

Fines against city rise in tax cases

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The court-imposed fines and penalties are piling up for the city and its tax commissioner.

Bruna Michaux, the city's commissioner of taxation and assessment, was fined an additional \$500 Wednesday, and two judges also ordered her and the city to pay almost another \$5,000 to property owners overbilled by the city.

State Supreme Court Justice Patrick H. NeMoyer's second civil contempt-of-court fine means the city owes the courts \$1,000 in fines. In January, NeMoyer imposed an initial \$500 civil contempt fine on Michaux over higher property assessments in violation of court-ordered assessment reductions.

The city has not yet paid the

first fine, court officials said.

Attorney Peter Allen Weinmann, who represents 23 property owners affected by the alleged overbilling, said he expects further court proceedings linked to reassessments levied against his clients after NeMoyer and fellow Justice Joseph G. Makpowski reduced and froze them.

Weinmann and court officials confirmed that the city recently refunded \$16,000 in property taxes to the affected property owners under court orders issued last year by NeMoyer and Makowski.

Both justices recently tacked on nearly \$5,000 in penalties against the city after Weinmann proved Michaux's department systematically reassessed his clients' residential properties higher after those court rul-

ings, court officials said.

City Corporation Counsel Alisa A. Lukasiewicz was unavailable to comment on the cases.

The Weinmann client properties are on Hodge Street, West Ferry Street, Lincoln Parkway, Highland, Ashland, Lafayette, Woodbridge and Lexington avenues, Saybrook and Clarendon places and Dorchester Road.

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