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Comptroller

COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

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NEWS RELEASE

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Comptroller Antonacci Responds to Phony Controversy Started by County Executive Mahoney

Syracuse, NY – In the ultimate act of childishness, the County Executive continues to attack the County Comptroller's Office, playing political football with the County's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and potentially jeopardizing the County's bond rating.

Rather than worry about the details of the financial operations of Onondaga County government, of which she is fully aware, the County Executive continues to attack the Comptroller's Office, the only independent office in County Government charged with protecting taxpayer dollars and safeguarding the assets of County Government.

So, let's set the facts straight:

1. The only time deadlines regarding financial information placed upon the Office of Comptroller are May 1 for the submission of the Annual Update Document (AUD), a document filed with the New York State Comptroller's Office. This document is online and can be retrieved here, <http://www.ongov.net/comptroller/documents/AUD12-31-17.pdf>. This document was timely filed.
2. The second deadline is the Federally required report called the Single Audit, and that is due on September 30 of each year. It will be filed timely.
3. The arbitrary and capricious meeting dates set by the County Executive with bond rating agencies were her doing and her doing alone. At no time did she or her administration seek from our office confirmation of the completion of the CAFR prior to setting the meeting dates. There are no federal, state or local requirements for this meeting to take place in July. Maybe we should check the Yankees' schedule.

Borrowing can be done at any point in the year. Of course, one must ask, why is the County continuing to borrow at a record pace? As this office reported prior, the County Executive has doubled the amount of money borrowed on her watch.

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4. The County Executive and her administration are responsible for an over one month delay in the closing of the books this year. As a result of her administration being incapable of processing accurate year-end transactions in a timely fashion, the accounting records closed on April 6, 2018, over a month past the scheduled closing date and the latest closing date in over 34 years.
5. The County Executive, in an effort to place blame on the County Comptroller, continues to ignore the draconian and vicious budget cuts, the result of her "Revenge Budget", on this office. The 2017 Budget as adopted was \$232,451 short of what was needed to pay the 30 "funded" positions. The fallacy of 30 "funded" positions was perpetuated in the 2018 budget. The salary funding which the Comptroller's Office received was that for only 25 actual positions. Either the Chief Budget Officer doesn't understand the concept of "funded" positions, or more likely, the County Executive is just bent on harming the Comptroller and his office.

The County Comptroller's office accounts for \$1.3 billion of taxpayer money. Previously we had six (6) accountants working on this vital task. Now we have two (2). We cannot understand how the County Executive can continue to tell the world that drastically limiting the resources of this office will not somehow result in priorities being reshuffled. As stated earlier, the County Comptroller meets every federal, state and local financial deadline and will continue to do so.

As a Certified Public Accountant, I don't know how anyone would believe that when you cut accountants and delay the closing of the accounting records, that the actual production of the financial statements would not lag.

We now hope the County Executive will get back to County government business as the financial ship is definitely heading in the wrong direction.

For further information regarding this release, contact Robert Antonacci II, CPA at (315) 435-2130.