



LLEZELLE DUGGER  
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT  
FOR THE  
CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

FOR THE PERIOD  
APRIL 1, 2017 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2018

Auditor of Public Accounts  
Martha S. Mavredes, CPA  
[www.apa.virginia.gov](http://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 the loss of revenues, assets, or otherwise compromise the Clerk's fiscal accountability.

### **Properly Review System Reports**

Repeat: Yes, Properly Review General Ledger

The Clerk does not consistently review the system reports identifying accounts payable, missing accounts receivable and general ledger errors. Proper and timely review of monthly reports ensures the Clerk holds only those funds associated with current cases, refunds bonds and filing fees to litigants timely, resolves immaterial receipting errors and establishes receivable accounts for all defendants. We noted the following concerns:

- Six incorrect general ledger accounts resulting from receipting errors, four of which were identified to the clerk in the last audit and one which caused a delay in remitting \$12,907 to the state for more than 10 months.
- Three civil bonds and one filing fee not disbursed to litigants for up to 19 months following the disposition of the cases.
- Reports identifying concluded criminal cases without receivables were not reviewed for 10 months of the audit period, leading to possible delays in collection of costs.

The Clerk should implement appropriate review procedures to ensure system reports are reviewed regularly and issues are addressed timely.

### **Properly Bill and Collect Court Costs**

Repeat: Yes

The Clerk did not properly bill and collect court costs. In 28 cases tested, we noted the following errors.

- In nine cases, defendants were not assessed costs totaling \$2,839.
- In one case, charges were miscoded in the court's financial system, resulting in a loss of \$1,235 to the Commonwealth.
- In one case, the defendant was overcharged \$445 in court costs.

The Clerk should correct the specific cases noted above 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 Code of Virginia.

## -TABLE OF CONTENTS-

### Pages

COMMENTS TO MANAGEMENT

AUDIT LETTER

1-2

CLERK'S RESPONSE AND CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

3-4



Martha S. Mavredes, CPA  
Auditor of Public Accounts

# Commonwealth of Virginia

## *Auditor of Public Accounts*

P.O. Box 1295  
Richmond, Virginia 23218

May 21, 2018

The Honorable Llezelle Dugger  
Clerk of the Circuit Court  
City of Charlottesville

Nikuyah Walker, Mayor  
City of Charlottesville

Audit Period: April 1, 2017 through March 31, 2018  
Court System: City of Charlottesville

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 possibly lead to the loss of revenues or assets, or otherwise compromise 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 letter.

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

AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

MSM:anu

cc: The Honorable Timothy K. Sanner, Chief Judge  
Maurice Jones, 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

**CIRCUIT COURT  
CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE**  
315 EAST HIGH STREET  
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22902-5195  
(434) 970-3766

**Tracy D. Smith**  
**Anita D. Spivey**  
**Julie S. Moats**  
**Dana M. Porter**  
DEPUTY CLERKS

**Lleazelle A. Dugger**  
CLERK  
  
**David A. Schmidt**  
CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK

**Gwendolyn T. Williams**  
**Dianne P. Pugh**  
**Jennifer J. Turner**  
DEPUTY CLERKS

June 12, 2018

Martha Mavredes  
Auditor of Public Accounts  
P.O. Box 1295  
Richmond, VA 23218

RE: Clerk's Office for the City of Charlottesville Circuit Court  
Response and Corrective Action Plan

Dear Ms. Mavredes:

The following is my response and corrective action plan regarding the Audit for the April 1, 2017 through March 31, 2018 time period.

**Properly Review System Reports.**

The errors noted in the general ledger accounts have been corrected. The general ledger will be reviewed regularly to ensure the accurateness of all account balances so that issues are addressed timely.

The filing fee has been disbursed back to the litigant. We are reviewing the civil files regarding the bonds to determine that the cases are in fact concluded and that there are court orders entered releasing the bonds. If they are concluded and the proper court order has been entered, the civil bonds will be disbursed back to the appropriate litigants. The appropriate report will be reviewed regularly to ensure the accurateness of all case balances so that issues are addressed timely.

Unfortunately, the ten (10) months prior to this audit were uncharacteristically stressful ones for our Court due to local events. Going forward, we will make a concerted effort to review the Concluded Criminal Cases without Receivables Report on a regular basis to assure that there are no delays in collection of costs and that issues are addressed timely.

**Properly Bill and Collect Court Costs.**

We are reviewing the specific cases noted and once confirmed, the appropriate actions will be taken.

We have a system of review in place, and I believe most errors are found and corrected. I will examine that system and make improvements in an effort to avoid billing errors in the future.

In conclusion I do want to thank the team that conducted my audit. Each of them was professional and pleasant. While audits are by their very nature stressful, each member of this team made it as least disruptive as they could to the regular day-to-day operations of my office. And for that, I am grateful.

Sincerely,

*Llezele Agustin Dugger*

Llezele Agustin Dugger  
Clerk of Court  
City of Charlottesville