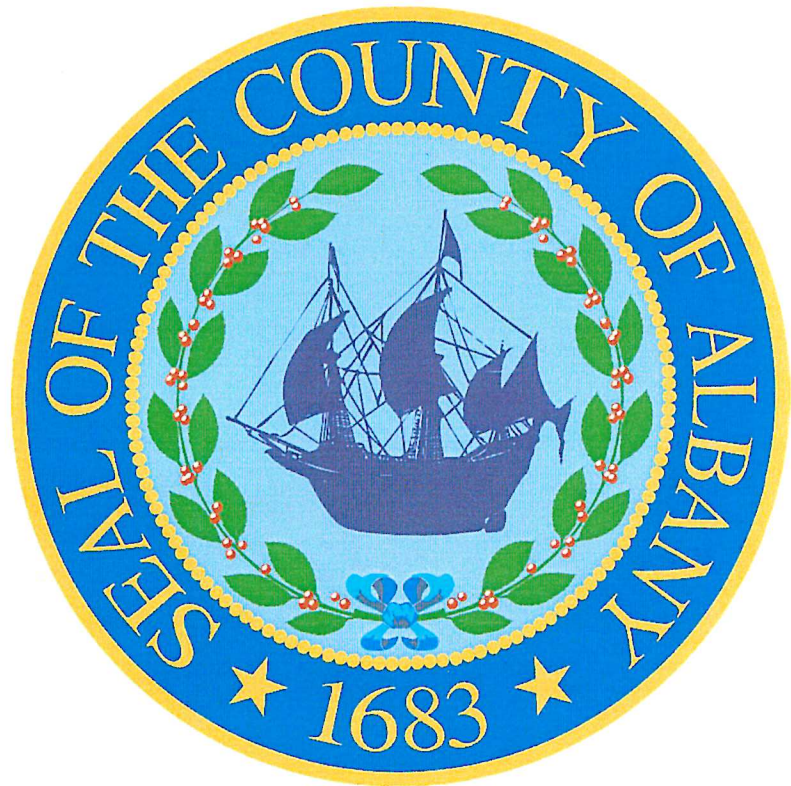


ALBANY COUNTY

Department of Audit and Control

Final Report Albany County Clerk Cash Audit



November 2023

Susan Rizzo, Comptroller

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 3

Background..... 3

Objectives..... 3

Scope 3

Approach 4

Conclusion..... 4

Audit Staff:

Stephanie Slominski, Chief Auditor
Kyle Newell, Auditor

Executive Summary

The Albany County Comptroller's Office, Department of Audit and Control (DAC) performed a Cash Audit of the financials of the County Clerk's Office, which was last done in 2020. The objective of the audit was to determine if the County Clerk's Office had procedures and controls in place related to the collection of fees and if the procedures in place were adequate to safeguard assets and prevent significant loss. In addition, the DAC reviewed the reconciliations of the County Clerk's bank accounts. The DAC determined the procedures and controls in place in 2020 to be adequate.

Background

The County Clerk is an elected position. The department uses M&T Bank, which is also the County's main bank. The Albany County Clerk's Office collects several different types of fees ranging from \$.65 to \$2,000. A large percentage of the fees collected must typically be remitted back to the State of New York (a small percentage belongs to the County). Some examples of fees are recording mortgage fees, liens, filing fees, searches, etc.

In accordance with the Comptroller's stated¹ duty to "Be the chief fiscal and auditing officer of the County..." the DAC periodically performs audits and reviews to identify and evaluate the design and effectiveness of controls over financial transactions in all departments. Collections of fees and subsequent transfers into several different accounts can result in errors or possible loss. Controls over this function should adequately provide assurance that the events resulting in loss are prevented or detected.

Objectives

- Determine if effective controls exist over the collection of fees and transfers to bank accounts;
- Determine if adequate procedure exists related to reconciliations of bank accounts; and
Provide management with further recommendations, where appropriate.

Scope

This audit will be conducted pursuant to Article 4, Section 403(f) of the Albany County Charter which states that the "Comptroller shall audit the financial records and accounts of all officers and employees charged with any duty relating to County funds or funds for which the County is responsible." The scope of this audit included all transactions and reconciliations for the months of February, July, and October of 2022. Audit work was substantially completed in October, 2023.

Approach

- Conducted an interview with the Deputy County Clerk and requested financial documents to review for accuracy;
- Reviewed financials for the months of February, July, and October of 2022;
- Compared cash receipts report to the daily transaction report;
- Verified monthly totals of the Real-Estate Tax sent to NYS;
- Verified County portion of fees retained is accurate;
- Verified both group and individual deposits to the bank accounts;
- Compared the daily mortgage tax printout vs. daily transaction report; and
- Verified Automated Clearing House (ACH) transactions for both e-file and e-recording reports.

Conclusion

No observations were noted during the review of the County Clerk's Office. The administration has adequate controls and procedures in place to ensure transactions are accurately processed and recorded.

I would like to thank all Albany County Clerk and staff for their cooperation and assistance, and for providing us with the materials and documentation to complete this audit.

Sincerely,



Susan Rizzo,
County Comptroller



Stephanie Slominski CIA, CFE
Chief Auditor

cc: Edward Dott, Executive Deputy Comptroller
Frank Commisso, Deputy Comptroller