



Martha S. Mavredes, CPA
Auditor of Public Accounts

Commonwealth of Virginia

Auditor of Public Accounts

P.O. Box 1295
Richmond, Virginia 23218

April 4, 2013

The Honorable Peter W. Steketee
Chief Judge
County of Prince William General District Court
9311 Lee Avenue
Manassas, VA 20110-5586

Audit Period: July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012
Court System: County of Prince William
Judicial District: Thirty-First

We are performing a statewide audit of the General District Courts. During our review of this court, we conducted certain audit procedures, as we deemed appropriate.

Management of this court is an important part of the court's accountability, since you are responsible for establishing and maintaining internal controls and complying with applicable laws and regulations. During our review, we noted certain matters that required management's attention and corrective action. These matters included:

Properly Complete and Retain Supporting Documentation

The Clerk does not maintain all required supporting documentation for court-appointed attorney payments and inconsistently followed the procedures for paying attorney fees.

Specifically, we tested 16 invoices and noted errors in four.

- In one instance, the Clerk did not retain documentation of the waiver applications and approval for \$1,170 in additional attorney compensation.
- In three instances, there was no approval from the Chief Judge for the additional compensation of \$990 paid to the attorney.

The Clerk should retain all pertinent documentation and follow the applicable procedures for disbursing attorney payments.

Properly Bill and Collect Court Costs

The Clerk and her staff did not properly bill and collect court costs. In 11 of 27 cases tested, the auditor noted the following errors.

The Honorable Peter W. Steketee
Chief Judge
April 4, 2013
Page Two

- In five local cases, the Clerk incorrectly billed the Commonwealth instead of the locality for \$600 in court-appointed attorney fees.
- In three cases, the Clerk miscoded attorney fees of \$359 under the tried in absence fee, the weighing fee, and the processing fee.
- In three cases, the Clerk overcharged defendants for bad check fees, blood analysis fees, and courthouse security fees.

The Clerk should correct these specific cases noted above. Further, the Clerk should work with her staff to ensure they understand the billing and collecting requirements and, if necessary, request additional training from the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia.

We acknowledge the cooperation extended to us by the Court during this engagement.

AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

MSM:lap

cc: The Honorable Steven S. Smith, Judge
The Honorable Tracy C. Hudson, Judge
The Honorable William E. Jarvis, Judge
Jacqueline R. Ward, Clerk
Paul F. DeLosh, Director of Judicial Services
Supreme Court of Virginia