

**Minutes of the
TROY CITY COUNCIL
FINANCE COMMITTEE
June 18, 2020
6:00 P.M.**

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, this meeting was held remotely via videoconference.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Council President Mantello.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: The roll being called, the following answered to their names: Council Member Gulli, Council Member Steele, Council Member Cummings, Council Member Zalewski, Council Member McDermott, Council President Mantello, Chair. Council Member Ashe-McPherson was absent.

In attendance were Mayor Patrick Madden, Deputy Mayor Monica Kurzejeski, Corporation Counsel Richard T. Morrissey, and Deputy Comptroller Andrew Piotrowski.

Public Forum - written statements were submitted by the following individuals and are appended to these minutes:

1. John J. Frank, Troy
2. Maggie Mang, Troy
3. Naomi Jaffe, Oakwood Avenue
4. Anthony Mohen, Troy
5. Zan Strumfeld, 2nd Street
6. David Banks, Belle Avenue
7. Dr. Guy Schaffer, 2nd Street
8. Raquel Velho, 4th Street
9. Rhea Drysdale, Troy
10. Damaris Miller, Hill Street
11. Amani Olugbala, Troy

41. Ordinance Adopting The City Of Troy, New York Credit Card Policy (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Ordinance passed 6 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions, 1 absence (Ashe-McPherson).

42. Ordinance Transferring Funds Within The 2020 General Fund Budget (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Ordinance passed 6 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions, 1 absence (Ashe-McPherson)

60. Resolution Of The Troy City Council Appointing Patricia Reilly To The Troy Community Landbank (Council Member Zalewski)

Resolution passed 6 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions, 1 absence (Ashe-McPherson)

63. Resolution Appointing A Commissioner Of Deeds For The City Of Troy (Council President Mantello)

Resolution passed 6 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions, 1 absence (Ashe-McPherson)

64. Resolution Determining That Proposed Action Is A Type Ii Action For Purposes Of The New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 6 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions, 1 absence (Ashe-McPherson)

65. Bond Resolution Authorizing The Issuance Of \$945,000 Serial Bonds To Finance The Cost Of Sidewalk Improvements (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 6 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions, 1 absence (Ashe-McPherson)

66. Resolution Of Troy City Council Authorizing A Public Hearing For Changing Traffic Direction On Jacob Street Between River And King Streets (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 6 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions, 1 absence (Ashe-McPherson)

67. Resolution Of Troy City Council Authorizing A Public Hearing For Changing Traffic Direction On State Street Between First And Third Streets (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 6 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions, 1 absence (Ashe-McPherson)

68. Resolution Of Troy City Council Authorizing A Public Hearing For Changing Traffic Direction On South River Street Between Main And Polk Streets (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 6 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions, 1 absence (Ashe-McPherson)

69. Resolution of Troy City Council Recognizing Juneteenth (Council President Mantello, Council Member Steele, Council Member Zalewski, Council Member McDermott, Council Member Cummings)

Resolution added via unanimous consent. Resolution passed 6 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions, 1 absence (Ashe-McPherson)

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

A video recording of this meeting is on file at the City Clerk's office.

Public Forum for June 18 Finance Meeting

12. John J. Frank, Troy
13. Maggie Mang, Troy
14. Naomi Jaffe, Oakwood Avenue
15. Anthony Mohen, Troy
16. Zan Strumfeld, 2nd Street
17. David Banks, Belle Avenue
18. Dr. Guy Schaffer, 2nd Street
19. Raquel Velho, 4th Street
20. Rhea Drysdale, Troy
21. Damaris Miller, Hill Street
22. Amani Olugbala, Troy

As a resident of Troy, I am writing to encourage you to immediately freeze additional funding for the Troy Police Department and reallocate \$10 million from the TPD Budget to community services, projects and people run by, decided by, and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing. The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to Community action programs to help police and resident regain the trust that has been lost over the years. I is important to have a community review board made up of both citizens and police as well a council members to patch the divide that has grown over the years.

We demand that this redistribution be run by, determined by, and decided by communities most impacted by violent and murderous policing. This process must center our local Black-led groups such as Troy for Black Lives (formerly known as Justice for Dahmeek) who have been making these demands for years.

We are in solidarity and support with the demands of our local grassroots Black-led organizations such as Troy for Black Lives / Justice for Dahmeek. While we make these demands during a surge of Black Lives Matter protests sweeping the country after the police murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Tony McDade, we emphasize that our demands have been consistent through years of surviving and challenging oppressive policing in Troy, New York.

We remember the lynching of Edson Thevenin and the attempted murder of Dahmeek McDonald by Troy police, as well as the subsequent coverups by Mayor Madden, district attorneys, and other Troy officials.

Defund Troy Police now! Invest in Black Communities!

Sincerely,
John J. Frank, Troy

<https://www.facebook.com/justicefordahmeek/posts/2602987623363823>

As a resident of Troy, I am writing to encourage you to immediately freeze additional funding for the Troy Police Department and reallocate \$10 million from the TPD Budget to community services, projects and people run by, decided by, and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing. The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to public health initiatives; community gardens and food infrastructures; educational spaces and recreational programs, provided free of charge for community members; and greater mental health access.

This is important because the over bloated budget of TPD actually does not serve community needs, and that a reallocation to services that have been proven to uphold safety is urgently needed. Furthermore, policing further harms communities of color and in particular Black and poor community members. Police violence is not “safety,” and I write to urge City Council Members to reconsider what safety looks like for “the community” by actively listening to and centering those most harmed by our current police state and police department.

We demand that this redistribution be run by, determined by, and decided by communities most impacted by violent and murderous policing. This process must center our local Black-led groups such as Troy for Black Lives (formerly known as Justice for Dahmeek) who have been making these demands for years.

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Sincerely,
Maggie Mang, Troy

There's been a lot of talk from city officials about support for Black Lives Matter. The city budget is one key place where the rubber hits the road.

Along with the thousands of other Troy residents who came out to demand that Black Lives Matter in Troy NY, I urge you to put Troy's money where its mouth is.

DEFUND THE POLICE. CUT THE TPD BUDGET BY 10 MILLION AND REDIRECT THOSE FUNDS TO PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, AND SERVICES DECIDED BY, RUN BY, AND CENTERING BLACK COMMUNITIES MOST IMPACTED BY VIOLENT POLICING.

This type of initiative, which would have been unthinkable a month ago, is being considered and in some cases implemented by cities across the U.S.

LET'S CALL IT THE EDSON THEVENIN/DAHMEEK MCDONALD TROY REPARATIONS FUND.

Sincerely,
Naomi Jaffe, Oakwood Avenue

As a homeowner and resident in the City of Troy, I am writing to ask you to immediately freeze additional funding for the Troy Police Department and reallocate \$10 million from the TPD Budget to community services, projects and people run by, decided by, and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing. The excessive TPD Budget should be

redistributed to services that actually address community needs. For example, these funds could be used for better waste management services (such as a comprehensive residential composting program), providing access to healthy food, and increasing services and outreach for mental health, drug treatment, and housing.

This is important because we continue pouring tax dollars into policing that is not helping residents of the City and generally only harming Black and low income communities. We need to prioritize services that address the root causes of crime in our city rather than putting people in jail and financing violence against our citizens.

We demand that this redistribution be run by, determined by, and decided by communities most impacted by violent and murderous policing. This process must center our local Black-led groups such as Troy for Black Lives (formerly known as Justice for Dahmeek) who have been making these demands for years.

We are in solidarity and support with the demands of our local grassroots Black-led organizations such as Troy for Black Lives / Justice for Dahmeek. While we make these demands during a surge of Black Lives Matter protests sweeping the country after the police murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Tony McDade, we emphasize that our demands have been consistent through years of surviving and challenging oppressive policing in Troy, New York.

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Sincerely,
Anthony Mohen, Troy

As a resident of Troy, I am writing to encourage you to immediately freeze additional funding for the Troy Police Department and reallocate \$10 million from the TPD Budget to community services, projects and people run by, decided by, and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing. The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to long-term safety strategies including a focus on education, social workers, local restorative justice services, and employment programs. There needs to be a greater investment and immediate priority in the health and safety of the Black community.

This is important because our Black community members make up so much of our beautiful city while simultaneously being drastically underrepresented. Troy should be a city setting an example to the rest of the Capital District (and beyond), not only by showing solidarity, but through significant change and anti-racist actions.

We demand that this redistribution be run by, determined by, and decided by communities most impacted by violent and murderous policing. This process must center our local Black-led groups such as Troy for Black Lives (formerly known as Justice for Dahmeek) who have been making these demands for years.

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Sincerely,
Zan Strumfeld, 2nd Street

My name is David Banks and I reside at Belle Avenue. This is in reference to ordinance 42. As a resident of Troy, I am writing to encourage you to rethink the allocation of funds to the Troy police department. Currently about 28 cents of every dollar in the general fund goes directly to the police department. This does not cover 911 services or traffic enforcement. While spending nearly a third of a city's tax dollars on policing is not abnormal for an American city, I would hope you use the present moment to think creatively about this situation.

We ask our police to do too much without the proper training. We cannot expect one person to be a warrior, an adept bureaucrat, and a conflict mediator. These are, often, contradictory roles that cannot be reconciled. Instead, I would encourage you to reallocate funds such that we pay for services and equipment that can stop crime before it happens. Some examples of this include: funding after school programs, particularly for teenagers and young adults, working with the school districts to make it easier and cheaper to get into HVCC and other surrounding colleges, and reinvesting in our neighborhoods with good paying jobs that go toward fixing aging infrastructure and making generative connections with neighbors.

Kind Regards,
David Banks, Belle Avenue

My name is Guy Schaffer, and I live at 2nd St. and Liberty St. in Troy, NY. I am submitting the following to be read at the public forum at tonight's finance meeting.

As a resident of Troy, I am writing to encourage you to immediately freeze additional funding for the Troy Police Department and reallocate \$10 million from the TPD Budget to community services, projects and people run by, decided by, and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing. The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to programs that empower Black youth, uplift Black voices, offer healing to Black bodies, and strengthen Black communities.

We demand that this redistribution be run by, determined by, and decided by communities most impacted by violent and murderous policing. This process must center our local Black-led groups such as Troy for Black Lives (formerly known as Justice for Dahmeek) who have been making these demands for years.

We are in solidarity and support with the demands of our local grassroots Black-led organizations such as Troy for Black Lives / Justice for Dahmeek. While we make these demands during a surge of Black Lives Matter protests sweeping the country after the police murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Tony McDade, we emphasize that our demands have been consistent through years of surviving and challenging oppressive policing in Troy, New York.

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Sincerely,
Dr. Guy Schaffer, 2nd Street

My name is Raquel Velho, I'm a resident of Troy on 4th Street. I'd like to use my time in tonight's public forum to address the agenda item: Ordinance Transferring Funds Within The 2020 General Fund Budget, namely the notion of transferring money within Facilities in a move, I can only suppose, is an attempt to adjust expenditures in what is already a pretty tight budget. Indeed, Council President Mantello seems to have made a declaration in an online Facebook group regarding the need to cut expenses across the board given the city's current financial situation due to COVID-19 and, though her statements were erroneous and misleading in saying that there had been a 10% cut across all departments, there is something that rang important in her words.

Truly, we are faced by a pandemic and an economic crisis of proportions we hadn't seen in a century. Yet this is an golden opportunity. I suggest to members of the council creative in the redirection of funds within the Budget! Why only transfer WITHIN departments? Why not transfer BETWEEN them? I suggest city council members take a closer look at the budget, and see with clarity the richness in funds that the so-called Law Enforcement have been given: a budget of nearly \$21 million, when other departments wallow, having to resort minor switches to make the numbers work. Council members, following from Justice For Dahmeek, we demand

divestment from the police and investment in Black communities in our city. What a wonderful opportunity here for you to learn to reinvent our community, investing instead in the education, health and safety of Black people, instead of investing in the criminalizing, caging, and harming of Black people.

I stand with Justice for Dahmeek. Their demands are my demands, and here, in this meeting you have an opportunity to think boldly, creatively, and towards equity for all of this city's residents.

Thank you.

Raquel Velho, 4th Street

As an individual who:

- relocated to this city from Florida,
- is a small business owner,
- an employer who has brought many more residents to the area,
- a parent to children in the public system
- and proud homeowner in Troy,

I am writing to encourage you to immediately freeze additional funding for the Troy Police Department.

And, I implore you to reallocate 30-40% of the current TPD Budget to efforts that will effectively and immediately:

1. reform the culture, practices and morale of the department
2. and repair relationships with marginalized and Black communities in Troy.

As a business owner I understand the cost of a trained workforce and I recognize that the department is already understaffed and functioning with a terrible morale.

While my recommendations may lack knowledge of the current Troy PD and city budget and existing police efforts, please take the principles to heart and recognize that I'm applying common business practices that we employ daily to elicit the behavior, performance and cost efficiencies needed in our company.

These are practices I see modeled everyday by our team, our partners, and our clients, which include some of the largest and most effective companies and brands in the world including Google, NASCAR, Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Lyft, Exelon and more than 190 other businesses.

Troy PD's current practices and funds should be audited, reviewed internally, reviewed publicly and reallocated to:

1. Increase community policing.

The City of Troy website states that:

“Our primary focus is on the people in our community. We work in a proactive way, getting to know the people who live and work around us. We believe that by interacting with communities we can reduce crime and increase the Quality of Life for the people we serve.

We have also made ourselves more visible on the streets of Troy by patrolling on bicycles, and foot which gives us the chance to interact closely with the community.”

As a business owner who regularly parks and walks through downtown Troy, I have never spoken to, been approached by, seen or interacted with a Troy police officer who appeared to be doing community policing. The presence of local police officers is simply not seen.

This may be due to understaffing. If that’s the case recruit community police officers at a lower pay level or incentivize current officers with additional pay to genuinely patrol, say hello to, and be present in the community building relationships.

2. Invest in more relevant and effective community training.

Also taken from the City of Troy website:

“All Community Police unit officers spend time giving presentations in local schools & to various community and professional groups. The subjects range from abuse to bicycle safety to drug/alcohol awareness.”

Develop programs that aren’t a regurgitation of 1980s public service announcements. While these may be effective for the subjects you cover (how is this measured? Is this public?), there are more pressing subjects that should be addressed with the community and businesses starting with: recognition of racism and bias and acts of microaggression and violence.

I can’t speak to the details of these programs, but there are professionals who could recommend a more relevant and effective offering.

3. Investigate overtime records and end of shift arrests.

There should be an impartial investigation into the overtime records of all active duty officers and arrests made one hour prior to the end of their shift.

This should be conducted for the last 6 months to assess how much overtime and how many resources were spent on false or excessive arrests by officers attempting to receive costly overtime pay.

4. Develop a conduct-driven pay structure.

A pay or bonus structure should be put in place for police officers.

I agree they are underpaid, but the system is setup to incentivize an unethical performance as a means of achieving a comfortable living wage relative to the risks they incur.

Police officers should be incentivized with a tiered pay structure or bonus that rewards the behavior and culture the department and community requires to fully reform the department and repair relationships with the community (the entire community—not just those supportive of and least impacted by police activities).

Recommended actions that could be considered for bonuses and/or raises or official accommodations factored into advancement:

- a. No conduct complaints for x period of time
- b. x number of foot or bike patrols
- c. x amount of community development
- d. etc.

5. Terminate officers with a history of misconduct and complaints.

Misconduct records and complaints filed against police officers should be made public and reviewed by the Citizen Review Board and/or other public and interested entities. Police officers with a history of founded complaints should be suspended.

6. Develop a city outreach program for police recruitment.

Establish a youth and/or second career program for new recruits.

7. Incentivize recruitment from residents in the City of Troy.

Include a sign-on bonus or other incentives for residents of Troy who become police officers.

8. Remove School Resource Officers and COPS from schools.

With the current school year in question due to COVID-19 this is an unnecessary and uncertain use of funds.

Additionally, other solutions can be put in place by the City of Troy allowing for the reading teachers to find alternative employment in the school system as a safety patrol, counselor, student advocate, or an alternative title and role best developed by the school board and changing needs in our post-COVID world.

9. Fund more mental health and family assistance and programs.

The entire world has been impacted and traumatized by COVID-19. There will be a growing number of issues that should not receive a police response. The community needs qualified support and trained help outside of the police force.

10. Invest in a reputation management and marketing strategy.

When I do see a police officer while driving or even on a call, they don't smile or say hello. You're in the business of customer service. The entire purpose of the police department is to protect and SERVE the community. This doesn't happen by intimidating them. Get some training in emotional intelligence and customer service and your outcome will be significant. I have performed this exact training for free for Clark House Hospitality and 60 of their employees. They provide exceptional customer service and have grown their business and become beloved in Troy.

The police department and the city are a business. You can have a similar outcome. This isn't a sales pitch, it's a genuine statement that I would give my time for free to demonstrate what corporations pay me thousands of dollars to train them on—reputation management and marketing.

I have not used my voice to help the City of Troy. That is going to change and I'm looking forward to learning from you and becoming a more involved resident and business owner.

I demand that this redistribution be run by, determined by, and decided by communities most impacted by violent and murderous policing. This process must center our local Black-led groups such as Troy for Black Lives (formerly known as Justice for Dahmeek) who have been making these demands for years.

I am in solidarity and support with the demands of our local grassroots Black-led organizations such as Troy for Black Lives / Justice for Dahmeek. While we make these demands during a surge of Black Lives Matter protests sweeping the country after the police murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Tony McDade, we emphasize that our demands have been consistent through years of surviving and challenging oppressive policing in Troy, New York.

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Sincerely,
Rhea Drysdale, Troy

As a resident of Troy, I am writing to encourage you to immediately freeze additional funding for the Troy Police Department and reallocate \$10 million from the TPD Budget to community services, projects and people run by, decided by, and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing. The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to parks and pools, mental health and /or rehabilitation services, out-of-school opportunities for Black youth and other marginalized youth, and community led police accountability.

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Sincerely,
Damaris Miller, Hill Street

As a resident of Troy, I am writing to encourage you to immediately freeze additional funding for the Troy Police Department and reallocate \$10 million from the TPD Budget to community services, projects and people run by, decided by, and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing.

The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to a variety of Black led community organizations, specifically those addressing police and state violence. Funds also need to go towards recreation & youth services. This is important because a lack of opportunities is directly correlated with violence and public unwellness.

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Defund Troy Police now! Invest in Autonomous Black Communities! Accountability to Those Most Impacted! This is not Politics. It is Life.

We Are Counting On You To Do the Right Thing!

Love,

Sincerely,
Amani Olugbala, Troy
