

# Statler Towers tax refund ordered

BY MATT GRYTA

NEWS STAFF REPORTER

The City of Buffalo on Wednesday was ordered to refund \$100,000 in tax overassessments to the former operators of the Statler Towers on Niagara Square within the next 30 days or face contempt-of-court and monetary penalties.

State Supreme Court Justice Frank A. Sedita Jr., who issued the latest deadline on Oct. 19, ordered a reduction in the tax bill of the former owner of the 18-story landmark, Northstar Development Corp, also known as York Statler.

Peter Allen Weinmann, at-

torney for Gerald Buchheit, head of Northstar, which sold the building last August, said he launched new court proceedings against the city — which was given 45 days after the October ruling to refund the overpayments. The company has “yet to receive any form of refund” three months after that deadline, he said.

Assistant Corporation Counsel Alan Gerstman, representing the city in the case, was unavailable to comment.

Sedita reduced the building's assessed value to \$1.3 million from \$3.4 million and ordered the city to refund the overpayments for the tax years

2005-06 and 2006-07 within 45 days.

Buchheit in August sold the Statler Towers to British developer Bashar Issa and the BSC Group of Manchester, England.

Ellsworth Statler, the Buffalo-based hotelier, built the Statler at 107 Delaware Ave. in 1923 as his flagship hotel. It was sold to the Hilton hotel interests in the 1950s and was converted into an office tower by a local investment group in the 1970s.

A Kuwaiti consortium owned it for a time in the 1980s, and Buchheit purchased it at a 1992 foreclosure sale.

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*e-mail: mgryta@buffnews.com*