



TERESA J. BROWN
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
FOR THE
COUNTY OF FRANKLIN

FOR THE PERIOD
JULY 1, 2020 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2022

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 has led or could lead to noncompliance with laws and regulations, the loss of assets or revenues, or otherwise compromise the Clerk's fiscal accountability.

Properly Bill and Collect Court Costs

Repeat: Yes (first issued in 2017)

The Clerk and her staff did not properly bill and collect court costs. In nine of 38 cases tested (24%), the Clerk did not charge defendants a total of \$10,056 in court costs, overcharged others by a total of \$1,649, and miscoded in the financial accounting system fees of \$278 as Commonwealth rather than local.

The Clerk and her staff should correct the specific cases noted during the audit and should 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.

Review and Disburse Liabilities

Repeat: No

The Clerk does not review the monthly liabilities report and disburse liabilities as appropriate. During the audit period, the Clerk was holding a total of \$4,180 in liabilities that she should have either paid out or escheated. The monthly liabilities report summarizes all liability account balances and helps identify balances requiring disbursement, correction, or other action.

The Clerk should review all liabilities she is currently holding and disburse as applicable. Going forward, the Clerk should routinely review the liabilities report and disburse, when appropriate, all court liabilities as recommended by the financial management system user's guide.

-TABLE OF CONTENTS-

Pages

COMMENTS TO MANAGEMENT

AUDIT LETTER

1-2

CLERK'S RESPONSE AND CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

3



Commonwealth of Virginia

Auditor of Public Accounts

Staci A. Henshaw, CPA
Auditor of Public Accounts

P.O. Box 1295
Richmond, Virginia 23218

April 12, 2022

The Honorable Teresa J. Brown
Clerk of the Circuit Court
County of Franklin

Ronnie Thompson, Board Chairman
County of Franklin

Audit Period: July 1, 2020, through March 31, 2022
Court System: County of Franklin

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 response and written corrective action plan to remediate these matters provided by the Clerk are included as an enclosure to 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: clj

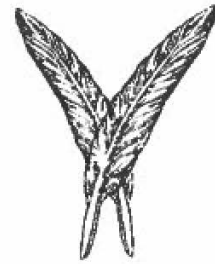
cc: The Honorable James J. Reynolds, Chief Judge
Christopher Whitlow, County Administrator
Robyn M. de Socio, Executive Secretary
Compensation Board
Paul F. DeLosh, Director of Judicial Services
Supreme Court of Virginia



FRANKLIN COUNTY
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

TERESA J. BROWN, CLERK

P.O. BOX 567
ROCKY MOUNT, VIRGINIA 24151
TELEPHONE (540) 483-3065
FAX (540) 483-3042



July 6, 2022

Staci A. Henshaw
Auditor of Public Account
101 North 14th Street, 8th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Ms. Henshaw:

In response to the audit report for the Circuit Court of Franklin County, I concur with the auditor's findings.

As to "Property Bill and Collect Court costs", we immediately corrected our assessment. We will try diligently to assess costs properly. This office will continue to strive to collect and bill court costs in accordance with the Code of Virginia.

As to "Review and Disburse Liabilities", unfortunately these were old cases in which we did not have the recipient information and one garnishment that the funds were received after the return date. These funds were either disbursed by court order or turned over to the Department of Unclaimed Property immediately. We will strive to review all liability cases in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Teresa J. Brown".

Teresa J. Brown, Clerk