

## **Case Study – Glens Falls Housing Authority**

***“Thank you Cost Control Associates for getting the refund from our telecom carrier that we had spent the last 4 months trying to get. The fact that you were willing to go to bat for us - even taking the case to the Public Service Commission - shows your tenacity in getting us the refunds and cost savings that we are entitled to”***



### **Background**

Nestled along the Hudson River, in the Adirondack foothills, lies the picturesque City of Glens Falls, New York, made famous by James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*. Glens Falls and the surrounding area have grown over the years and have seen substantial increases in housing costs. The region, long a popular vacation destination, has a large tourist-based economy with many entry level and service positions. Low income residents can spend as much as 50% of their income, or more, on rent alone.

The Glens Falls Housing Authority (GFHA) provides rent assistance to low income people covering the gap between the cost of housing and 30% of the individual's income. The fact that Federal funding has been substantially reduced over the years while rents and operating costs continue to rise, present challenges to GFHA. Clearly, any cost savings would help.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

GFHA changed telephone providers, but for several months after the new carrier began providing service, the former carrier continued to bill. While the former carrier agreed to cancel any unpaid bills, they refused to issue a refund for those bills that had been issued by the carrier and paid by GFHA in error.

After several months of discussions during which the carrier refused GFHA's repeated refund requests, GFHA called Cost Control Associates for help. Since it had been several years since Cost Control Associates' last review of energy and telecom costs, GFHA welcomed the opportunity to have Cost Control Associates complete a new review of energy and telecom costs.

Since the carrier that had billed GFHA in error clearly did not provide the service they billed for, Cost Control Associates thought this would be an easy case. However, obtaining the telecom refund was more involved than expected as the carrier steadfastly refused any refund request.

However, Cost Control Associates was certain the refund was due and so on behalf of GFHA filed a complaint with the New York State Public Service Commission.

### **Solutions and Results**

Based on the arguments presented to the New York State Public Service Commission by Cost Control Associates, the Commission ordered that a full refund with interest be issued to GFHA. A check was promptly issued by the carrier.

Not only was Cost Control Associates successful in helping GFHA obtain the telecom refund it was entitled to, Cost Control Associates' analysis of both energy and telecom costs identified other refunds and cost savings as well. The savings included an unfavorable contract for electric supply that Cost Control Associates successfully got GFHA released from. Through its efforts, GFHA realized over \$15,000 in combined refunds and annual savings. The savings realized for GFHA will allow them to assist even more people with their housing needs.

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