

Editor: City Business Administrator Stu Renda is not a liar! His statements to Scranton City Council about discussing the upcoming layoffs were true. Mr. Renda and I met on more than one occasion to discuss the layoffs. While I do not want to see anyone lose their job, I did agree the layoffs would not affect the operations of the Scranton Single Tax Office (“STO”). Additionally I do find it ironic that City Council, and more particularly, Mr. Courtright, are accusing Mr. Renda of failing to do exactly what they failed to do – contact me. Unlike Mr. Renda, no member of City Council has contacted me to discuss the layoffs.

Additionally and more importantly, I find it interesting that City Council has voted to retain the Chief Clerk’s position. Is this in lieu of a Controller or in addition to a Controller? The Controller position was the recommendation of the Philadelphia based auditing firm of Nihill Riedley. It was supposed to **replace** the Chief Clerk’s position. It was not intended to add another political appointee. The Controller is supposed to be an individual with an extensive background in accounting. I attempted to hire such an individual, but my efforts were blocked by City Council. If City Council wishes to save a job at the STO, they should save the job of a current rank and file member – not create a job for an appointee.

Over the past two years, I have brought numerous problems at the STO to the attention of the City Council as well as the public. In the next few weeks, the final results of the discovered \$12.2M will be released. Unfortunately, when the final results are released, they will highlight what should already be known. The STO was run as a political office – not as a professional organization. In January, I will hand the reigns of the STO to Mr. Courtright and I wish him well. However, his recent activities are “not a promising sign” that he intends to change the status quo.

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