

DeKalb County, Georgia



Department of Finance
Internal Audit and Licensing

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May 18, 2010

TO: Dr. Michael J. Bell, Chief Financial Officer

FROM: Deputy Director of Finance, Division of Internal Audit & Licensing (DIAL)

SUBJECT: Parks & Recreation

RE: Porter Sanford III Performing Arts & Community Center

General Information

The Porter Sanford III Performing Arts & Community Center (Arts Center) officially opened in February, 2009. The Arts Center was designed to be a venue for various types of performances such as plays, musicals or concerts as well as for private events through rental of its main theater, secondary "black box" theater, or lobby.

On April 24, 2010, a private event (50th Birthday Party) was held in the Lobby of the Arts Center. Local news media have questioned whether the facility rental was properly paid to the County.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of our audit was to determine Parks & Recreation fee policies related to the Arts Center and to determine if DeKalb County received the appropriate fee for the April 24th birthday rental.

We interviewed Parks & Recreation personnel regarding their general fee policies as well as details of this rental and examined documentation related to the reserving, fee calculation, and payment for this rental.

Findings

The Parks & Recreation policy for the Arts Center is to allow free usage for any event that is for the community as a whole. This would typically be by the County, Schools, Churches, or a community service organization. Any rental for a private event would incur charges at varying

rates dependent on which parts of the Arts Center were being used, day of the week, and the “category” of the private renter (individuals, families, corporations, etc...). Also, the Arts Center fee schedule states that half of the rental amount is due at the time of the booking with the remainder due thirty days prior to the event.

The Lobby of the Arts Center was reserved in 2009 by the Executive Director of the Arts Center for his wife’s 50th birthday on April 24, 2010. Per the Arts Center fee schedule, the charge for the Lobby for private users on a Saturday is \$130/hr. For this four hour event, the total charged would be \$520 and the total would have been due on March 24, 2010.

When questioned about the rental payment, the Executive Director stated, in a memo dated May 10, 2010, he “paid the same price as other clients to the center, \$100.00 per hour for the lobby for 4 hours.”

The Executive Director provided the carbon-copy part of a duplicate check register showing a check dated April 24, 2010 to Blake Vision for \$475 (\$400 for the rental and \$75 for an alcohol permit for the event). In a written reply to questions from the Parks & Recreation Director, he stated he “asked Blake to go while he was going to the bank to pick up the money orders for me for the facility” since the Arts Center does not accept personal checks.

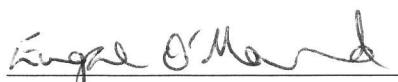
Payment for the rental was turned into the County on a Daily Report dated May 10, 2010. The employee who handles receipts for the Arts Center stated in a memo dated May 10, 2010 that she was out of the state from April 22 – May 10. The Money Order attached to the Daily Report (copy obtained from accounting) was in the amount of \$400 and dated May 10, 2010.

Conclusion

Payment was not received by the Art Center in a timely manner as required by Art Center policy – policy is for an event to be paid in full thirty days prior to the event and the money order used to pay for the birthday party was dated sixteen days after the event. In addition, according to the Art Center schedule, the event should have rented for \$520 and payment was only \$400.

Recommendation

We recommend an additional \$120 be collected for the event and procedures be enacted to either insure that payments are made timely in the future or that exceptions to the payment schedule are standardized and documented.


Eugene O'Mard

Cc: Keith A. Barker, Chief Operating Officer/Executive Assistant
Roy Wilson, Director, Department of Parks & Recreation
Ted E. Rhinehart, Deputy COO for Infrastructure