



**OFFICE OF THE ULSTER COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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February 16, 2024

**FORMER ULSTER COUNTY COMMISSIONER OF FINANCE BURT GULNICK  
SENTENCED TO TWO YEARS IN JAIL**

**District Attorney Emmanuel C. Nneji** today announced that former Ulster County Commissioner of Finance Burton Gulnick, Jr., has been sentenced to two years in jail by the Honorable Debra J. Young. This sentence follows his guilty pleas on October 10, 2023, in connection with the theft of tens of thousands of dollars from a local not-for-profit, as well as monies from a county-wide election campaign account.

Following a lengthy investigation by the New York State Police, Gulnick was arrested in June of 2023 and charged with felonies concerning monies he stole from the Hurley Recreational Association, a not-for-profit organization that provides summer activities and programs for children and families. The Hurley Rec suffered losses of over \$97,000, resulting in a disruption to children's programs and activities during the 2023 summer season.

During the investigation, NYSP Investigators further determined that Gulnick also stole thousands of dollars from an election campaign bank account belonging to former Ulster County Executive Michael Hein. Gulnick abused his position of trust and stole money from both victims for his personal use over an extended period of time. He manipulated accounting records in both instances to hide his criminal conduct.

At sentencing DA Nneji called Gulnick's conduct "most disappointing, especially given the public trust in him, and that he stole from children, particularly at a time when children were coming out of being homebound for a long time as a result of the pandemic." It was revealed during the sentencing that Gulnick said that he committed these thefts because he "wanted everything for his kids and could not say no to them."

Although Gulnick expressed disappointment, DA Nneji questioned whether his disappointment was for his conduct which he hid for so long and betrayed those



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who trusted him, or simply because he was caught. Nneji added that “blaming his blatant abuse of his authority to steal on his desire to provide everything for his children is shameful and despicable. Many people in this County, including public officials, emergency service providers, farmers, store clerks, cashiers, waiters, teachers, nurses, to name a few, have similar desires to provide everything for their children, but they restrict themselves to their means and make do with what they have. They set examples for their children, rather than blaming them. I hope this experience teaches the children that there is dignity in working hard and living within your means, and that being trusted in the community and in your work is priceless.”

Gulnick was required by District Attorney Nneji to pay restitution of \$35,000 to the Hurley Rec and \$15,000 to the Hein Campaign before his sentencing date; he has done that. He was also required to waive his appellate rights, sign confessions of judgement for two insurance companies which paid approximately \$62,000 to Hurley Rec after the thefts were discovered.

The defense attorney requested a sentence of probation, saying that first-time felons for this type of crime in the Hudson Valley do not receive incarceration, but DA Nneji asked the court to impose the agreed sentence of one to three years in state prison.

Judge Young decided to impose two years in jail; she noted the impact statement submitted by Rich Mugge, Hurley Rec President, in which Mugge disclosed that Gulnick was telling volunteer board members and others to do more fundraising at the same time that he was stealing the money.

DA Nneji said on the record that the plea and sentence only pertain to the crimes against Hurley Rec and the Friends of Mike Hein Campaign; they do not in any way affect any other matters under investigation by the NYS Comptroller’s Office or Ulster County Comptroller relating to Gulnick’s job as Ulster County’s Commissioner of Finance and his handling of the County’s accounts and assets.

Burton Gulnick, Jr., was represented in this case by Todd Carpenter, Esq., a Poughkeepsie attorney.

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