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Comptroller Jack Schnirman Announces Audit of Nassau County Assessment Review Commission

Review will probe property tax grievance processes and commission finances

MINEOLA, NY – Nassau County Comptroller Jack Schnirman today announced his office will be conducting an audit of the county's Assessment Review Commission (ARC), which is the agency responsible for reviewing and making determinations on property tax grievances filed by residential and commercial property owners.

"In light of the many issues residents are having with their assessments, and the potentially inequitable way the grievance process has played out, we must take a close look at the commission's policies, procedures, and practices," Schnirman said. "Specific complaints about the commission's processes had previously been filed with this office, and I believe they warrant further investigation."

Staff from the Office of the Nassau County Comptroller officially filed an engagement letter with ARC on February 20, 2018. The letter outlined the initial scope of the audit, which will review ARC's assessment grievance processes to determine if it's in compliance with statutory mandates, review processes that govern how a grievance is granted or denied, and determine if there is a substantial difference between filings made by owners and specialized representatives. The commission's finances will also be reviewed to determine if it is operating in an efficient manner. The audit review period is 2015 to present.

This audit is not related to the County Executive's ongoing county property reassessment efforts and will operate independently of that process.

"It is important we move forward with our audit as soon as possible," Schnirman said. "Any benefit gained from a fair reassessing of Nassau County properties by the County Executive's Office could be quickly lost if ARC's policies and procedures for grievances are not in compliance with best practices."

This audit will provide a clear look at the numbers behind Nassau County's complex property tax grievance process. It is a process that truly affects all Nassau County residents and business owners, and as a result ARC must be transparent in its operations.

"We know there is a strong desire to improve the way Nassau County handles tax grievances," Schnirman said. "It is our hope that bringing in our objective audit team and the resources of the Comptroller's Office will result in positive reforms so that we can move forward to address the other financial issues Nassau County is facing."