

Audit Report

DUTCHESS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
PAYMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES FOR SNOW AND ICE CONTROL
2015 AND 2016

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Background

The County has determined it is in its best interest, and the safety and transportation needs of residents and users of the highways in outlying areas of the County to utilize the services of municipalities.

According to a 2013 resolution, Towns can assist with snow and ice control on approximately 25% of the total County Road System (396 center line miles).

Audit Scope

An audit was conducted to review the billing for Snow and Ice removal services provided by the municipalities for county roads for 2015 and 2016.

In accordance with Article 6, Section 135-a, of the New York State Highway Law (Addendum I), the County has entered into inter-municipal agreements for the rental of town-owned snow and ice control equipment for use on the County Highway System. In addition funds appropriated and expended include the cost of labor from the contracted municipalities.

General Observations/Recommendations

- Timely billing from the municipalities would facilitate prompt review and payment.
- Billings for the Highway Superintendent services should be billed by and paid to the respective municipalities.

Detailed Findings

Contract Provisions

During the audited time period, the County entered into agreements with towns for the control and removal of snow and ice from county roads which included; supervision/patrolling, preparedness for snow and ice control, plowing, removal of snow from roadways/intersections, treatment of slippery spots and routine benching using plow trucks. The contract also allows for the cost of materials used to perform these tasks. Town contracts could change from year to year. Routes can be added/deleted.

Billing processes

There are two processes in place to pay for services. Contracts are in place with municipalities to provide reimbursement for personnel, salt, materials, equipment rentals.

In addition, there are direct billings from Highway Superintendents for the services they perform.

Payments to the respective municipalities for services billed

Services billed and paid include reimbursement for personnel (other than the Highway Superintendent), salt, materials and equipment rentals. Typically forms submitted by the municipality to support reimbursement claims include:

- ~ The Summary Invoice which is a total of all billable time
- ~ Timesheets which include the names, dates and hours worked

- ~ Reports which indicate the road conditions for the respective dates

Observations

- Billings were not submitted timely. In most cases billings for services were submitted up to six to eight months after the services were rendered.
- In some cases, the road conditions reports did not accompany the respective dates reported.

Payments to respective Highway Superintendents via Dutchess County payroll

In order to receive reimbursement, forms prescribed by the county are completed by the individual Highway Superintendents. The required information includes the dates and times worked and the service performed for the hours claimed. These forms are submitted by the Highway Superintendents to the Dutchess County Department of Public Works. These forms are then reviewed by the Dutchess County Director of Highway Construction and Maintenance and are initialed attesting to review. Forms are then sent to the Dutchess County Highway Department's Payroll area to be entered into the county payroll system. Each Highway Superintendent is paid with a county paycheck rather through a paycheck from their respective municipality. Some towns that provided services did not have billings for their Highway Superintendent's services.

Observations/Findings

Based on the forms that are submitted to the county by each municipality, the forms and the respective hours and services submitted do not appear to be reviewed by each municipality. Highway Superintendents are elected officials; however, they also are employees of the respective municipalities. *Other personnel performing snow and ice control services are billed by municipalities and paid to the municipalities based on claim forms for reimbursement.*

- It was noted that several timesheets submitted did not have initials' attesting to review from the Director of Highway Construction and Maintenance. Additional review by the Payroll area of this attestation was not evident.
- While reviewing the billings, we noted 4 invoices that had not been paid and two that were overpaid.

Recommendations

- Requests for the respective Highway Superintendent's reimbursement of services performed should be submitted by the municipality and funds should be paid to the municipality and disbursed accordingly.
- We recommend an additional review be performed by the DPW Administration Payroll area to ensure each timesheet has an attestation of review.
- Adjustments and payments should be made to the billings noted above.

Municipalities 2015 & 2016	# County Roads	Miles	Cost 2015 \$	Cost 2016 \$ (thru 8/24/16)
Beekman	6	12.11	\$62,866.27	\$25,584.28
Clinton	2	8.89	67,911.58	13,785.35
Dover	4	11.67	118,354.14	25,760.63
Fishkill, Town	4	8.11	45,676.46	15,887.60
Hyde Park	10	14.34	71,787.25	21,923.68
Milan	2	7.62	13,247.10	-0-
North East	3	12.64	35,215.31	2,110.86
Pawling, Town	5	16.73	185,984.00	67,734.59
Poughkeepsie, Town	6	3.17	29,980.24	5,871.65
Rhinebeck, Town	1	2.98	19,225.90	3,651.23
Stanford	3	12.81	49,303.68	-0-
Union Vale	1	3.21	<u>102,588.63</u>	<u>15,181.09</u>
Totals			\$802,140.56	\$197,490.96

Municipality 2015 Detail	Materials	Truck rentals/ Drivers 2015	Supervisor 2015
Beekman	\$38,390.46	\$21,935.36	\$2,540.45
Clinton	43,239.12	23,862.62	809.84
Dover	69,208.98	46,958.41	2,186.75
Fishkill, Town	22,022.91	23,653.55	-0-
Hyde Park	52,145.28	18,800.62	841.35
Milan	7,436.64	5,468.97	341.49
North East	33,524.81	-0-	1,690.50
Pawling, Town	104,893.86	75,084.52	6,005.62
Poughkeepsie, Town	7,663.73	22,292.01	24.50
Rhinebeck, Town	10,498.53	8,493.88	233.49
Stanford	21,891.63	25,121.60	2,290.45
Union Vale	<u>70,505.79</u>	<u>29,106.49</u>	<u>2,976.35</u>
Totals	\$481,421.74	\$300,778.03	\$19,940.79

Municipality 2016 Detail (thru 8/24/16)	Materials	Truck rentals/ Drivers 2016	Supervisor 2016
Beekman	\$16,861.85	\$7,507.34	\$1,215.09
Clinton	8,793.74	4,828.34	163.27
Dover	13,531.11	11,427.78	801.74
Fishkill, Town	9,774.00	6,113.60	-0-
Hyde Park	15,914.11	5,710.08	299.49
North East	420.36	No claims	1,690.50
Pawling, Town	40,365.96	25,239.13	2,129.50
Poughkeepsie, Town	3,188.08	2,470.71	212.86
Rhinebeck, Town	1,918.16	1,577.51	155.56
Union Vale	<u>11,561.55</u>	<u>2,942.76</u>	<u>676.78</u>
Totals	\$122,328.92	\$67,817.25	\$7,344.79

Addendum I

Chapter 25. Of the Consolidated Laws

§ 135-A. Control of snow and ice conditions on county roads

Notwithstanding any general, special or local law, any county or its superintendent of highways may contract with any city, town or village for the removal of snow from the county roads of a county or for sanding or otherwise treating them for the purpose of removing the danger of ice and snow, subject to such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon by the parties involved and to the approval by resolution of each of the legislative bodies of such county, city, town or village, as follows:

- (a) By such city, town or village renting its highway tools or equipment to the county for such purposes at such terms as may be agreed upon;
- (b) By removal of snow from county roads by a city, town or village;
- (c) By sanding and otherwise treating of county roads for the purpose of removing the danger of ice and snow by a city, town or village;
- (d) By removal of snow and sanding and control of ice and snow on county roads by a city, town or village;
- (e) By any combination of a, b, c and d.

A county may in like manner contract with a city, town or village for the erection of county owned snow fence along a county road upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon. The erection of snow fence shall not be deemed to be a part of the contract entered into as described in b, c, d or e above, unless expressly so provided in writing.

Such contract or contracts shall be in writing for not longer than a period of ten years. Money received by a town pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be credited to the respective funds which were charged with the objects of expense. Money so received by a city or village shall be placed in the city or village general fund, respectively, and may be used for any lawful city or village highway purpose.

Any county shall annually appropriate and expend such sum as it deems proper for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this section.