

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

CRAVEN COUNTY CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT

FISCAL CONTROL AUDIT

NEW BERN, NORTH CAROLINA

OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

LESLIE W. MERRITT, JR., CPA, CFP

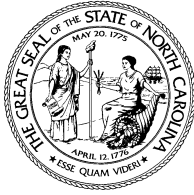
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THE HONORABLE JAN H. CAHOON, CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
Office of the State Auditor

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AUDITOR'S TRANSMITTAL

The Honorable Michael F. Easley, Governor
The General Assembly of North Carolina
The Honorable Jan H. Cahoon, Clerk of Superior Court

This report presents the results of our fiscal control audit of the Craven County Clerk of Superior Court. Our work was performed by authority of Article 5A of Chapter 147 of the *North Carolina General Statutes* and was conducted in accordance with the performance audit standards contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The objective of a fiscal control audit is to identify improvements needed in internal control over selected fiscal matters, such as financial accounting and reporting; compliance with finance-related laws and regulations; and/or management of financial resources.

The results of our audit disclosed no internal control deficiencies or instances of noncompliance or other matters that are considered reportable under *Government Auditing Standards*. However, we noted a certain matter that we reported to management of the Craven County Clerk of Superior Court in a separate letter dated September 26, 2008.

North Carolina General Statutes require the State Auditor to make audit reports available to the public. Copies of audit reports issued by the Office of the State Auditor may be obtained through one of the options listed in the back of this report.

Leslie W. Merritt, Jr.

Leslie W. Merritt, Jr., CPA, CFP
State Auditor

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OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, METHODOLOGY, AND RESULTS

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

As authorized by Article 5A of Chapter 147 of the *North Carolina General Statutes*, we have conducted a fiscal control audit at the Craven County Clerk of Superior Court.

The objective of a fiscal control audit is to identify improvements needed in internal control over selected fiscal matters, such as financial accounting and reporting; compliance with finance-related laws and regulations; and/or management of financial resources. Our audit does not provide a basis for rendering an opinion on internal control, and consequently, we have not issued such an opinion.

Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal control. Internal control is a process designed to provide reasonable assurance that relevant objectives are achieved. Because of inherent limitations in internal control, errors or fraud may nevertheless occur and not be detected. Also, projections of any evaluation of internal control to future periods are subject to the risk that conditions may change or compliance with policies and procedures may deteriorate.

To accomplish our audit objectives, we gained an understanding of internal control over matters described below and evaluated the design of the internal control. We then performed further audit procedures consisting of tests of control effectiveness and/or substantive procedures that may reveal significant deficiencies in internal control.

Specifically, we performed procedures such as interviewing personnel, observing operations, reviewing policies, and analyzing accounting records and examining documentation supporting transactions and balances.

As a basis for evaluating internal control, we applied the internal control guidance contained in *Internal Control Integrated Framework*, published by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO). As discussed in the framework, internal control consists of five interrelated components, which are (1) control environment, (2) risk assessment, (3) control activities, (4) information and communication, and (5) monitoring.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our audit findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, METHODOLOGY, AND RESULTS (CONCLUDED)

Our audit scope covered the period January 1, 2008 through June 30, 2008. During our audit, we considered internal control related to the following accounts and control objectives:

*Cash and Cash Equivalent*s - This classification includes change funds and cash on deposit with private bank accounts. We examined internal control designed to ensure that the Clerk properly safeguards and accounts for these assets. As of June 30, 2008, the Clerk had \$576,783.99 in Cash and Cash Equivalents.

Investments - This classification consists of investments in pooled savings accounts. We examined internal control designed to ensure that the Clerk properly safeguards and accounts for these assets. We also examined evidence to support compliance with finance-related laws and regulations over these assets. These laws and regulations set limits on authorized investments, set timing requirements for investing funds, provide for the Clerk to receive a fee for administering the investments and provide for allocation of interest to the beneficial owner or owners of the funds. As of June 30, 2008, the Clerk had \$2,976,400.39 in Investments.

Trusts - This classification includes funds held by the Clerk for minors, incapacitated adults, and others according to the terms of a court order, will or deed. We examined internal control designed to ensure that the Clerk properly safeguards and accounts for these accounts. We also examined evidence to support compliance with finance-related laws and regulations. These laws and regulations set guidelines for the receipt, administration, and disbursement of these accounts. As of June 30, 2008, the Clerk had \$1,570,913.70 in Trust accounts.

RESULTS

The results of our audit disclosed no internal control deficiencies or instances of noncompliance or other matters that are considered reportable under generally accepted government auditing standards. However, we noted a certain other matter that we have reported to management in a separate letter dated September 26, 2008.

ORDERING INFORMATION

Audit reports issued by the Office of the State Auditor can be obtained from the web site at www.ncauditor.net. Also, parties may register on the web site to receive automatic email notification whenever reports of interest are issued. Otherwise, copies of audit reports may be obtained by contacting the:

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