

**CHRISTOPHER W. COLEMAN  
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT  
FOR THE  
CITY OF BUENA VISTA**

**REPORT ON AUDIT  
FOR THE PERIOD  
OCTOBER 1, 2008 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2009**



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**Walter J. Kucharski, Auditor**

# **Commonwealth of Virginia**

**Auditor of Public Accounts  
P.O. Box 1295  
Richmond, Virginia 23218**

April 20, 2010

The Honorable Christopher W. Coleman  
Clerk of the Circuit Court  
City of Buena Vista

City Council  
City of Buena Vista

Audit Period: October 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009  
Court System: City of Buena Vista

We have audited the cash receipts and disbursements of the Clerk of the Circuit Court for this Court System and 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 possibly lead to the loss of revenues or assets, or otherwise compromise fiscal accountability.

We noted a matter involving internal control and its operation necessary to bring to management's attention. The matter is discussed in the section titled Comments to Management. Any response and written corrective action plan to remediate this matter provided by the Clerk are included as an enclosure to this report.

We discussed this comment with the Clerk and we acknowledge the cooperation extended to us by the court during this engagement.

AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

WJK: clj

cc: The Honorable Humes J. Franklin, Jr., Chief Judge  
Timothy L. Dudley, City Manager  
Robyn M. de Socio, Executive Secretary  
Compensation Board  
Paul F. DeLosh, Director of Judicial Services  
Supreme Court of Virginia  
Director, Admin and Public Records  
Department of Accounts

## COMMENTS TO MANAGEMENT

We noted the following matter involving internal control and its operation that has led or could lead to the loss of revenues, assets, or otherwise compromise the Clerk's fiscal accountability.

### Properly Reconcile Hunting and Fishing Sales

The Clerk is not properly reconciling his hunting and fishing licenses fees to the total sales per the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. As of December 2009, the Clerk has an unidentified difference of \$893.50 in the court's automated accounting system. The Clerk should resolve all differences immediately when he reconciles the system balance to the monthly invoice from the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Allowing reconciling items to go unresolved can lead to errors and irregularities going undetected and increases the risk of loss of funds.



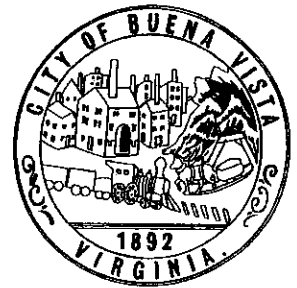
## CITY OF BUENA VISTA CIRCUIT COURT

Municipal Building  
2039 Sycamore Avenue  
Buena Vista, Virginia 24416

Telephone: (540) 261-8627

Facsimile: (540) 261-8625

E-mail: ccoleman@courts.state.va.us



*CHRISTOPHER W. COLEMAN, CLERK*

*MICHELLE M. TROUT, CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK  
DONNA S. COLE, DEPUTY CLERK*

April 14, 2010

Mr. Walter Kucharski  
Auditor of Public Accounts  
P. O. Box 1295  
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Mr. Kucharski:

This letter serves as a response to your report dated March 31, 2010 regarding the audit of Buena Vista Circuit Court for the period of October 2008 through December 2009.

As noted in the Comments to Management, there was a discrepancy in receipts to the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries accounts, which created a negative balance. During this audit period, there were initially two DGIF codes, which was subsequently combined into one account. In tracking the two accounts over the previous sixteen month period, it appears as the errors occurred by transposing the receipts for license sales with the commission account. In two instances, the account code 190 was entered as code 109 (state interest). I contacted Martin Watts, Financial Systems Analyst with the Supreme Court of Virginia, who advised me that the best course of action was to debit code 308 (commission on state revenues) and credit DGIF codes 190 and 191. I immediately followed his recommendation and the accounts were restored to their proper balance.

As a corrective measure, I have addressed this matter with my staff and we will reconcile the hunting and fishing receipts daily to insure license sales and commissions are applied to the proper account. Additionally, the Supreme Court recently updated the general miscellaneous receipt to require the entry of a formatted code which defaults to the Game and Inland Fisheries and commission account codes. This will greatly reduce the chance of an error being created.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Christopher W. Coleman