



ANGELA INGRAM
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
FOR THE
COUNTY OF MATHEWS

FOR THE PERIOD
APRIL 1, 2022 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2023

Auditor of Public Accounts
Staci A. Henshaw, CPA

www.apa.virginia.gov

(804) 225-3350



COMMENTS TO MANAGEMENT

We noted the following matters involving internal control and its operation that have led or could lead to noncompliance with laws and regulations, the loss of assets or revenues, or otherwise compromise the Clerk's fiscal accountability.

Reconcile Bank Accounts

Repeat: Yes (first issued in fiscal year 2022)

The Clerk has not reconciled the court's bank account since March 2023. Timely and complete reconciliations are an essential internal control. Allowing reconciling items to go unresolved can lead to errors and irregularities going undetected and increases the risk of loss of funds. The Clerk should immediately reconcile the court's bank account, resolving all reconciling items and, going forward, should perform monthly bank reconciliations upon receiving the bank statement as required by the Financial Accounting System User's Guide.

Properly Bill and Collect Court Costs

Repeat: No

The Clerk and her staff did not properly bill and collect court costs. In 12 of 24 cases tested (50%), we noted the following errors:

- For eight cases, the Clerk did not charge defendants a total of \$1,983 in court costs.
- The Clerk overcharged defendants in four cases a total of \$734 in court costs.

The Clerk and her staff should correct the specific cases noted above, seek additional training in the billing and collection of costs, and establish a system of review to minimize the likelihood of billing errors going undetected. In all cases, the Clerk should bill and collect court costs in accordance with the Code of Virginia.

Properly Bill and Collect Probate Taxes and Fees

Repeat: No

The Clerk did not properly bill and collect probate taxes and fees when recording wills. In four of ten estates tested (40%), we noted the Clerk did not bill and collect a total of \$166 in taxes and fees. The Clerk should bill the four estates noted for the additional amounts owed and, going forward, should properly bill and collect probate taxes and fees when recording estates, as required by the Code of Virginia.

Properly Document Voided Transactions**Repeat:** No

The Clerk does not properly document voided transactions. For all five voided receipts tested, we noted the Clerk did not document the reason for the voids in the daily accounting records. Voided transactions pose an increased risk for fraudulent activity and, as such, must be monitored and controlled closely. The Clerk should properly document all voided transactions, maintaining all copies of the voided receipts and completing the applicable accounting paperwork, as required by the Financial Accounting System User's Guide.

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Commonwealth of Virginia

Auditor of Public Accounts

Staci A. Henshaw, CPA
Auditor of Public Accounts

P.O. Box 1295
Richmond, Virginia 23218

October 30, 2023

The Honorable Angela Ingram
Clerk of the Circuit Court
County of Mathews

David Jones, Chairman
County of Mathews

Audit Period: April 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023
Court System: County of Mathews

We have audited the cash receipts and disbursements of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of this locality for the period noted above. Our primary objectives were to test the accuracy of financial transactions recorded on the Court's financial management system; evaluate the Court's internal controls; and test its compliance with significant state laws, regulations, and policies.

Management's Responsibility

Court management has responsibility for establishing and maintaining internal controls and complying with applicable laws and regulations. Internal control is a process designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting, effectiveness and efficiency of operations, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Deficiencies in internal controls could lead to noncompliance with laws and regulations, the loss of assets or revenues, or otherwise compromise the Clerk's fiscal accountability.

We noted matters involving internal control and its operation necessary to bring to management's attention. These matters are discussed in the section titled Comments to Management. Any written corrective action plan to remediate these matters provided by the Clerk is included as an enclosure to this report. We did not validate the Clerk's corrective action plan and, accordingly, cannot take a position on whether it adequately addresses the issues in this report.

The Clerk has taken adequate corrective action with respect to the internal control finding reported in the prior year that is not repeated in this report.

We discussed these comments with the Clerk, and we acknowledge the cooperation extended to us by the Clerk and her staff during this engagement.

Staci A. Henshaw
AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

LJH:vks

cc: The Honorable Holly B. Smith, Chief Judge
The Honorable Elizabeth Brown, Interim Clerk of the Circuit Court
Ramona Wilson, County Administrator
Robyn M. de Socio, Executive Secretary
Compensation Board
Paul F. DeLosh, Director of Judicial Services
Supreme Court of Virginia

Commonwealth of Virginia
County of Mathews
Clerk of the Circuit Court
10622 Buckley Hall Road
Post Office Box 463
Mathews, Virginia 23109
Telephone (804) 725-2550

Elizabeth A. Brown
Clerk

Vallin Jenkins
Deputy Clerk

W. Shane Stewart
Deputy Clerk

Staci A. Henshaw
Auditor of Public Accounts
James Monroe Building
101 North 14th Street 8th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219

December 20, 2023

Ms. Henshaw,

I have received the audit findings for this court. All audit findings have been or are in the process of being corrected.

We have assistance from an accountant to ensure all reconciliations have been completed properly and to assist us with future reconciliations.

All court costs that were incorrect have been properly billed and corrected. We have increased training on costs and fines and all cases are now reviewed by two associates before being finalized.

All additional probate taxes have been billed and we have a new procedure in place to ensure future cases are not missed. Our previous Commissioner of Accounts provided notices when additional taxes were due and we were unaware it should have been done differently.

All future voided transactions will include a written explanation for the void.

I appreciate the time your staff took while here for the audit to answer questions and provide me with detailed explanations of what they were looking for.

Thank you,
[Signature On File](#)

Elizabeth A. Brown, Clerk