

Van Zandt County



ANDY REESE
COUNTY JUDGE

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June 2, 2025

Press Release – Van Zandt County Auditor Position

In late 2024, Van Zandt County Auditor, Sandy Hill, announced that she would be retiring from her job in January 2025. Sandy Hill served in the role of County Auditor for eight years and has been an employee of the county for 28 years. She and her staff have been instrumental in ensuring that county financials were accurate and county processes complied with state and federal laws. Under her leadership as County Auditor, the county received positive remarks from our outside auditing firm over the years for its financial management.

The Van Zandt County District Judge is responsible for appointing the County Auditor, it is not a function of the Commissioners Court. Shortly after Sandy announced her intention to retire, a committee was formed to begin the interviewing process. In December 2024, the committee offered the position to Catherine Gazda and she accepted. She began working for Van Zandt County in early January, working with Sandy Hill in the transition.

After four months in the position, on May 22, 2025, Catherine was terminated as the Van Zandt County Auditor. The attached letter from District Judge Chris Martin explains the reasons for her termination.

A new committee has been formed and is currently accepting applications for the Auditor position. The job posting can be found at this link: <https://294th.org/employment>

In the interim, the assistant auditors, with many years of experience in their positions, will make sure the functions of the Auditor's office are carried out as a new Auditor is selected.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy Reese". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Andy" and last name "Reese" clearly distinguishable.

Andy Reese
County Judge



CHRIS MARTIN
294TH Judicial District Court

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May 30, 2025

Attn: County Judge and County Commissioners

Re: Removal of County Auditor

After receiving multiple and various concerns from elected officials and county employees regarding the qualifications and ability of Catherine Gazda to serve as County Auditor, I instituted an investigation to determine if she possessed the requisite competence to faithfully discharge the duties of the office of county auditor.

Pursuant to Sec. 84.006, a county auditor must be: (1) a competent accountant with at least two years' experience in auditing and accounting; (2) thoroughly competent in public business details; and (3) a person of unquestionably good moral character and intelligence.

Sec. 84.009 of the Local Govt. Code requires that prior to removal, a due investigation of claims must be conducted. Further, a county auditor may only be removed from office if it is proven that the auditor has either committed official misconduct or is found to be incompetent to faithfully discharge the duties of the office of county auditor.

The results of my investigation revealed that Mrs. Gazda failed to diligently complete her daily work, failed to supervise, assist, and provide competent directions to her staff, failed to familiarize herself with the county's business and fiscal matters, failed to follow information technology policy, failed to develop a fundamental working knowledge of county government, and failed to regularly report to the office to perform necessary duties.

Due to the results of my investigation, I found that Mrs. Gazda lacked the requisite competence in public business dealings and was incompetent to faithfully discharge the duties of her appointed office. She was officially removed as County Auditor on May 22, 2025.

I firmly believe my decision to be in the best interests of Van Zandt County.

Respectfully,

Judge Chris Martin