



THOMAS P. DiNAPOLI
COMPTROLLER

STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE STATE COMPTROLLER
110 STATE STREET
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12236

ROBIN L. LOIS, CPA
DIVISION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AND SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
Tel: (518) 474-4037 Fax: (518) 486-6479

December 2025

Jeffrey Campo, Chairman
Members of the Board of Fire Commissioners
Ridge Fire District
20 Francis Mooney Drive
Ridge, NY 11961

Report Number: 2021M-165-F

Dear Chairman Campo and Members of the Board of Fire Commissioners:

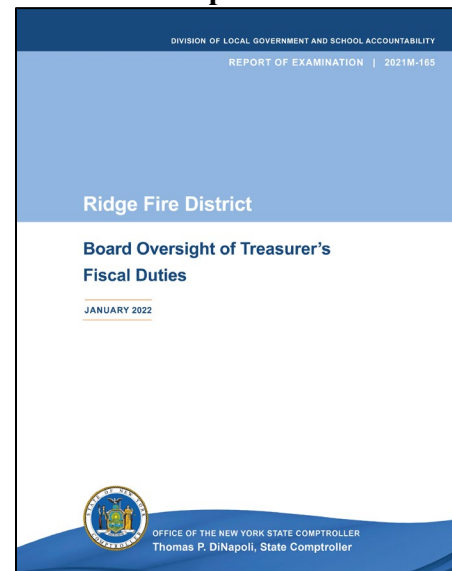
One of the Office of the State Comptroller's primary objectives is to identify areas where local government officials can improve their operations and provide guidance and services that will assist them in making those improvements. The Office also works to develop and promote short-term and long-term strategies to enable and encourage fire district officials to reduce costs, improve service delivery, and to account for and protect their fire district's assets.

In accordance with these objectives, we conducted an audit of the Ridge Fire District (District) to determine whether the District Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) provided adequate oversight of the Treasurer's fiscal duties. The Board consists of five members (Commissioners) including one who serves as the Chairman.

As a result of our audit, we issued a report, dated January 2022, identifying certain conditions and opportunities for the Board's review and consideration (Figure 1). In response to the audit, District officials filed a corrective action plan (CAP) with our Office on January 11, 2022. The CAP identified the actions the Board planned to take to implement the audit recommendations.

To further our policy of providing assistance to local governments, we revisited the District on September 30, 2025. Our follow-up review was limited to interviews with Commissioners and the

**Figure 1: Ridge Fire District
2022 Audit Report**



<https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/audits/2022/pdf/ridge-fire-district-2021-165.pdf>

District Treasurer (Treasurer), inspection of certain documents related to the issues identified in our report and review of the District's CAP.¹

Based on our limited procedures, the Board partially implemented one recommendation and did not implement two recommendations. As a result, the Board cannot ensure District assets are fully safeguarded.

Recommendation 1 – Financial Reports to the Board

The Board should ensure that the Treasurer maintains adequate and complete accounting records, and provides accurate monthly reports to the Board, including budget status reports for use in monitoring District operations throughout the year.

Status of Corrective Action: Partially Implemented

Corrective Action Plan: The District's CAP stated that the newly-appointed Treasurer maintained adequate and complete accounting records and provided the Board with complete and accurate monthly reports.

Observations/Findings: The Chairman, two other Commissioners and the Treasurer told us the Treasurer provides the Board a monthly Treasurer's Report, which includes the following for its review at Board meetings:

- Banking activity for all District bank accounts, including money received and deposited, disbursed and transferred, and a reconciliation between the beginning and ending book and bank balances,
- Explanations for any variations in bank balances,
- A budget-to-actual report of expenditures, and
- A list of bills paid.

We compared the most recent Treasurer's Report provided to the Board at the September 8, 2025 Board meeting to source documentation and determined it was accurate and complete. However, the budget-to-actual report did not include revenues. The Chairman and the two Commissioners told us they thought monitoring expenditures was sufficient oversight. However, the Treasurer's budget-to-actual report should also include revenues so the Board can ensure actual revenues are meeting budget estimates and if not, take timely corrective action before the District's financial condition is negatively affected.

Recommendation 2 – Bank Reconciliations

The Board should ensure the Treasurer prepares monthly bank reconciliations on a timely basis and provides them to the Board for review.

Status of Corrective Action: Not Implemented

¹ See Appendix A for the District's CAP to the OSC audit report.

Corrective Action Plan: The District's CAP stated that the newly-appointed Treasurer prepared bank reconciliations in a timely manner and that the Board would continue to review them.

Observations/Findings: The Chairman, and the Treasurer told us the Treasurer prepares bank reconciliations for all District bank accounts as soon as the bank statements are available and provides them to the Board for its review. We reviewed the July and August 2025 bank reconciliations and although they were prepared accurately and in a timely manner, we determined that the Board did not review them. One Commissioner told us he occasionally reviews the bank reconciliations and another Commissioner told us he does not review them at all. Because the Treasurer performs most accounting duties with limited oversight, the Board should perform a deliberate review of the bank reconciliations each month to ensure they are timely and accurate. The Treasurer and Chairman told us they thought making the bank reconciliations available and having one Commissioner review them was a sufficient process. However, to be an effective control, bank reconciliations, including the bank statements and the supporting documentation for deposits, withdrawals and outstanding items, should be provided to the entire Board at its meetings for review. Without this necessary oversight control, the Board cannot ensure that it will detect and correct errors or irregularities in a timely manner.

Recommendation 3 – Commissioner Signatory Rights

The Board should limit Commissioners' signatory rights to the District's bank accounts and communicate to the bank the Board's intent regarding dual signatures.

Status of Corrective Action: Not Implemented

Corrective Action Plan: The District's CAP did not address this recommendation.

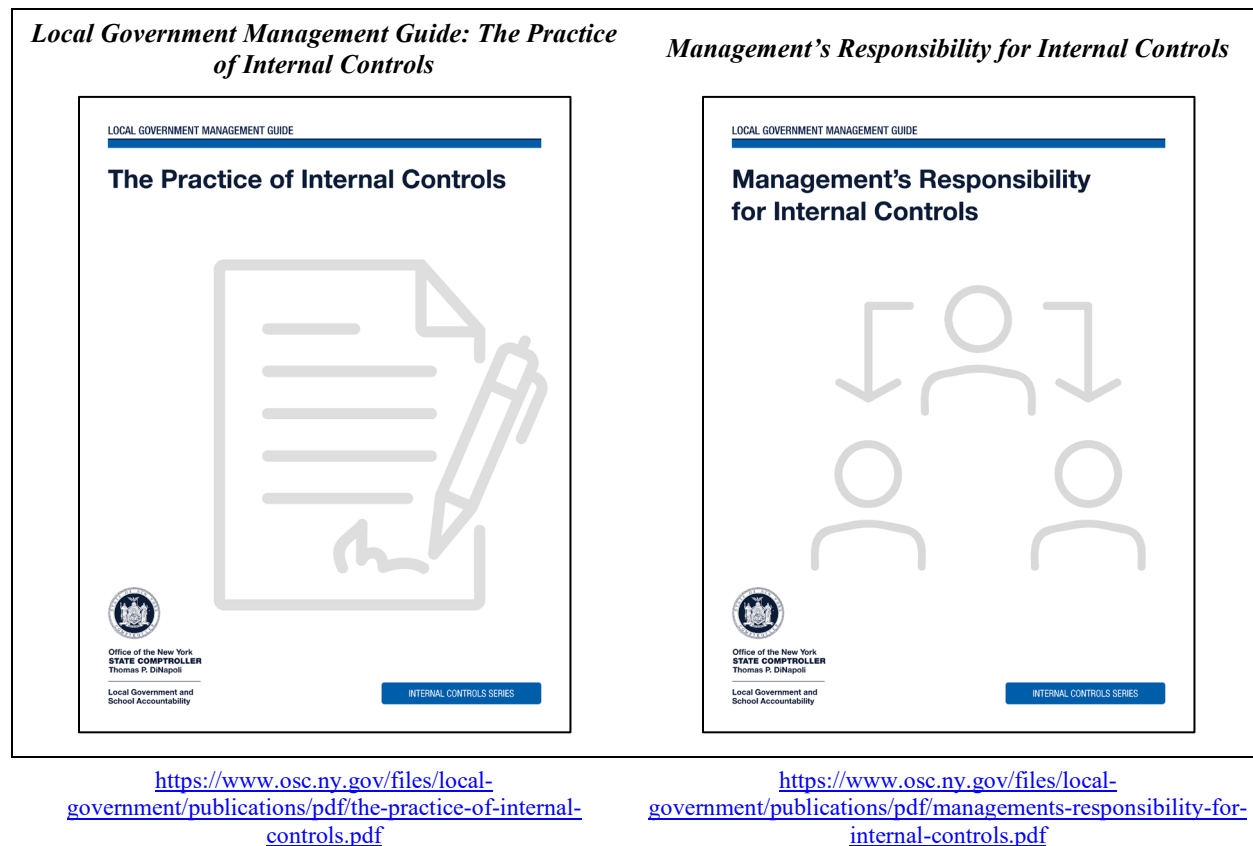
Observations/Findings: During our audit, we learned that a significant amount of the discrepancies we observed were due to the District's bank incorrectly withdrawing funds from the District's bank account instead of from the personal line of credit of a Commissioner, who had signatory rights on the District bank accounts, and banked at the same institution.² The Chairman told us that, subsequent to our audit, the District changed banks and Commissioners were not permitted to make withdrawals from District bank accounts. However, we reviewed the District's bank agreement and it listed the Treasurer, the Deputy Treasurer and all five Commissioners as signatories to the accounts. Furthermore, it did not specify whose signatures were required for transactions or restrict Commissioners from being the sole signature on any District bank transactions.

As an important segregation of functions, the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer should be the only signatories to the District's bank accounts. However, to help safeguard District funds, if the Board wants all five Commissioners included as signatories it should communicate to the bank its intent to restrict Commissioners' from being the sole signature on any bank transactions.

² We found discrepancies totaling \$10,244 between the District's bank reconciliations, financial records and bank statements. In a letter dated March 2019, the District's bank stated that in June 2018, it inadvertently processed three withdrawals from the District's bank account rather than the Commissioner's personal line of credit. The bank corrected the error in January 2019 by transferring \$9,201 into the District's bank account from the Commissioner's personal account.

During our review, we discussed the basis for our recommendations and the operational considerations relating to these issues. We encourage District officials to fully implement our recommended improvements. For additional guidance, District officials should refer to OSC's *Local Government Management Guide* publications available on our website, including *The Practice of Internal Controls* and *Management's Responsibility for Internal Controls* (Figure 2).

Figure 2: OSC Publications



Thank you for the courtesies and cooperation extended to our auditors during this review. If you have any further questions, please contact Nicole Tomsen, Chief of Municipal Audits of our Statewide Audit Unit at (716) 847-3647.

Sincerely,

Robin L. Lois, CPA
Deputy Comptroller

Appendix A – District's' CAP to the OSC Audit Report



Board of Fire Commissioners

PHONE 631 - 924-4080
FAX 631 - 924-0001

RIDGE FIRE DISTRICT
20 FRANCIS MOONEY DRIVE
P.O. BOX 500
RIDGE, L.I., N.Y. 11961

January 10, 2022

Via Email and First Class Mail

Mr. Ira McCracken
Chief Examiner
Division of Local Government and School Accountability
Office of the State Comptroller
NYS Office Building
Room 3A10, Veterans Memorial Highway
Hauppauge, New York 11788-5533

Re: Report of Examination, Ridge Fire District; Board Oversight of Treasurer's
Fiscal Duties; Audit - January 1, 2019-September 30, 2020 (Extended to
December 31, 2020); 2021M – 165; Fire District Response and Corrective
Action Plan

Dear Mr. McCracken:

This communication is sent as the response of the Board of Fire Commissioners ("Board") to the draft audit report submitted by your office. In addition, we have also detailed the Corrective Action Plan ("CAP") which we will undertake at our fire district to address the recommendations contained within your report. Initially, the Board would like to thank your office for its efforts and professional work in connection with the recent audit. Clearly, the recommendations made during the audit process, as well as within the report, will assist the Board in improving its fiscal duties.

Initially, the Board would like to note that there was no finding of fraud, waste, or abuse on behalf of the Board. We feel that this is, in part, attributable to the continuous efforts of the Board members to exercise proper fiscal constraints while contemporaneously providing a high level of firematic service to the residents of the fire district.

The report indicates in its key findings several practices that have been discontinued due to a change in the District's Treasurer.

The following are the Board's responses to each key recommendations stated in your report, as well as any corrective action that will be undertaken as to each such recommendation.

Recommendations:

The fire district should:

1. Maintain adequate and complete accounting records and provide the Board with complete and accurate monthly reports.

The District Treasurer who was employed by the District during the audit period at issue is no longer employed by the Fire District. The current District Treasurer does maintain adequate and complete accounting records, and does also provide the Board with complete and accurate monthly reports.

2. Board should review monthly bank reconciliations that are completed accurately and timely.

The District Treasurer who was employed by the District during the audit period at issue is no longer employed by the Fire District. The current District Treasurer does provide the Board with accurate and timely reconciliations. In addition, the Board will continue to review monthly bank reconciliations to insure that they are complete and accurate.

In closing, this communication shall serve as our response and CAP as required by statute. The Board will not issue a separate CAP after the report is published. Notwithstanding, we will ask your office to accept this letter as the fire district's CAP.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the Chairman of Ridge Fire District.

Chairman, Ridge Fire District