



Edit Referral

H-24-267 Referral Information

Hotline ID: H-24-267

Date of Submission: 6/11/2024

Entity Type: Local

Entity Category Type: City/Town

Entity: Mabton, City of

Sub Entity Name:

Category: Accounting/Financial Reporting

1-2 sentence description of concern: Budget Approval for 2023 and 2024 and USDA loan

Report Issued: No

Reporting Type: Exit Item

Report Number:

Investigation Contracted: No

Contract Number:

Contract Name:

Billing Time Code:

Costs:

Public Records Request: Yes

Flag For Annual Report: No

Substantiated: No

ARRA: No

Action: Referred to Audit Team - Consider Next Audit

Audit Team: Yakima

Audit Team Contact: stranda@sao.wa.gov

cc: AMY Bunger (bungera@sao.wa.gov)

Referral Date: 6/12/2024

Action Taken: No

Response Date:

Report Date:

Follow Up Date:

Date Closed: 5/16/2025

H-24-267 Contact Information

Hotline ID: H-24-267

Date of Submission: 6/11/2024

Submission Method: Web

Submission Type: Citizen

Staff:

Author(Last, First): Luna , Adriana

Address:

City:

State: WA **Zip:**

Home Phone:

Work Phone:

Mobile Phone:

Email: adrianaluna99@gmail.com

Contact Preference: Email

Waived Confidentiality: Yes

H-24-267 Referral Details

Hotline ID:

H-24-267

What state or local organization is involved?

Please identify the specific concerns you are hoping the audit will address.

Budget Approval for 2023 and 2024 and USDA loan

Please provide a detailed description of the assertion or outstanding achievement, including who, when, where, what, how and how much.

I have been going to the council meetings' since last year. The budget for 2023 is not posted on the city website, the council members have been warning Mayor Rachel about operating the city with no budget.

How did this issue come to your attention?

Last year when our town had an awful experience with our water, I and a group of residents started investigating where our ARPA funds were allocated. We noticed that the budget for 2023 had not been uploaded and as residents started asking questions. Mayor Ruelas would not give any type of answer to no one, until the new council stepped in in 2024. The council started to ask questions with no results, we are in June of 2024 and the budget for 2023 and 2024 has not been approved or brought to the council for review. The council member has requested this multiple times, and since Mayor Ruelas refuses to live stream I and another resident have been recording all this for evidence. We have audio and video, that I'm willing to provide. Mayor Ruelas put on the record that the auditors have told her the city is in good standing. How can that be is not to long ago a USDA representative reached out to one of our group members letting her know that Mayor Ruelas has been avoiding their emails and had not been reporting for the past 2 years! The USDA had to send Mayor Ruelas a threat email stating that they will default on the loan if she doesn't comply. I put in a public request on this matter, requesting any emails related to the USDA loan on April 24th, 2024, and on May 1st after the acknowledgement of my request, the Deputy Clerk extended my request to May 10th 2024. Since that last email I haven't heard from them again. Tonight, there is a Council meeting where again for the third time I will be putting on record for the administration to please provide me with my public records request. I have been asking Mayor Ruelas at the council meetings with no luck. I urge your office to investigate these matters thoroughly and take appropriate action to address the transparency and ensure accountability. Please send a forensic auditor to audit this specific administration.

What employee(s), contractors, etc., were involved in the assertion or achievement? Please include employee titles if possible.

Please provide the names of any witnesses to the assertion or achievement, if possible.

Please provide any additional details or comments that would help us understand your assertion or achievement.

The budget for the fiscal years 2023 and 2024 has not been approved, resulting in financial instability. Despite repeated requests and the pressing need for a clear and operational budget, Mayor Ruelas has failed to take the necessary steps to secure its approval. In the absence of an approved budget, the city has been approving invoices and holding city events without proper financial oversight. Furthermore, Mayor Ruelas has been organizing these events without bringing them to the council for approval, bypassing the required protocols. Additionally, there have been no reports on the USDA loan for the past two years, leaving residents in the dark about the status and management of these funds. Moreover, a public records request that was extended to May 10th has yet to be completed, indicating a lack of transparency and responsiveness from Mayor Ruelas' administration. This neglect has caused significant distress and operational inefficiencies within the city, impacting the overall welfare of our community.

H-24-267
Activity
Log

Hotline ID: H-24-267

Entry Date ▼	Log Entry
05/16/2025	Referral updated by 'JEANA Gillis (gillisj)'.
05/16/2025	Referral updated by 'JEANA Gillis (gillisj)'.
05/15/2025	Referral updated by 'JEANA Gillis (gillisj)'.
05/15/2025	We did not identify any concerns with the hotline concern. We have emailed the citizen to call to discuss the results. This can be closed. --bungera
02/19/2025	Referral updated by 'JEANA Gillis (gillisj)'.
10/25/2024	Referral updated by 'JEANA Gillis (gillisj)'.
06/13/2024	Number was not provided, so sent email for them to call me at their convenience and discuss further. --bungera
06/12/2024	Referral updated by 'JEANA Gillis (gillisj)'.
06/12/2024	Task assigned to 'stranda@sao.wa.gov'. Team notification email sent to: stranda@sao.wa.gov,bungera@sao.wa.gov
06/12/2024	Referral updated by 'JEANA Gillis (gillisj)'. Action changed from (not set) to Referred to Audit Team - Consider Next Audit.

From: [Bunger, Amy \(SAO\)](#)
To: adrianaluna99@gmail.com
Subject: hotline request #H-24-267
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2024 11:43:00 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hi Adriana,

Thank you so much for submitting a hotline to our office. I would love to chat about this a little more. Can you give me a call at your convenience? My working hours are:

Monday through Thursday 7:00 AM to 4:30 PM

Friday 7:00 AM to 11:00 AM

If these times do not work for you let me know and I can work on give you a call at another time.
Thank you!



Amy Bunger

Assistant Audit Manager, [Office of the Washington State Auditor](#)

(509) 517-5624

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