



Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller

October 7, 2020

Mayor of Henning Indicted for Theft and Official Misconduct

Baris Douglas, the mayor of Henning in Lauderdale County, has been indicted for theft and official misconduct after an investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office.

Investigators determined that Douglas used the town's debit and Walmart credit cards to steal at least \$2,237.74 from the town and its taxpayers.

Douglas used the cards to make a variety of unauthorized purchases for his own benefit including meals, medication, food products, and a laptop with accessories.

Comptroller investigators also identified \$4,151.51 in questionable transactions. These included travel expenses that were not supported with receipts or other documentation, and other purchases of meals, lawn fertilizer, and printer ink that could not be substantiated for the town's benefit.



The investigative report also questions a \$48,000 contract awarded to a financial consultant for the town's financial matters at a rate of \$2,000 per month.

Mayor Douglas entered into the contract, and it was retroactively approved by the town's alderman. Investigators were unable to verify that the consultant provided any of the services to the town that were outlined in the contract.

In October 2020, Baris Clayton Douglas was indicted by the Lauderdale County Grand Jury on one count of theft over \$2,500 and two counts of official misconduct.

"The Town of Henning must take immediate steps to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse," said Comptroller Justin P. Wilson. "The town does not have a purchasing policy, guidelines governing the use of credit cards, and it does not maintain inventory records for capital assets. Town officials have pledged to address these problems, and I'm hopeful they will take action."

To view the investigative report, go to: <https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/investigations/find.html>

If you suspect fraud, waste or abuse of public money in Tennessee, call the Comptroller's toll-free hotline at 800.232.5454, or file a report online at: tncot.cc/fraud. Follow us on twitter: [@TNCOT](https://twitter.com/TNCOT)

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