



BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

STEPHEN B. STREET, JR.
STATE INSPECTOR GENERAL

State of Louisiana
Office of the Governor
Office of State Inspector General

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**For the Second Time, State Inspector General Finds Longstanding
Misuse of Public Funds by Former Director of Massage Therapy
Board**

BATON ROUGE -- Today, the State Inspector General's Office in Baton Rouge issued a report detailing its investigation of the State Board of Massage Therapy and its former executive director, Kayla Aymond. The investigation found that Ms. Aymond either misspent, or failed to account for spending, public funds totaling \$201,200.

The investigation specifically reached the following conclusions:

- Between 2006 and 2010, Ms. Aymond prepared checks payable to herself in excess of her standard salary, resulting in an additional \$113,000 of income. The \$113,000 is a combined total that represents:
 - Approximately \$23,500 attributed to the apparently unjustified reduction of payroll taxes and health insurance premiums.
 - Approximately \$27,000 attributed to overtime hours paid at the rate of \$70.85 per hour. Investigators have been unable to find supporting documentation for the overtime hours.
 - Approximately \$62,500 in travel and reimbursement of expenditures for which the Board has been unable to produce supporting documentation.

- Our investigation also found mismanagement during Ms. Aymond's tenure that spanned a wide array of issues, including:
 - Failure to obtain a properly executed building lease renewal.
 - Unauthorized repairs to the Board's leased building that cost approximately \$59,000.
 - Failure to obtain written contracts and approvals for building repairs, legal services, and accounting services.
 - Failure to submit federal withholding taxes, resulting in the Internal Revenue Service assessing the Board approximately \$40,000.
 - Failure to properly document approximately \$72,000 in per diem payments to Board members during the period of this review.
 - Failure to seek Board approval for, and supply justification for, cellular telephone service of at least \$16,500.
 - Failure to account for approximately \$22,700 in payments to local vendors such as Wal-Mart and Lowe's.
 - Failure to maintain public records as required by state law.

The Board discharged Ms. Aymond in March 2010 after it began questioning expenditures and office practices.

Inspector General Stephen Street said: "In 1998, an Inspector General investigation revealed serious problems with the Board of Massage Therapy and the use of public funds by its Executive Director, Kayla Aymond. At that time, the individuals serving on the Board and Ms. Aymond were wholly uncooperative with that investigation, and ignored its findings. The present investigation found that Ms. Aymond's mismanagement appears to have continued unchecked until those serving as Board members in March of 2010 finally put their foot down."

To obtain the full report, follow this link:

<http://oig.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/reports/CID-10-029.pdf>