

# ULSTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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**AMANDA LAVALLE**

*Deputy County Executive*

March 7, 2023

Dear Citizens of Ulster County:

In light of the recent events concerning the County's longtime Commissioner of Finance, I wanted to update you all on the steps I have taken to secure access to County funds, initiate an independent investigation, and take the opportunity to reform the County Finance Department to be more transparent, secure, and efficient.

We were all dismayed last week to learn of the accusations levied against Mr. Gulnick, the County Finance Commissioner of 12 years, who allegedly may have stolen thousands of dollars from the Hurley Recreation Association, a private swim club for which he served as Treasurer. Upon learning of the allegation, I immediately directed him to go on leave pending the outcome of an investigation. Mr. Gulnick chose to resign, instead.

Immediately after his resignation, I directed our staff to terminate access to the following:

- the County government's financial systems;
- email and network access;
- physical access to the County Office building, including swipe card access and installing new locks on the Commissioner's office;
- all bank accounts, including those related to the management of estates.

Additionally, physical technology assets including computer equipment and cellular phones were retrieved and secured within minutes of the Commissioner's resignation.

We have worked closely with the County Comptroller's office every step of the way, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank County Comptroller March Gallagher and her superb staff for their continued assistance and partnership in ensuring the County's finances are secured.

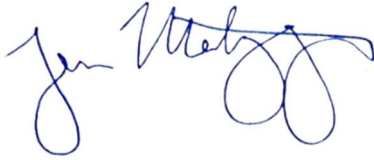
I have also requested that the Office of NYS Comptroller Thomas P. Dinapoli undertake a forensic audit of our County finances to investigate whether those finances have been compromised in any way during Mr. Gulnick's long tenure, and for the State investigative team to identify any improvements that can be made to the County's internal controls and systems. I have made it clear to our staff that County books are open for review by all law enforcement agencies and forensic investigators.

I am pleased to report that an investigation is now underway by the State Comptroller and our District Attorney's Office. My office is working with them to ensure that investigators have what they need to conduct a rigorous and exhaustive investigation.

From my perspective, this challenging moment is an opportunity to scrutinize the County's financial system and internal controls, modernize that system where necessary, and create the level of transparency, accountability, and security taxpayers deserve.

As your County Executive, I will continue to keep you informed on the progress of this work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jen Metzger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jen" written in a smaller, simpler script and the last name "Metzger" in a more elaborate, flowing cursive style.

Jen Metzger  
Ulster County Executive