



COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Type: Council - Regular

Meeting Date: May 7, 2026

Agenda Item Type: New Business

Staff Contact: Brandon Perkins, Town Manager

STAFF REPORT

AGENDA ITEM:

Consideration to issue an RFP for auditing services.

BACKGROUND:

The Town has utilized the services of Rushton & Company to conduct its annual independent financial audits since 2011. Councilwoman Wheeler recently expressed interest in the Town seeking proposals from other audit firms given the length of this relationship. Staff raised this matter during staff comments at the April 16, 2026 meeting, and Council requested that the item be brought back as a regular agenda item after confirming the Town's current contractual status.

Staff has determined that the Town is not under a multi-year contract with Rushton & Company. As is typical for professional audit services, the Town executes an annual engagement letter outlining the scope of work, responsibilities, and fees for each fiscal year audit. Accordingly, there is no contractual restriction that would prevent the Town from issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for audit services should Council choose to do so.

There are no federal or state laws requiring local governments to periodically change external auditors. However, several professional organizations provide guidance regarding the periodic procurement of audit services. In general, these organizations recommend regularly evaluating audit services through a competitive process while allowing continuity when performance and independence remain satisfactory.

Relevant Professional Guidance

Georgia Municipal Association (GMA)

- Typical structure includes a one-year initial term with up to four annual renewals
- Competitive procurement of audit services approximately every five years is a common practice

International City/County Management Association (ICMA)

- Periodic re-procurement of audit services, typically on a five-year cycle, is considered a sound governance practice

American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA)

- Emphasizes rotation of the lead audit partner rather than mandatory rotation of the audit firm
- Lead audit partner rotation is generally recommended every five to seven years to maintain independence and professional objectivity

Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)

- Recommends periodic competitive procurement of audit services, typically every five years
- Continuation with the same firm is appropriate when performance, pricing, and independence remain satisfactory

Because several of the above standards reference lead partner rotation as an important independence safeguard, staff reviewed the Town’s history with Rushton & Company. The lead audit partner assignments have been as follows:

- John Holden: 2011–2013
- Sam Latimer: 2013–2016
- Julie George: 2017–Present

This history reflects periodic rotation of the lead audit partner over the course of the Town’s relationship with the firm.

FUNDING:

None required to issue RFP.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Council direction is requested regarding whether to:

1. Continue utilizing Rushton & Company for the upcoming audit cycle, or
2. Authorize staff to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for external audit services.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS:

Staff comments – April 16, 2026