



Contact:

Lauri-Ellen Smith, APR
Director, Community Relations
City of Pascagoula
Office: 228-938-6651 Mobile: 228-217-2824
Email: lsmith@cityofpascagoula.com

July 27, 2018

**Pascagoula Officials Seek Answers on Budget Shortfall
*State Auditor and District Attorney to Review Documents***

Today Mayor Dane Maxwell, Councilwoman Jennifer Colmer, Councilman Stephen Burrow and city staff members met with State Auditor Shad White and representatives from the District Attorney's office to discuss the recent forensic audit of the City of Pascagoula.

"At this time we have handed over a packet of documents to both the District Attorney and the Office of the State Auditor for their review. This includes city budgets and related documents for years 2012-2017 and the recent forensic audit commissioned by this administration.

"We initiated this action as we continue to seek a complete understanding of the severity of poor fiscal management practices in the past, and the extent to which any employees or officials were responsible or had knowledge of the financial mismanagement at the city.

"It must be reiterated that while we initiated these external reviews by state authorities, this administration is not involved in that process. We discovered this problem. We sought the assistance of a forensic auditor. We revealed the issue in a transparent manner and at a public forum, and we now leave it to the experts to make their determinations," said Mayor Maxwell.

Councilman Burrow added: "I emphasized to the Auditor the need for a full inquiry as to exactly what happened, recommend how to prevent this from occurring again, and work with us to chart a path for our City back to financial stability. The Auditor said he would do exactly that. He expressed great appreciation for the initiative we took in bringing this dire situation to light, immediately notifying his office of the audit findings, and how proactive we have been in furnishing him and his staff with information. I told the Auditor we would continue to do so."

"I greatly appreciate Shad White for taking time to come down to Pascagoula, and meeting with us in our hour of need. He recognizes the unprecedented circumstances our City faces in light of this forensic audit. His commitment to working with us quickly to get to the bottom of what happened is welcome news," Councilwoman Colmer said.

-MORE-

Pascagoula Leaders Turn Over Documents to State Authorities

“As for the current management team at the city, this council and myself: we are laser focused on three things: cutting expenses even further; exploring ways to increase revenue; and preparing/enacting a sound budget for fiscal year 2019. These actions are being taken in a responsible and strategic way.

“Together, we will achieve our ultimate goal of putting this great city on a clear path to restore solvency, respecting our quality of life and preventing mistakes that were made from ever being repeated,” Maxwell said.



603 WATTS AVE. - P.O. DRAWER 908 - PASCAGOULA, MS 39568-0908