



Robert E. Antonacci II, CPA
Comptroller

COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

Office of the
County Comptroller

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July 14, 2008

Mr. Robert Geraci, Commissioner
Parks and Recreation Department
106 Lake Drive
Liverpool, New York 13088

Dear Mr. Geraci:

Audits of the Department of Parks and Recreation's low cost purchases and change funds were performed on June 17, 18, 20 and July 7 and 9, 2008. We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the recorded fund balances and the related expenditures are free of material misstatement. These recorded fund balances and the related expenditures are the responsibility of the department's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these amounts based on our audit. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the funds amounts and expenditures. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

A review of the department's petty cash funds indicates that the funds are not in balance against the amounts of the County Financial Accounting Management Information System (FAMIS). The following findings were noted during the audit and are presented below with recommendations for correction.

Highland Forest and Jamesville Beach

Per Legislative Resolution 139-2003, Highland Forest and Jamesville Beach are each authorized to have a \$500 change fund, yet FAMIS reported Highland Forest as \$1,000 and Jamesville Beach as having \$0.

On 6/17/08, the cash count at Highland Forest revealed \$300 cash and a \$200 transfer slip to Jamesville Beach. On 6/18/08 the cash count at Jamesville Beach revealed \$974 in cash made up of their authorized amount of \$500, the \$200 transferred from Highland Forest, \$74.25 in concession money to provide vending machine refunds and an additional \$200 in donations which appeared to have been collected from 5/1/08 to the date of the cash count.

- 1) The County's policy for depositing funds received is not being followed by Jamesville Beach. \$274.25 should have been deposited in accordance with county policy. Per the memo from the Chief Fiscal Officer dated 11/1/04, "Amounts up to \$250 can be held for a maximum of one week by the department in a secure, locked desk or cabinet and accumulated for deposit." This policy is in place in order to protect the county's assets as well as county employees.

It is recommended the department deposit monies in accordance with county policy. Money should not be held on to in order to increase change funds above legislatively approved amounts.

- 2) Resolution 139-2003 specifically states by park the amount of the change funds at Highland Forest and Jamesville Beach. Any increases, decreases or transfers require legislative approval.

The \$500 Jamesville Beach change fund had been physically moved to Highland Forest and recorded as being at Highland Forest on FAMIS as of 1/25/08. This appears to have been done due to employees not being at Jamesville Beach during the winter months and not wanting to leave the cash unattended.

Although it is in the best interest of taxpayers not to leave the change fund unattended at Jamesville Beach, legislative approval should be sought to authorize the department to move the money from Jamesville Beach to Highland Forest when Jamesville Beach closes and the reverse when the beach opens again for the summer beach season.

The department should determine if the \$500 is needed at Highland Forest during the winter months or if the money could be deposited during the winter months. The increase, decrease, or transfer of change fund money needs to be approved by the County Legislature.

- 3) Due to the situation above as of 6/17/08, Highland Forest was reported as having \$1000 on FAMIS and Jamesville Beach as having \$0. At the time of the cash count at Highland Forest only \$300 was on hand. A signed transfer receipt for \$200 documented this amount was moved to Jamesville Beach, but there was no documentation to support that \$500 had been transferred from Highland Forest to Jamesville Beach when the cash was counted at Highland Forest. This was only substantiated when the change fund was counted at Jamesville Beach the following morning.

The department should seek legislative approval before transferring change fund accounts. No entries to adjust these accounts on FAMIS should be made without legislative approval. In the mean time the parks should return funds to the proper park and deposit any excess monies so there is not more money on hand than they are approved for.

Highland Forest

- 4) On the date of the change fund count at Highland Forest, the current custodian form on file in the Comptroller's Office was not valid because the person that signed as custodian of the fund is not the person listed as the custodian. In addition, the Visitor Center Attendant appears to handle the money a great deal and is not listed as an alternate custodian.

A "Designation of Petty Cash Custodian" and an "Alternate for Petty Cash Custodian" form were sent to Highland Forest and were completed and sent back to the Comptroller's Office prior to the issuing of this report.

Oneida Shores

- 5) A count of the change fund at Oneida Shores revealed \$653.00 in change fund money. This amount is net of profits taken in since the last deposit. Resolution 139-2003 authorizes the park to have a change fund up to \$500.00. \$3.00 of this was from normal overages that occur throughout the day. The additional \$150.00 was acquired by withholding funds that should have been deposited. The Park Superintendent says they need this money so they do not run out of change and have to go to the bank on weekends when they are busy.

The \$153 overage should be included in the next deposit. The department should look into whether or not the change fund at Oneida Shores needs to be increased through a legislative resolution.

Rosamond Gifford Zoo

- 6) Currently there is no custodian form on file for the main custodian of the change fund. The custodian said she recently filled one out and gave it to her supervisor.

The form should be completed and sent to the Comptroller's Office as soon as possible.

- 7) A count of the change fund at Rosamond Gifford Zoo revealed the account to be under by \$1.00.

The \$1.00 shortage should be held back from the next deposit in order to bring the change fund to balance.

Beaver Lake

- 8) A count of the petty cash change fund revealed the account to be \$5.00 over the authorized amount.

It is recommended the overage be included in deposits in order to bring the account back to the authorized amount.

Onondaga Lake Park

- 9) The Account Clerk I appears to handle the change fund a lot of the time and is not listed as an alternate custodian.

An "Alternate for Petty Cash Custodian" form has been sent to the Account Clerk I. Upon completion, it should be forwarded to the Comptroller's Office.

Low Cost Purchases

10) We noted there was a petty cash requisition that included tax. Petty cash reimbursements should not include any tax.

It is recommended that all purchases be made without paying any tax.

In summary, internal controls over the change funds need to be strengthened. The transferring of funds and withholding deposits in order to increase change funds above legislatively approved amounts should be discontinued. While your department's expenditures appear to be legitimate county expenditures, your department's procedures do not comply to generally accepted accounting standards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert E. Antonacci II". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Robert E. Antonacci II, CPA

Cc: Hon. Joanne M. Mahoney, County Executive
Jean M. Smiley, Administrator for Physical Services