

2007 Annual Report Finance Department

The City of Lawrence Finance Department is responsible for accounting, purchasing, financial management, payroll, meter reading, and utility billing and collection.

Accomplishments

The Finance Department celebrated many accomplishments in 2007.



The Utility Billing Division launched the Orion Radio-Wave Meter Program. This new system provides meter reading staff the ability to electronically retrieve readings from a transmitter located in the water pit or building to a lap top computer in their vehicle. These reads are then downloaded into the City's financial software for utility bill processing. In addition, these new transmitters give us the capability of storing customer's consumption history for the previous 30 days. This allows us to provide our customers with their usage profile upon request. Currently 3% of the City's water meters are read with the Orion system, 97% are still read manually as shown here. The new transmitters are placed on meters that are difficult for staff to get to.

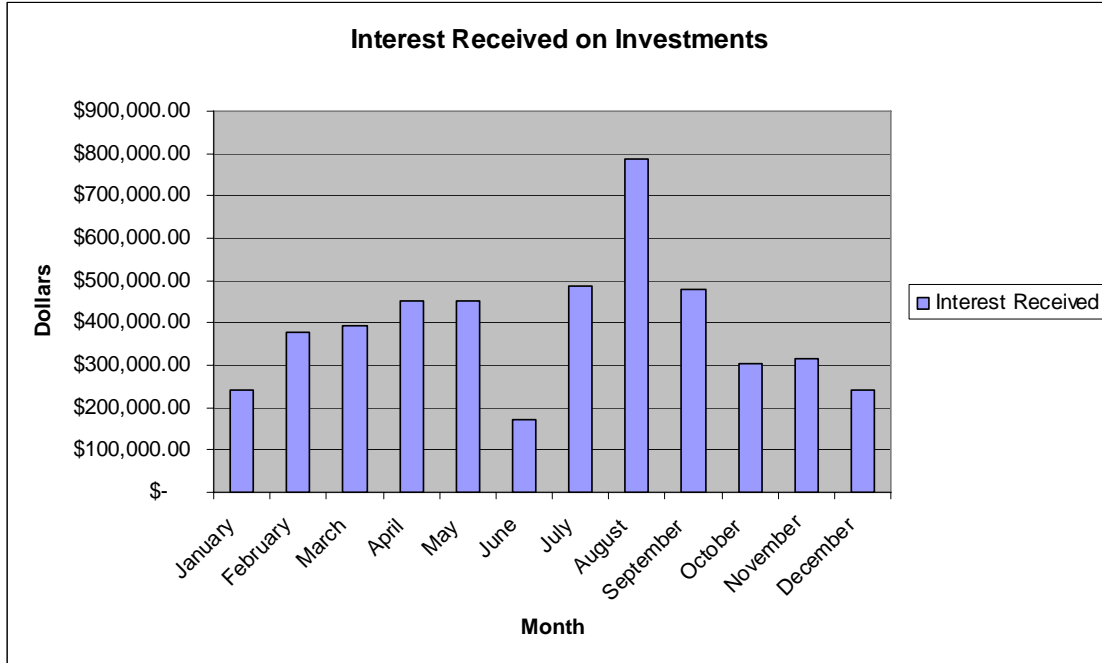
The Utility Billing Division implemented a 24/7 utility hotline that provides customers with their account information such as current and past due balances, service disconnect dates, as well as payment and billing history.

The Utility Billing Division purchased a new payment processing machine. The Creditron machine can process 100 documents per minute. The machine reads, scans, and endorses the check and validates the payment against the amount on the utility coupon. When finished scanning, the machine prepares a file to be uploaded into the City's financial software, as well as create a deposit file for the bank.

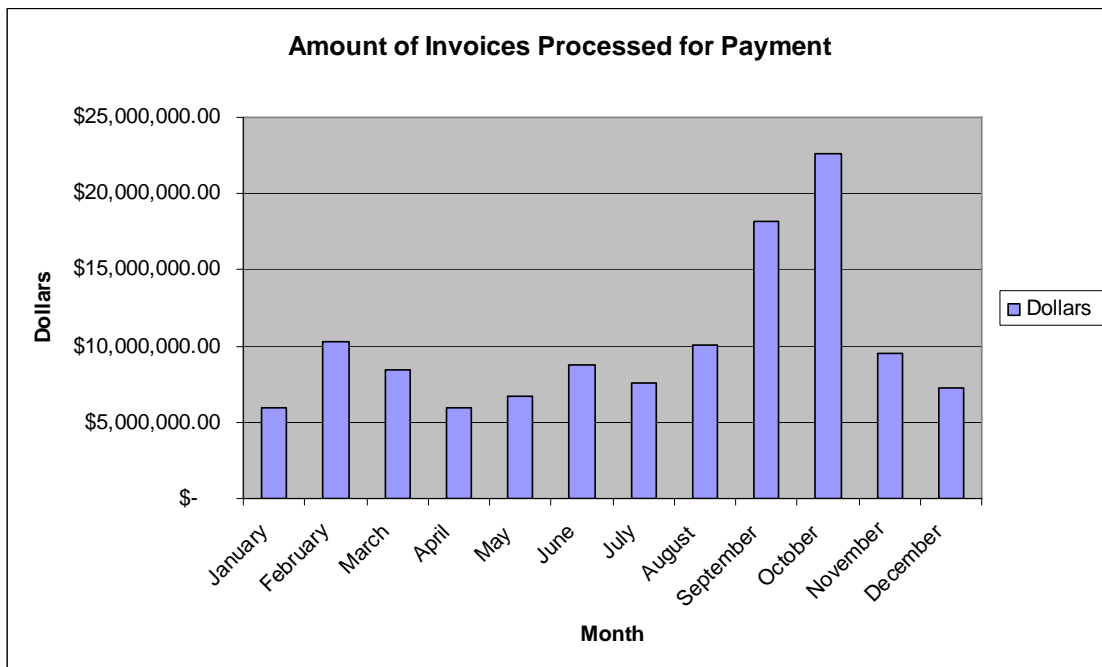


The Finance Department hired an Assistant Finance Director in June. Primary responsibilities include managing the Utility Billing Division, overseeing the investment of idle city funds, preparing various reports and departmental performance measures, as well as ensuring compliance with city policies, procedures and regulations.

The Finance Department recently selected Public Financial Management (PFM) as the City's Investment Advisory Firm for portfolio management, strategy development, and investment services for its operating funds, capital project bond proceeds, bond reserves, and debt service fund. The initial investment of city funds was made in December 2007. The average rate of return on the City's investments for 2007 is 5.22%.



In 2007, the City of Lawrence was faced with the task of cutting expenditures to 94% of the approved General Fund operating budget. The graph below illustrates invoices processed for payment by the City's Accounts Payable Department.



Awards

The Accounting Division received its 16th Award for Financial Reporting Achievement for the City's 2006 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest, most prestigious award for financial reporting available. The Certificate Program is designed to recognize and encourage excellence in financial reporting by state and local governments. Lawrence was only one of twenty-five cities in Kansas to receive this award.



Performance Measures

Description	Measure
Percent of utility bills sent as scheduled	98.61%
Average utility customer calls per full time employee	853.69
Average payments processed per full time employee	\$12,951.21
Average water meters read per full time employee	5887.27
Average utility work orders completed per full time employee	796.62
Percent of water meters requiring re-reads	1.78%
Average number of invoices processed per full time employee	1815.08
Average number of vendor checks processed per full time employee	643.92
Average rate of return on investments	5.22%