

***When they talk about the former City Manager –
they mean Alfred Grieshaber***

Archer audit shows progress, state says

Sarah Nelson^[P]_[SEP] Staff writer

A new state audit shows Archer has made progress in how the city operates after a 2016 report revealed several deficiencies.

Florida's Auditor General listed 14 findings in 2016 for the city to correct across a spectrum of activities. The report said the city did not always track employee work time, sick leave, employee performance forms or whether employees used travel expenditures strictly for city business.

The report also said the assistant city manager was given seven payroll advances, despite state law prohibiting municipalities from giving credit to aid any person. Archer also paid more than \$2,900 to the former city manager for unused sick leave.

The 2018 audit, released on Dec. 20, said the city has corrected five of the findings, partially corrected seven, and not corrected two.

Among the corrections, administration took away city manager authority to grant payroll advances, created new anti-fraud policies, passed an ordinance to ensure all service contract agreements are now in writing, and mandated the city provides records and approves all purchases for professional services.

The city has yet to provide proof that employees meet its education and experience requirements. In the time frame examined by the auditor, Archer possessed no evidence of a newly hired employee's work experience, which turned out to be just one month of bookkeeping. The report said the former city manager told an administrative staff not to contact the former employer to verify the individual's experience.

Employee travel practices were also left uncorrected. Travel authorization forms did not always show approval for trips to conferences or conventions. Auditors found three conference registration fees totaling \$1,500 yet no records showing the event agendas. Forms revealing 15 travel expenses for \$5,325 in lodging, rental cars and meal fees did not detail the purpose of travel.

The city also did not show travel voucher forms to support travel expenses.

Archer City Commission members were not available for comment because of the holiday.

In 2015, a group of Archer residents joined together to voice worries over how the city was being run. The Concerned Citizens of Archer said the city was overcharging on water bills and using city credit cards for questionable expenses.

They managed to get 185 signatures on a petition for the state to conduct the 2016 audit.

Archer had a population of about 1,165 in 2017, according to the latest audit report.