

**NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2002**

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STATE OF OKLAHOMA
OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR AND INSPECTOR

JEFF A. McMAHAN
State Auditor and Inspector

July 7, 2003

TO THE CITIZENS OF
NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA

Transmitted herewith is the audit of Nowata County, Oklahoma, for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2002. A report of this type is critical in nature; however, we do not intend to imply that our audit failed to disclose commendable features in the present accounting and operating procedures of the County.

We wish to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the assistance and cooperation extended to our office during the course of our audit.

The Office of the State Auditor and Inspector is committed to serve the public interest by providing independent oversight and to issue reports that serve as a management tool to the state to ensure a government which is accountable to the people of the State of Oklahoma.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeff A. McMahon".

JEFF A. McMAHAN
State Auditor and Inspector

NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2002

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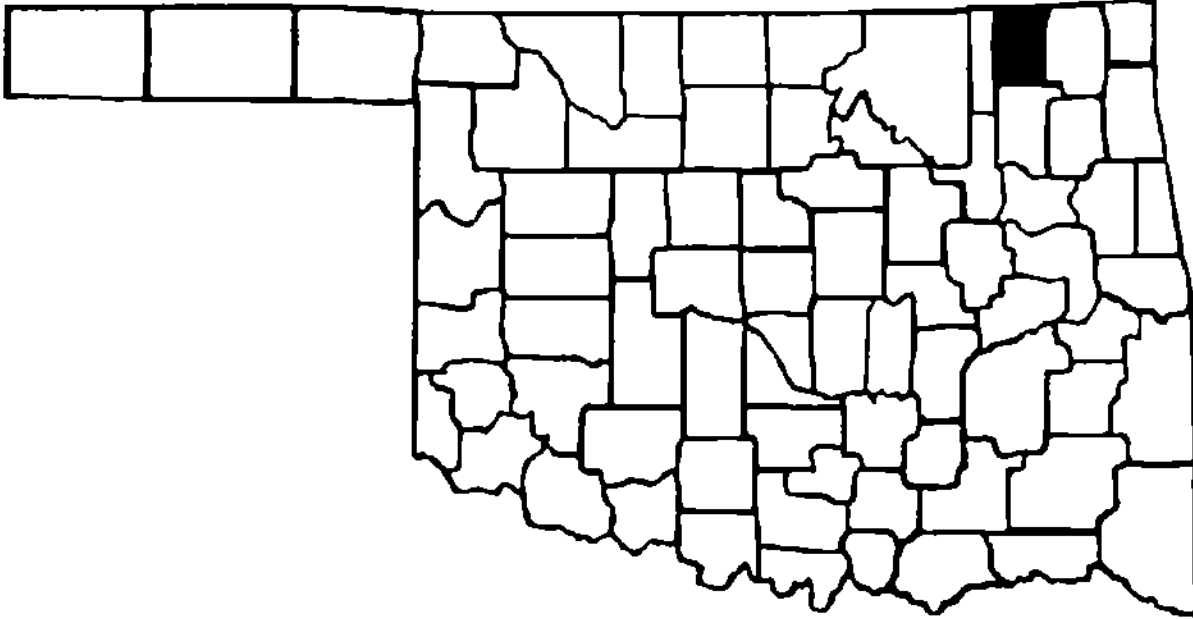
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REPORT TO THE CITIZENS
OF
NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA



Nowata County was created in 1907 from part of Recording District 3 in the old Cherokee Nation. The name came from the town of Nowata, which became the county seat.

In 1904, when oil and gas were discovered, Nowata County became known as the world's largest shallow oil field. Today, the county is principally agricultural, with cattle products accounting for more than half of the farm income and wheat as the second leading revenue source.

The Nowata County Courthouse is a historic site and the Verdigris River and other streams provide recreational and fishing opportunities.

County Seat – Nowata

Area – 565 Square Miles

County Population – 10,079
(1999 est.)

Farms - 764

Land in Farms – 309,446 Acres

Source: Oklahoma Almanac 2001-2002

See independent auditor's report.

**COUNTY OFFICIALS
AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

COUNTY ASSESSOR
Sandra Stanley
(D) Nowata

The County Assessor has the responsibility to appraise and assess the real and personal property within the county for the purpose of ad valorem taxation. Also, the County Assessor is required to compute the ad valorem taxes due on all taxable property. The County Assessor appraises all the taxable real and personal property according to its fair cash value for which the property is actually being used as of January 1 of the taxable year at the percentages provided for in Article 10, § 8 of the Oklahoma Constitution.

The County Assessor is required to build and maintain permanent records of the taxable real property and tax exempt real property within the county. Information entered on each record includes the property's legal description, owner's name and address, and the homestead exemption status of the owner.

COUNTY CLERK
Teresa Jackson
(D) Nowata

The County Clerk serves as the register of deeds and custodian of records for the county. The County Clerk also serves as the secretary to several boards, including the Board of County Commissioners, the County Excise Board, the County Board of Equalization, and the Board of Tax Roll Corrections.

The County Clerk reviews all the claims for payment of goods and services purchased or contracted by the county, and prepares the proper warrants for payment of those goods and services and the county payroll. The County Clerk, or his or her designated deputy, serves as the purchasing agent for the county. This system is a means to ensure the public that tax dollars are being spent appropriately.

Various records within the different county offices are classified as "open records." As such, they can be reviewed and mechanically copied by the public.

See independent auditor's report.

**COUNTY OFFICIALS
AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

DISTRICT #1
Charles Parker
(D) Alluwe

DISTRICT #2
Dale Epperson
(D) Nowata

DISTRICT #3
Joe Akers
(D) Delaware

The Board of County Commissioners is the chief administrative body for the county. County Commissioners are also responsible for maintaining and constructing the county roads and bridges.

The Commissioners must act as a Board when entering into contracts or other agreements affecting the county's welfare. Thus, actions taken by the Board are voted on and approved by a majority of the Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners' business meetings are open to the public.

As the county's chief administrative body, the three County Commissioners must make major financial decisions and transactions. The Board has the official duty to ensure the fiscal responsibility of the other county officers who handle county funds. The review and approval procedures empowered to the Board of County Commissioners are a means to provide the public with a fiscally efficient system of county government.

See independent auditor's report.

**COUNTY OFFICIALS
AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

COUNTY SHERIFF

James Hallet

(D) Nowata

The County Sheriff is responsible for preserving the peace and protecting life and property within the county's jurisdiction. As the county's chief law enforcement officer, the sheriff has the power and authority to suppress all unlawful disturbances, to apprehend and secure persons charged with felony or breach of peace, and to operate the county jail.

The County Sheriff has the responsibility of serving warrants and processing papers ordered by the District Court.

COUNTY TREASURER

Naydean Wesson

(D) Delaware

All revenues received by county government from ad valorem taxes and other sources are deposited with the County Treasurer. The County Treasurer collects ad valorem taxes for the county and its political subdivisions. The County Treasurer is authorized to issue delinquent personal property tax warrants and to impose tax liens on real property for delinquent taxes.

To account for county revenues and expenditures, the County Treasurer is required to maintain an accurate record of all the monies received and disbursed. The State Auditor and Inspector's Office prescribes all the forms used by the County Treasurer, and at least twice a year inspects the County Treasurer's accounts.

See independent auditor's report.

**COUNTY OFFICIALS
AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

COURT CLERK
Beverly McKee
(D) Nowata

The Court Clerk has the primary responsibility to record, file, and maintain as permanent records the proceedings of the District Court.

Court proceedings are recorded in the appropriate journal or record docket. All the court proceedings are public information except those related to juvenile, guardianship, adoption, and mental health cases.

The Court Clerk issues marriage licenses, passports, notary certificates, beer and pool hall licenses, and private process server licenses.

Monies from the court fund are identified for distribution by the Court Clerk to the appropriate units of county and state government. Court Clerks use forms and follow procedures prescribed by the Court Administrator's Office, the Oklahoma Supreme Court, and the State Auditor and Inspector.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Frederick Esser
(R) Bartlesville

As the chief attorney for county government, the District Attorney acts as the legal advisor to the county officers on matters related to their duties. The District Attorney represents the county in civil litigation. County officials may call upon the District Attorney to clarify a law or request an official interpretation from the Attorney General.

See independent auditor's report.

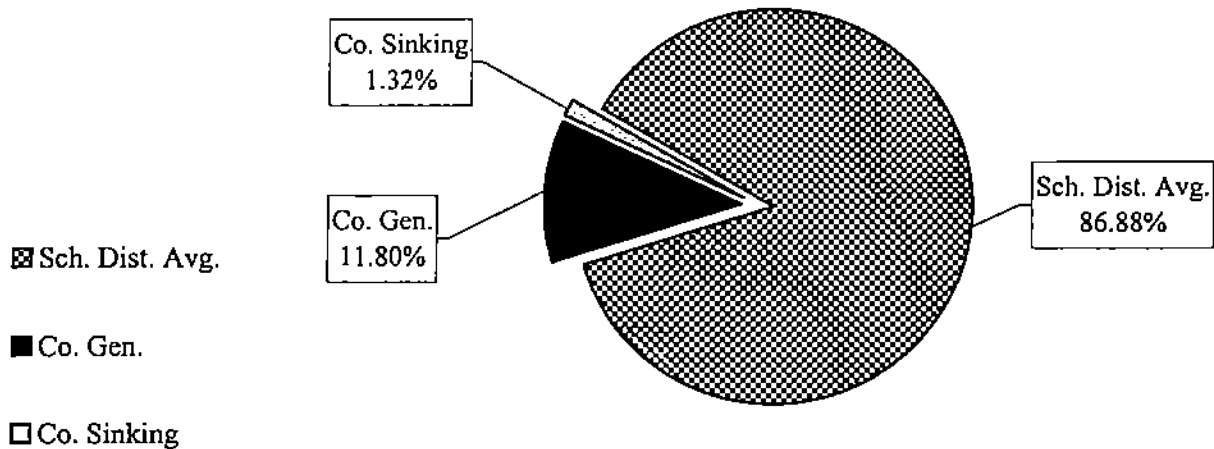
ELECTION BOARD SECRETARY
Barbara Dawson
(D) Nowata

The Election Board Secretary is appointed by the State Election Board and is the chief administrative officer of the County Election Board. The County Election Board has direct responsibility for all the ballots used in all elections within the county. The Board also conducts all elections held within the county.

To finance the operating expenses of the County Election Board, the County Excise Board must appropriate sufficient funds annually. The state and counties split the election costs, but counties must pay for any county elections not held concurrently with state elections.

**AD VALOREM TAX DISTRIBUTION
NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
SHARE OF THE AVERAGE MILLAGE**

Property taxes are calculated by applying a millage rate to the assessed valuation of property. Millage rates are established by the Oklahoma Constitution. One mill equals one-thousandth of a dollar. For example, if the assessed value of property is \$1,000.00 and the millage rate is 1.00, then the tax on that property is \$1.00. This chart shows the different entities of the County and their share of the various millages as authorized by the Constitution.



County-Wide Millages:

Co. General Fund	10.00
Co. Sinking	1.12

School District Millages:

	<u>Gen.</u>	<u>Bldg.</u>	<u>Skg.</u>
Nowata I-40	35.00	5.00	24.89
Okla. Union I-3	35.00	5.00	16.46
So. Coff. I-51	35.00	5.00	6.82
Copan I-4	35.00	5.00	6.38
Chelsea I-3	35.00	5.00	23.56

Vo-Tech

<u>Gen</u>	<u>Bldg</u>	<u>Common</u>	<u>Total</u>
10.00	5.00	4.00	83.89
10.00	5.00	4.00	75.46
10.00	5.00	4.00	65.82
10.00	5.00	4.00	65.38
10.00		4.00	77.56

See independent auditor's report.

Independent Auditor's Report



STATE OF OKLAHOMA
OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR AND INSPECTOR

JEFF A. McMAHAN
State Auditor and Inspector

Independent Auditor's Report

TO THE OFFICERS OF
NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA

We have audited the accompanying general-purpose financial statements of Nowata County, Oklahoma, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2002, as listed in the table of contents. These general-purpose financial statements are the responsibility of Nowata County's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these general-purpose financial statements based on our audit.

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. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

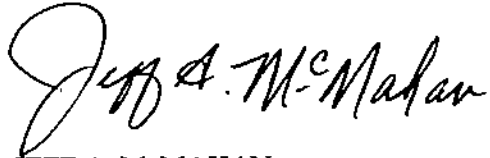
As explained in Note 1(H), the general-purpose financial statements referred to above do not include the general fixed assets account group, which should be included in order to conform with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The amount that should be recorded in the general fixed assets account group is not known.

In our opinion, except for the effect on the general-purpose financial statements of the omission described in the preceding paragraph, the general-purpose financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Nowata County, Oklahoma, as of June 30, 2002, and the results of its operations for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated February 27, 2003, on our consideration of Nowata County's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations and contracts. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be read in conjunction with this report in considering the results of our audit.

Our audit was performed for the purpose of forming an opinion on the general-purpose financial statements of Nowata County, Oklahoma, taken as a whole. The other information listed in the table of contents under *Introductory Section* has not been audited by us, and accordingly, we express no opinion on such data.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff A. McMahar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

JEFF A. McMAHAN
State Auditor and Inspector

February 27, 2003

General-Purpose Financial Statements

NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
COMBINED BALANCE SHEET – ALL FUND TYPES AND ACCOUNT GROUP
JUNE 30, 2002

	Governmental Fund Types			Fiduciary Fund Types	Account Group	Total (Memorandum Only)
	General	Special Revenue	Debt Service	Trust and Agency	General Long-Term Debt	
ASSETS						
Cash	\$ 73,253	\$ 1,918,630	\$ 65,351	\$ 236,884	\$	\$ 2,294,118
Ad valorem taxes receivable	6,754		762	53,041		60,557
Sales tax receivable		36,815				36,815
Accrued interest receivable	3,286	603	48	69		4,006
Due from other governments	1,576	130,432		5,867		137,875
Amount available in debt service fund					66,161	66,161
Amount to be provided for retirement of general long-term debt					5,839	5,839
Amount to be provided for capitalized lease agreements					541,967	541,967
Total assets	\$ 84,869	\$ 2,086,480	\$ 66,161	\$ 295,861	\$ 613,967	\$ 3,147,338
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES						
Liabilities:						
Warrants payable	\$ 41,268	\$ 154,172	\$	\$	\$	\$ 195,440
Accounts payable	2,587	67,260				69,847
Due to other taxing units				109,017		109,017
Due to others				186,844		186,844
Bonds payable					72,000	72,000
Capitalized lease obligations payable					541,967	541,967
Total liabilities	43,855	221,432	-	295,861	613,967	1,175,115
Fund balances:						
Reserved for encumbrances	4,294	25,286				29,580
Reserved for debt service			66,161			66,161
Unreserved:						
Undesignated	36,720	1,839,762				1,876,482
Total fund balances	41,014	1,865,048	66,161	-	-	1,972,223
Total liabilities and fund balances	\$ 84,869	\$ 2,086,480	\$ 66,161	\$ 295,861	\$ 613,967	\$ 3,147,338

The notes to the financial statements are an integral part of this statement.

**NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
COMBINED STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN
FUND BALANCES - ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2002**

	Governmental Fund Types			Total (Memorandum Only)
	General	Special Revenue	Debt Service	
Revenues:				
Ad valorem taxes	\$ 355,181	\$	\$ 39,861	\$ 395,042
Sales tax		417,264		417,264
Charges for services	71,956	57,634		129,590
Miscellaneous	44,266	76,896	24,733	145,895
Intergovernmental	118,703	2,089,463		2,208,166
Total revenues	<u>590,106</u>	<u>2,641,257</u>	<u>64,594</u>	<u>3,295,957</u>
Expenditures:				
Current operating:				
General government	548,066	162,723		710,789
Public safety	108,550	502,938		611,488
Health and welfare		300		300
Culture and recreation	653	11,367		12,020
Education		28,352		28,352
Roads and highways		2,300,951		2,300,951
Debt service:				
Principal retirement			36,000	36,000
Interest and fiscal agent charges			5,400	5,400
Total expenditures	<u>657,269</u>	<u>3,006,631</u>	<u>41,400</u>	<u>3,705,300</u>
Excess of revenues over (under) expenditures	<u>(67,163)</u>	<u>(365,374)</u>	<u>23,194</u>	<u>(409,343)</u>
Other financing sources (uses):				
Capitalized lease agreements		423,827		423,827
Total other financing sources (uses)	<u>-</u>	<u>423,827</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>423,827</u>
Excess of revenues and other sources over (under) expenditures and other uses	<u>(67,163)</u>	<u>58,453</u>	<u>23,194</u>	<u>14,484</u>
Beginning fund balances	<u>108,177</u>	<u>1,806,595</u>	<u>42,967</u>	<u>1,957,739</u>
Ending fund balances	<u>\$ 41,014</u>	<u>\$ 1,865,048</u>	<u>\$ 66,161</u>	<u>\$ 1,972,223</u>

The notes to the financial statements are an integral part of this statement.

NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES
BUDGET AND ACTUAL - GENERAL FUND
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2002

	General		
	Budget	Actual	Variance
Beginning fund balances, budgetary basis	\$ 84,364	\$ 84,660	\$ 296
Revenues:			
Ad valorem taxes	328,365	354,278	25,913
Charges for services	66,799	71,957	5,158
Intergovernmental revenues	163,656	118,820	(44,836)
Miscellaneous revenues	72,254	55,249	(17,005)
Supplemental appropriations	1,548		(1,548)
Total revenues, budgetary basis	<u>632,622</u>	<u>600,304</u>	<u>(32,318)</u>
Expenditures:			
Current operating:			
General government	604,424	548,403	56,021
Public safety	110,562	109,458	1,104
Culture and recreation	2,000	1,999	1
Total expenditures, budgetary basis	<u>716,986</u>	<u>659,860</u>	<u>57,126</u>
Excess of revenues and beginning fund balances over expenditures	<u>\$ -</u>	25,104	<u>\$ 25,104</u>
Reconciliation to Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances			
Add: Ad valorem taxes receivable		6,754	
Due from other governments		1,576	
Accrued interest receivable		3,286	
Reserved for encumbrances		4,294	
Ending fund balances		<u>\$ 41,014</u>	

The notes to the financial statements are an integral part of this statement.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial statements of the County are required to be presented in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America as applied to government units. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is the accepted standard-setting body for establishing governmental accounting and financial reporting principles. The more significant accounting policies and practices are described below.

A. Financial Reporting Entity

Counties were created by the Constitution of Oklahoma. One county officer is appointed; however, most county officers are locally elected by their constituents. All county powers are delegated by the state.

In accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial statements of the reporting entity are required to include those of Nowata County (the primary government) and its legally separate component units. The County has no component units.

Related Organization Excluded From the Reporting Entity

The County's officials are responsible for appointing the members of the board of another organization, but the County's accountability for this organization does not extend beyond making the appointments. The following organization is not included in the financial statements.

Nowata County Industrial Authority

B. Fund Accounting

The government uses funds and account groups to report on its financial position and the results of its operations. Fund accounting is designed to demonstrate legal compliance and to aid financial management by segregating transactions related to certain government functions or activities.

A fund is a separate accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. An account group is a financial reporting device designed to provide accountability for certain assets and liabilities that are not recorded in the funds because they do not directly affect net expendable available financial resources.

Funds are classified into two major categories: governmental and fiduciary.

Governmental Funds

Governmental funds are used to account for all or most of a government's general activities, including the collection and disbursement of earmarked monies (special revenue funds), and the

Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

servicing of general long-term debt (debt service funds). The general fund is used to account for the activities of the general government not accounted for in some other fund.

Fiduciary Funds

Fiduciary funds are used to account for assets held on behalf of outside parties, including other governments, or on behalf of other funds within the government. Agency funds are generally used to account for assets that the government holds on behalf of others as their agent.

Account Groups

General Fixed Assets Account Group (GFAAG) - Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the fixed assets of a government be reported in a general fixed assets account group (GFAAG). This account group is not a fund. It does not have a balance sheet as such, nor does it report operations. Instead, the GFAAG serves as a list of the government's fixed assets and is designed to ensure accountability.

General Long-Term Debt Account Group (GLTDAG) - The general long-term debt account group (GLTDAG) is used to account for a government's unmatured long-term indebtedness that has not been identified as a specific fund liability of a trust fund. In addition to general obligation debt instruments (e.g., bonds, notes), the GLTDAG is also used to report revenue bonds that will be repaid from general government resources, special assessment debt when the government is "obligated in some manner," special revenue bonds, and certain liabilities that are normally not expected to be liquidated with expendable available financial resources (e.g., capitalized lease-purchase obligations).

C. Measurement Focus and Basis of Accounting

The accounting and financial reporting treatment applied to a fund is determined by its measurement focus and basis of accounting. All governmental fund types are accounted for using a current financial resources measurement focus. With this measurement focus, only current assets and current liabilities are generally included on the balance sheet. Operating statements of these fund types present increases (i.e., revenues and other financing sources) and decreases (i.e., expenditures and other financing uses) in net current assets.

The modified accrual basis of accounting is used by all governmental fund types and agency funds. Under the modified accrual basis of accounting, revenues are recognized when susceptible to accrual (i.e., when they become both measurable and available). "Measurable" means the amount of the transaction can be quantified, and "available" means collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to be used to pay liabilities of the current period. The government considers property taxes as available if collected within 60 days after year-end. Expenditures are recorded when incurred and the related fund liability is expected to be paid from available spendable resources. Principal and interest on general long-term debt are recorded as fund expenditures when paid or when amounts for principal and interest have been accumulated in the debt service fund for payments to be made early in the following year.

NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
JUNE 30, 2002

Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Those revenues susceptible to accrual are property taxes, sales tax, interest revenue, and other taxes collected and held by the Oklahoma Tax Commission at year-end on behalf of the government. Charges for services are not susceptible to accrual because generally they are not measurable until received in cash.

D. Budgetary Policies and Procedures

Under current Oklahoma Statutes, the general fund is the only fund required to adopt a formal budget. The budget presented for the general fund includes the originally approved budgeted appropriations for expenditures as adjusted for supplemental appropriations and approved transfers between budget categories. Appropriations for the highway funds and other cash funds are made on a monthly basis, according to the funds then available.

Encumbrance accounting, under which purchase orders, contracts, and other commitments for the expenditure of monies are recorded in order to reserve that portion of the applicable appropriation, is employed as an extension of formal budgetary integration in the general and special revenue funds.

Any encumbrances outstanding at year-end are reported as reservations of fund balances since they do not constitute expenditures or liabilities. At the end of the year, unencumbered appropriations are lapsed.

The Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances - Budget and Actual - General Fund presents comparisons of the legally adopted budget with actual data. The "actual" data, as presented in the comparison of budget and actual, will differ from the data as presented in the Combined Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances - All Governmental Fund Types because of adopting certain aspects of the modified accrual basis of accounting and the adjusting of encumbrances to their related budget year.

E. Cash

The County pools cash resources of its various funds to facilitate the management of cash. Cash applicable to a particular fund is readily identifiable. The balance in the pooled cash accounts is available to meet current operating requirements.

F. Receivables

All receivables are reported at their gross value.

G. Interest Receivable

Interest on deposits is recorded as revenue in the year the interest is earned and is available to pay liabilities of the current period.

Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

H. Fixed Assets

The County presently maintains some individual records of personal property; however, the County does not keep similar records for land, buildings, and improvements. Because the County does not maintain detailed records of its land, buildings, and improvements, a statement of general fixed assets, required by accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, is not presented on the Combined Balance Sheet - All Fund Types and Account Group.

I. Risk Management

The County is exposed to various risks of loss as follows:

<u>Types of Loss</u>	<u>Method Managed</u>	<u>Risk of Loss Retained</u>
General Liability - Torts - Errors and Omissions - Law Enforcement Officers Liability - Vehicle	The County participates in a public entity risk pool; Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma-Self-Insured Group. (See ACCO-SIG.)	If claims exceed pool assets, the County would have to pay its share of the pool deficit.
Physical Plant - Theft - Damage to Assets - Natural Disasters	The County participates in a public entity risk pool. (See ACCO-SIG.)	If claims exceed pool assets, the County would have to pay its share of the pool deficit.
Worker's Compensation - Employees' Injuries	The County participates in a public entity risk pool; Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma-Self-Insured Fund. (See ACCO-SIF.)	If claims exceed pool assets, the County would have to pay its share of the pool deficit.
Health and Life - Medical - Disability - Dental - Life	The County participates in the Oklahoma Public Employees Health and Welfare Plan. (See OPEH&WP.)	If claims exceed authorized deductibles, the County would have surcharges assessed to pay the excess claims.

ACCO-SIG - The pool operates as a common risk management and insurance program and is to be self-sustaining through member premiums. Each participating county will pay a deductible amount (\$1,000 to \$10,000; Nowata County has a \$5,000 deductible) for each insured event as stated in the County's "Certificate of Participation." The risk pool will pay legitimate claims in excess of the deductible amounts up to and including \$50,000 per insured event. The pool has acquired commercial

NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
JUNE 30, 2002

Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

reinsurance to cover claims in excess of \$50,000 up to \$1,000,000 limit per insured event. The pool, established in 1986, has never had to assess additional premiums to be paid by its members.

ACCO-SIF - The pool operates as a common risk management and insurance program and is to be self-sustaining through member premiums. ACCO-SIF was set up in 1984 and will pay legitimate worker's compensation claims up to \$500,000 per incident. A reinsurance policy, with no limit, pays claims that exceed \$500,000 for a particular incident. The pool has not assessed additional premiums to be paid by its members in the past three years.

OPEH&WP - The County has entered into an interlocal agreement with other governmental entities to participate in a pooled self-insurance fund to provide insurance coverage. The pool provides for surcharges to be assessed for claims in excess of pool assets to offset pool deficits. The pool has assessed additional premiums to be paid by its members in the current fiscal year.

J. Compensated Absences

The County does not accrue any liability for future vacation benefits. Vacation benefits are earned by the employee during the year and must be taken during the year earned.

Annual leave is accrued at the following rates:

<u>Years of Service</u>	<u>Amount of Leave</u>
0-6 Months	1 Week
6 Mo. – 5 Years	2 Weeks
5 Years and Over	3 Weeks

This amount of accumulated unpaid vacation benefits is not material to the financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2002.

Sick leave is earned at the rate of 10 hours per month. Employees are not paid for accumulated sick leave at termination. All benefits for sick leave are based on occurrences outside the County's or employee's control which have not yet occurred; hence, no liability exists at June 30, 2002.

K. Long-Term Obligations

The County reports long-term debt of governmental funds at face value in the general long-term debt account group. Certain other governmental fund obligations not expected to be financed with current available financial resources are also reported in the general long-term debt account group.

Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

L. Memorandum Only - Total Columns

Total columns on the financial statements are captioned "memorandum only" to indicate that they are presented only to facilitate financial analysis. Data in these columns do not present financial position or results of operations in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Interfund transactions have not been eliminated from the total column of each financial statement.

2. Stewardship, Compliance, and Accountability

Budgetary Compliance

On or before the first Monday in July of each year, each officer or department head submits an estimate of needs to the governing body. The budget is approved by fund, office or department, and object. The County Board of Commissioners may approve changes of appropriations within the fund by office or department and object. To increase or decrease the budget by fund requires approval by the County Excise Board.

3. Detailed Notes on Account Balances

Title 62 O.S. § 348.1 authorizes the County Treasurer to invest in:

- U.S. Government obligations
- Certificates of deposit
- Saving accounts
- G.O. bonds issued by counties, municipalities, or school districts
- Money judgments against counties, municipalities, or school districts
- Bonds and revenue notes issued by a public trust when the beneficiary of the trust is a county, municipality, or school district

A. Deposits

At year-end, the carrying amount of the County's deposits was \$ 2,294,118 and the bank balance was \$ 2,367,433. Of the bank balance, all funds were covered by federal depository insurance or collateral held by the County's agent in the County's name.

B. Receivables

The County's property tax is levied each October 1 on the assessed value listed as of January 1 of the same year for all real and personal property located in the County, except certain exempt property. Assessed values are established by the County Assessor within the prescribed guidelines established by the Oklahoma Tax Commission and the State Equalization Board. Title 68 O.S. § 2820.A. states, "... Each assessor shall thereafter maintain an active and systematic program of visual inspection on

NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
JUNE 30, 2002

Detailed Notes on Account Balances (continued)

a continuous basis and shall establish an inspection schedule which will result in the individual visual inspection of all taxable property within the county at least once every four (4) years.”

The net assessed property value as of January 1, 2001, was \$ 35,135,067.

The County levied 10 mills for general fund operations and 1.12 mills for debt service. In addition, the County also collects the ad valorem taxes assessed by cities and towns and school districts and apportions the ad valorem taxes collected to the appropriate taxing units.

Taxes are due on November 1 following the levy date, although, they may be paid in two equal installments. If the first half is paid prior to January 1, the second half is not delinquent until April 1. Unpaid real property taxes become a lien upon said property on October 1 of each year. Unpaid delinquent personal property taxes are published usually in May. If the taxes are not paid within 30 days from publication, they shall be placed on the personal tax lien docket.

Current year tax collections for the year ended June 30, 2002, were approximately 95 percent of the tax levy.

C. Pension Plan

Plan Description. The County contributes to the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement Plan (the Plan), a cost-sharing, multiple-employer defined benefit pension plan administered by the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS). Benefit provisions are established and amended by the Oklahoma Legislature. The Plan provides retirement, disability, and death benefits to Plan members and beneficiaries. Title 74, Sections 901 through 943, as amended, establishes the provisions of the Plan. OPERS issues a publicly available financial report that includes financial statements and supplementary information. That report may be obtained by writing OPERS, P.O. Box 53007, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105 or by calling 1-800-733-9008.

Funding Policy. The contribution rates for each member category are established by the Oklahoma Legislature and are based on an actuarial calculation which is performed to determine the adequacy of contribution rates. County employees are required to contribute between 3.5% and 8.5% of earned compensation. The County contributes between 5.0% and 10.0% of earned compensation. Elected officials could contribute between 4.5% and 10% of their entire compensation. The County contributes 10.0% of earned compensation for elected officials. The County's contributions to the Plan for the years ending June 30, 2002, 2001, and 2000, were \$115,502, \$109,406, and \$109,636, respectively, equal to the required contributions for each year.

D. Capital Leases

The County acquires road machinery and equipment through lease-purchase agreements financed by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and/or the equipment vendors or their assignees pursuant to the provisions of 69 O.S. § 636.1 through § 636.7. Lease agreements entered into with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) are interest free. However, starting in January 1997, ODOT began charging a one-time fee of 3% on all subsequent pieces of machinery acquired.

NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
 NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
 JUNE 30, 2002

Detailed Notes on Account Balances (continued)

Oklahoma Statutes prohibit the County from entering into contracts of this nature longer than one year. For this reason, these lease-purchase agreements do not qualify for capitalization until the year the lease-purchase agreements are completed and title to the equipment is transferred to the County. However, it is the County's intent to exercise its right to purchase this property; accordingly, the lease-purchase agreements have been capitalized to conform with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The unpaid portions of these agreements have been reflected as capitalized lease obligations within the general long-term debt account group.

Providing all capital leases are renewed each year by resolution of the Board of Commissioners, minimum lease commitments under capitalized lease-purchase agreements as of June 30, 2002, are as follows:

Year Ending June 30,	Principal	Interest	Total
2003	\$ 91,855	\$ 28,850	\$ 120,705
2004	92,212	23,562	115,774
2005	89,515	18,235	107,750
2006	86,084	13,146	99,230
2007	86,652	8,167	94,819
2008 & thereafter	95,649	4,979	100,628
Total	\$ 541,967	\$ 96,939	\$ 638,906

During the year, the County capitalized leases totaling \$423,827 and paid \$108,303 on the outstanding balances of lease-purchase agreements.

E. Long-Term Debt

General Obligation Bonds

The government issues general obligation bonds to provide funds for the acquisition and construction of major capital facilities.

NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA
 NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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Detailed Notes on Account Balances (continued)

General obligation bonds are direct obligations and pledge the full faith and credit of the government. These bonds are required to be fully paid within 25 years from the date of issue. General obligation bonds currently outstanding are as follows:

Purpose	Interest Rates	Amount
Nowata County General Obligation Limited Tax Bonds of 1993	6%	\$ 72,000

Annual debt service requirements to maturity for general obligation bonds are as follows:

Fiscal Year Ending June 30,	Principal	Interest	Total
2003	\$ 36,000	\$ 3,240	\$ 39,240
2004	36,000	1,080	37,080
Total	\$ 72,000	\$ 4,320	\$ 76,320

Changes in Long-Term Debt

During the year ended June 30, 2002, the following changes occurred in liabilities reported in the general long-term debt account group:

	Balance July 1, 2001	Additions	Reductions	Balance June 30, 2002
General Obligation Debt	\$ 108,000	\$	\$ 36,000	\$ 72,000
Capital leases	226,443	423,827	108,303	541,967
Total	\$ 334,443	\$ 423,827	\$ 144,303	\$ 613,967

Detailed Notes on Account Balances (continued)

F. Fund Equity

Reservations of fund balances of governmental funds are established to either (1) satisfy legal covenants that require a portion of the fund balance be segregated or (2) identify the portion of the fund balance that is not appropriate for future expenditures. Specific reservations of the fund balance accounts are summarized below:

Reserved for Encumbrances – The reserve for encumbrances represents encumbrances outstanding at the end of the year based on purchase orders and contracts signed by the County but not completed as of the close of the fiscal year.

Reserved for Debt Service – The reserve for debt service was established to indicate that the fund balance or portion thereof is required by law to be used for the payment of any outstanding bonds, interest, or judgments against the County.

G. Sales Tax

On September 15, 1992, Nowata County voters approved a one-cent sales tax. The tax ran for four years, and on October 21, 1996, was permanently modified to one-half cent effective November 1, 1996. The purpose of the tax is the construction, maintenance and operation of a modern jail facility, and operation of the Nowata County Sheriff's Department. The one-half cent sales tax is apportioned to the general fund for the operation of the Sheriff's Department.

On November 3, 1998, Nowata County voters approved a one half-cent sales tax effective January 1, 1999, for the construction, operation and maintenance of the county road and bridge system of Nowata County, Oklahoma. The one-half cent sales tax is apportioned to the county highway sales tax fund for the designated purpose.

H. Fuel Taxes

The County receives major funding for roads and highways from a state imposed fuel tax. Taxes are collected by the Oklahoma Tax Commission. Taxes are imposed on all gasoline, diesel, and special fuel sales statewide. The County's share is determined on formulas based on county population, road miles, and land area and is remitted to the County monthly. These funds are earmarked for roads and highways only and are accounted for in the County highway fund. The County highway fund is reported herein as "special revenue," and the fuel tax revenue is presented as "intergovernmental."

4. Contingent Liabilities

The government is a defendant in various lawsuits. Although the outcome of these lawsuits is not presently determinable, in the opinion of the County management, the resolution of these matters will not have a material adverse effect on the financial condition of the government.

**Report on Compliance and on Internal Control Over Financial
Reporting Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With
*Government Auditing Standards***



STATE OF OKLAHOMA
OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR AND INSPECTOR

JEFF A. McMAHAN
State Auditor and Inspector

**Report on Compliance and on Internal Control Over Financial
Reporting Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With
*Government Auditing Standards***

TO THE OFFICERS OF
NOWATA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA

We have audited the financial statements of Nowata County, Oklahoma, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2002, and have issued our report thereon dated February 27, 2003. We qualified our opinion because the general fixed assets account group was not included in the financial statements. 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.

Compliance

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether Nowata County's financial statements are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, and contracts, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. 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 no instances of noncompliance that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit, we considered Nowata County's internal control over financial reporting in order to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements and not to provide assurance on the internal control over financial reporting. However, we noted a certain matter involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operation that we consider to be a reportable condition. Reportable conditions involve matters coming to our attention relating to significant deficiencies in the design or operation of the internal control over financial reporting that, in our judgment, could adversely affect the County's ability to record, process, summarize, and report financial data consistent with the assertions of management in the financial statements. The reportable condition is described below.

Finding 98-1 - (Repeat Finding)

Criteria: Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America for a governmental entity using governmental fund types require the presentation of the general fixed assets account group (GFAAG) in the financial statements.

Condition: Information is not available for reporting general fixed assets in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America for a government entity. The County does not maintain a summary listing with the required information for land, buildings, and improvements. The general fixed assets control account is not accurate.

Effect: This component of internal control is not effective. Accordingly, there is a greater risk that a fixed asset may not be properly accounted for and safeguarded against loss.

Recommendation: We recommend records include acquisition cost, a complete description, purchase date, location of such asset, and that a control total of the cost of these assets be maintained and reconciled annually.

Management's Corrective Action Plan-

Contact Person: Teresa Jackson, Nowata County Clerk

Anticipated Completion Date: None

Corrective Action Planned: No planned corrective action is anticipated to obtain fixed assets records in such a manner that general fixed assets could be reported in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

A material weakness is a condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial statements being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions. Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control that might be reportable conditions, and accordingly, would not necessarily disclose all reportable conditions that are also considered to be material weaknesses. However, we consider the reportable condition described above to be a material weakness.

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants' Statement on Auditing Standards No. 87 requires the inclusion of the following paragraph in this report:

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the management of the County and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

However, the Oklahoma Open Records Act states that all records of public bodies and public officials shall be open to any person, except as specifically exempted. The purpose of this Act is to ensure and facilitate the public's right of access to and review of government records so they may efficiently and intelligently exercise their inherent political power. Therefore, this report is a matter of public record and its distribution is in no way limited or restricted.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff A. McMahhan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

JEFF A. McMAHAN
State Auditor and Inspector

February 27, 2003