 31, 2023.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

SECTION I
SUMMARY OF AUDIT RESULTS

Financial Statements

Type of report the auditor issued on whether the financial statements audited were prepared in accordance with GAAP.	Unmodified
Internal control over financial reporting: Material weaknesses identified?	__X__ Yes ____ No
Significant deficiencies identified not considered to be material weaknesses?	____ Yes __X__ None Reported
Noncompliance material to financial statements noted?	__X__ Yes ____ No

Federal Awards

Internal control over major programs: Material weaknesses identified?	____ Yes __X__ No
Significant deficiencies identified not considered to be material weaknesses?	____ Yes __X__ None Reported
Type of report the auditor issued on compliance for major programs:	Unmodified
Any audit findings disclosed that are required to be reported in accordance with 2 CFR 200.516(a)?	____ Yes __X__ No

Identification of major program:

AL Number	Name of Federal Program or Cluster
21.027	**U.S. Department of Treasury** Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Dollar threshold used to distinguish between Type A and Type B programs:	$750,000
Auditee qualified as low-risk auditee?	___ Yes __X__ No

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

SECTION II
FINANCIAL STATEMENT FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

2023-001 Financial Findings Reporting and Year-end Close-out

Criteria: Internal controls are processes designed to provide reasonable assurance about the achievement of an entity's objectives with regard to the reliability of financial reporting, effectiveness and efficiency of operations, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Condition: The County required several significant year-end audit adjustments to properly report account balances.

Context: We addressed this matter with County officials, who determined the propriety of all respective details and reconciliations in order to produce trial balances and supporting documentation as of and for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2023.

Effect: The ultimate effect of the above condition includes a delayed conclusion to the 2023 fiscal year financial reporting process as well as the potential for errors and irregularities to occur and not be detected and corrected in a timely manner. As noted in the context, adjustments were required across all funds and a listing has been provided to management.

Cause: There was a lack of appropriate controls implemented at the County during the fiscal year to ensure that the year-end balances were properly recorded and reconciled.

Recommendation: We recommend the County continue to utilize their third-party accounting firm for assistance with adjusting account balances and performing the year-end close-out procedures in order to ensure all account balances are properly recorded at year-end.

Views of Responsible Officials and Planned Corrective Action: We concur with the finding. We will implement the necessary controls and procedures to ensure that balances are properly recorded and year-end close-out procedures are performed prior to the start of the annual audit process.

2023-002 ARPA Fund Budget

Criteria: The official code of Georgia ("O.C.G.A.") requires all special revenue funds to have a legally adopted budget.

Condition/Context: The County did not adopt an annual budget for the ARPA fund.

Effect: The County was not in compliance with the O.C.G.A.

Cause: There was a lack of appropriate controls implemented to ensure all special revenue fund budgets had a legally adopted budget.

SECTION II
FINANCIAL STATEMENT FINDINGS AND RESPONSES (CONTINUED)

2023-002 ARPA Fund Budget (Continued)

Recommendation: We recommend the County implement proper controls to ensure all funds that require a legally adopted budget are identified during the budget process.

Views of Responsible Officials and Planned Corrective Action: We concur with the finding. We will implement the necessary controls and procedures to ensure that a budget is adopted annually for all funds requiring such in accordance with the O.C.G.A.

SECTION III
FEDERAL AWARDS FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS

None reported.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF PRIOR YEAR FINDINGS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

STATUS OF PRIOR YEAR FINDINGS

2022-001 Financial Reporting and Year-end Close-out

Criteria: Internal controls are processes designed to provide reasonable assurance about the achievement of an entity's objectives with regard to the reliability of financial reporting, effectiveness and efficiency of operations, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Condition: The County required several significant year-end audit adjustments to properly report accounts receivable, accounts payable, accrued liabilities, and expenditures/expenses.

Status: Partially resolved – see finding 2023-001.

2022-002 Prior Period Adjustments

Criteria: Internal controls are processes designed to provide reasonable assurance about the achievement of an entity's objectives with regard to the reliability of financial reporting, effectiveness and efficiency of operations, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Condition: The County did not properly record unearned/unavailable revenue, governmental activities capital assets, and related revenues/expenses/expenditures which resulted in prior period adjustments. Additionally, the County did not implement GASB Statement No.84.

Status: Resolved.

PIERCE COUNTY, GEORGIA

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

KENNETH N. BENNETT, CHAIRMAN
TROY MATTOX, COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1
GRAHAM RALEY, COMMISSIONER DISTRICT2
RANDY DIXON, COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 3
DAVID LOWMAN, COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 4
RAPHEL MADDOX, COUNTY MANAGER
DONNA GOLDING, COUNTY CLERK



May 1, 2025

Dear Sir or Madam:
Please find below the Pierce County, GA corrective action plan for the audit findings and budget violations reported in the December 31, 2023 annual financial report.

2023-001 Financial Reporting and Year-end Closeout

Criteria: Internal controls are processes designed to provide reasonable assurance about the achievement of an entity's objectives with regard to the reliability of financial reporting, effectiveness and efficiency of operations, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
Condition: The County required several significant year-end audit adjustments to properly report account balances.
Views of Responsible Officials and Planned Corrective Action: We concur with the finding. We will implement the necessary controls and procedures to ensure that balances are properly recorded and year-end closeout procedures are performed prior to the start of the annual audit process.

2023-002 ARPA Budget

Criteria: The official code of Georgia (OCGA) requires all special revenue funds to have a legally adopted budget.
Condition/Context: The County did not adopt an annual budget for the ARPA fund.

Views of Responsible Officials and Planned Corrective Action: We concur with the finding. We will implement the necessary controls and procedures to ensure that a budget is adopted annually for all funds requiring such in accordance with the OCGA.
State Law Compliance – Expenditures exceed appropriations
Views of Responsible Officials and Planned Corrective Action: We concur. We will implement controls to ensure proper review of the County's budgets and appropriately amend the budgets throughout the year so that expenditures do not exceed appropriations at the legal level of budgetary control.

Please let us know if additional information is needed.

Thank you,

Raphel Maddox
County Administrator

Neal Bennett
County Commission Chairman

312 Nichols Street * Blackshear, Georgia 31516 * Phone (912) 449-2022 * Fax (912) 449-2024
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