

**Minutes of the
TROY CITY COUNCIL
FINANCE MEETING
July 23, 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 6:02 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 Ashe-McPherson, Council Member Steele, Council Member Cummings, Council Member Zalewski, Council Member McDermott, Council President Mantello, Chair.

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

Council Member Zalewski made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the prior meeting and approve as posted.

Public Forum

Written statements were submitted and are appended to these minutes.

Deputy Comptroller Piotrowski presented the 2nd Quarter Financial Report.

44. Ordinance Amending The 2020 General Fund Budget And Accepting Grand Funds From The Troy Capital Resource Corporation For The 2020 Neighborhood Improvement Program (Council President Mantello)

Ordinance passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

45. Ordinance Amending The Capital Projects Fund Budget (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Ordinance passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

46. Ordinance Amending The 2020 General Fund Budget To Accept Funds From The New York State Division Of Criminal Justice Services For The Purpose Of Gun Involved Violence Elimination (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Ordinance passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

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

Ordinance passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

48. Ordinance Authorizing The City To Create A Capital Project And Amending The Capital Projects Fund Budget To Allow Funding For Said Capital Project (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Ordinance passed 6 ayes, 1 no (Mantello), 0 abstentions.

49. Ordinance Declaring Certain City Owned Property As Surplus And Directing The Comptroller To Dispose Of Said Property (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Ordinance passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

50. Ordinance Adopting The City Of Troy Returned Check Policy (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Ordinance passed 6 ayes, 1 no (Cummings), 0 abstentions.

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

Ordinance passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

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

Ordinance passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

53. Ordinance Amending The 2020 General Fund Budget (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Ordinance amended to replace Memo and Schedule A, 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions. Ordinance passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

54. Ordinance Authorizing The Implementation Of A Parking Violation Amnesty Program (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Ordinance passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

55. Ordinance Authorizing And Ratifying The Employment Contracts With The Police Chief, Deputy Chief Of Police, And Assistant Chief Of Police (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Ordinance passed 6 ayes, 1 no (Cummings), 0 abstentions.

72. Resolution Authorizing The City Of Troy To Impose A Service Charge For Returned Checks (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 6 ayes, 1 no (Cummings), 0 abstentions.

73. Resolution Authorizing The Mayor To Enter Into A 2019/2020 Stop-DWI Enforcement Crackdown Agreement With The County Of Rensselaer (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

74. Resolution Authorizing The Mayor To Enter Into A 2020 Stop-DWI Enforcement Agreement With The County Of Rensselaer (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

75. Resolution Of The City Of Troy, New York Amending Certain Prior Bond Resolutions Relating To The Combined Sewer Overflow Long Term Control Plan (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

76. Bond Resolution Of The City Of Troy, New York, Authorizing The Issuance Of \$1,600,000 Serial Bonds To Finance The Reconstruction And Improvement Of A City Parking Garage (Council Member Zalewski) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 6 ayes, 1 no (Mantello), 0 abstentions.

77. A Resolution Authorizing The Issuance Of Up To \$3,300,000 In Revenue Anticipation Notes Of The City Of Troy, Rensselaer County, New York In Anticipation Of The Receipt Of Certain Revenue Due During The Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2020 (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

78. Resolution Accepting The Rubin Foundation Grant As Awarded By The Louis & Hortense Rubin Community Fellows Program (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

79. Resolution Of Troy City Council Authorizing The Change Of Traffic Direction On Jacob Street Between River And King Streets (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

80. Resolution Of Troy City Council Authorizing The Change Of Traffic Direction On State Street Between First And Third Streets (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

81. Resolution Of Troy City Council Authorizing The Change Of Traffic Direction On South River Street Between Main And Polk Streets (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

82. Resolution Approving The City Clerk's Appointment Of Sharon Wells As Assistant To The City Clerk And Setting The Wages Of The Assistant To The City Clerk (Council Member Zalewski)

Resolution passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

83. Resolution Supporting The Chaptering Of New York State Legislature Bill A.9952b/S.7880b To Prohibit The Incineration Of Firefighting Foam Containing Per- And Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAs) In Cohoes (Council Member Cummings)

Resolution passed 6 ayes, 0 nos, 1 abstention (Mantello).

84. Resolution Authorizing The Mayor To Enter Into A Contract With The Boys And Girls Club Of The Capital Area, Inc., For The Purpose Of Providing Trained Personnel To Administer And Operate The South Troy Pool Facility Until August 31, 2020, Under City Supervision (Council President Mantello) (At The Request Of The Administration)

Resolution passed 7 ayes, 0 nos, 0 abstentions.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

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

Public Forum for Finance Meeting, July 23, 2020

1. Rafael Varela, Hill St., Troy NY
2. Melissa Bromley, Springwood Manor, Troy, NY
3. Maggie Mang, 4th Street
4. Scott Stafiej, 15th St between Jacob and People's Ave
5. Jennifer Cardinal, Bleeker Ave. Troy
6. Darcie Casey, 4th Street
7. Ross Siegel, PhD, Cedar Park Apartments
8. Aidan Bardos, 3rd St Troy, NY
9. Vanessa Arcara, 15th Street
10. Emily Olsen, Sherman Ave
11. Mark Emanatian, South Lake Avenue, Troy, NY
12. Adam Cybulski, Parkview Court
13. Jaimie Drozdal, 2nd Street
14. Zak Guthrie, 8th Avenue, Troy
15. Zachary Hayes. 4th St, Troy
16. Dara Silbermann, 2nd Street Farm
17. Ellie Irons, 9th Street, Troy
18. Linden Horvath, 2nd Street, Troy
19. Jennifer Bartels, 2nd Street
20. Raquel Velho, 4th Street, Troy
21. Rhea Drysdale, Massachusetts Avenue, Troy
22. Angela Beallor, Jacob Street, Troy, NY
23. Sylva Menard, Fifth Avenue, Troy
24. Emily Musial, 1st St, Troy
25. Brandon Tankersley, Downtown Troy
26. Laura Rabinow, Madison Street, Troy
27. Penelope Barbalios, 5th Avenue, Troy
28. Mickey Dobbin, 2nd Street, Troy
29. Oz McClamrock, Jesse Court, Troy
30. Elizabeth Woodbury Kasius, Whitman Court
31. Anansa Benbow, MA, Taylor Court, Troy

Non-Troy Residents

32. Karen Bellamy. Halfmoon, NY
33. Abigail Harris, Former Resident
34. Kathryn McTeigue, Kenosha Street, Albany, NY
35. Asaf Fabbi, Albany, NY
36. Suzanne Davis, Niskayuna, NY
37. Mackenzie Denofio, Niskayuna
38. Henry Park, Niskayuna

Dear City Council ,

I am writing to consider the benefits of reducing the police budget and using that money for social benefit, please vote no to Ordinance 46 and 55, do not raise the police salaries and/or benefits; and do not give them more equipment.

We want to see a significant effort towards defunding the Troy Police Department which as every Police Department in the USA have shown that they are incapable of learning or changing their systemic well entrenched culture of racism.

What are you waiting for to act? are you waiting until another black person is murder by Troy Police and gets caught on camera to make the national news?

We demand Justice for Edson Thevenin, and Dahmeek McDonald, , and compensation for their families.

When are you going to disclose the information regarding the 2016 murder of Edson Thevenin?

I have been a resident and property owner in Troy since 2003 and I own a business in Troy. It is historical time to make real change now and not to waste everyone's time and energy with ineffectual committees.

Rafael Varela, Hill St., Troy NY

To The Troy City Council,

During last week's meeting the opportunity to de-obligate some of the TPD responsibilities came up. Ordinance #46 Amending The 2020 General Fund Budget To Accept Funds From The New York State Division Of Criminal Justice Services For The Purpose Of Gun Involved Violence Elimination (GIVE) points to a missed opportunity.

The GIVE program was created to allocate state funding to evidence based approaches for reducing gun violence. In picking from the menu of investment options, TPD wrote the grant to spend nearly \$200,000 on hot-spot policing and field intelligence. Where is the investment in street outreach? What about crime prevention through environmental design? The TPD has one perspective of how to reduce gun violence, and their perspective is at odds with the numbers.

According to Gifford's Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence "GIVE areas have observed reductions in shootings ranging from 7% to 35% following implementation." Compare that to the nearly 60% reduction for Operation SNUG. "Unlike GIVE, Operation SNUG exclusively supports the Cure Violence model of violence reduction, which requires significantly less involvement from law enforcement and a greater emphasis on street outreach work."

At last week's meeting Councilperson Ashe McPherson spoke about gun violence within the Black community, contrasting it with police violence against Black people. Black lives matter

whether they are being taken from us in the form of state sanctioned violence, or eruptions of violence from oppressive conditions. How our city allocates funding from programs like GIVE has a real effect on the safety of our Black community members. What role does the Council play in overseeing how these grants are written?

We can do better.

Melissa Bromley, Springwood Manor, Troy, NY

P.S. Here's a link to Gifford's Law Center's full paper: <https://lawcenter.giffords.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Investing-in-Intervention-12.18.17.pdf>. It's worth reading and thinking critically about how we approach gun violence in our community. (Note that at the time this paper was published the numbers quoted above were initial results and formal evaluations were still pending, I wasn't able to find more up-to-date figures).

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Maggie Mang and I am a resident of Troy, NY, living at 4th Street. I moved to Troy about a year ago to start graduate school at RPI. Beyond being a student, I also am regularly involved with Oakwood Community Center and am finding additional ways to be of service to this community in realms surrounding food and racial justice. I am writing to you to encourage you to immediately freeze additional funding for the Troy Police Department and reallocate \$10 million from the TP budget to community services and projects led by and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing. The current budget as it stands is over-bloated, allocating too much money to police departments at the expense of sectors such as public health, education, and housing. Instead, TPD should be redistributed to these sectors listed (public health, education, and housing), areas most urgently needing bolstered support as our global pandemic and rates of unemployment severely impact issues such as reopening of schools, rent, and healthcare. Funding these areas, rather than siphoning even more unnecessary resources to the TPD, will what will actually support and make safer our communities.

I am writing in solidarity and support with the demands of Troy 4 Black Lives. The Council has done nothing to address these demands, which, if the historic rally of 11,000 people last month indicated anything, is long overdue. The City Council continues to be complicit in the murder and harm of Black people in Troy. We remember the lynching of Edson Thevenin and the attempted murder of Dahmeek McDonald by Troy police, as well as the egregious coverup by Mayor Madden, district attorneys, and other Troy officials.

Once again, I urge the City Council to defund Troy Police and to use that money to invest in our communities, actions that will actually serve to support, protect, and uplift the constituents you purport to serve.

Sincerely,
Maggie Mang, 4th Street

Ms. Steele,

I wrote to you two weeks ago asking you to support Troy for Black Lives in their calls for *a civilian review board with subpoena power and representation of no less than 60% of people most impacted by police violence* and to divert those at risk of *entering the criminal justice system towards community-based treatment alternatives*.

Your response, and the response of the council, is both underwhelming and disappointing. In response to calls to defund the police, you suggest "holding listening sessions" for a number of months. This does not respond properly to this moment and pretends that you need to hear more voices. 11,000 people rallied in early June in support of Black Lives. Your community is speaking clearly to you now. Listen now, not later!

We need to defund current police systems in favor of more empathetic community alternatives!

With this in mind, you will be voting on ordinance #46 and ordinance #55. Ordinance #46 supports the "GIVE" grant which supports hiring more officers and provides more equipment to the police. Ordinance #55 approves 3 additional police administrators. To be clear, these ordinances do not defund the police, and they do not favor community alternatives. In short, they are deaf to the calls of your constituents.

Please do not support these ordinances. Please listen to the requests of black community in Troy.

Thank you!

Scott Stafiej, 15th St between Jacob and People's Ave

Good afternoon City Council Members,

My name is Jennifer Cardinal and I live in Troy, NY and teach at RPI. My husband and I moved to Troy a year ago, and have been happy to put down roots and call this community home. I felt inspired and hopeful to see so many neighbors out among the 11,000 who came out to support Black Lives Matter. Now it's time for our local institutions to support the changes our community is demanding.

The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to support community organizations like Troy for Black Lives and Oakwood Community Center, and provide resources for our community. The city must take this opportunity to support the needs of the community. There are strong organizations leading clear initiatives. All we need from you is a reallocation of resources to make them a reality and create a more vibrant community.

This is important because if we don't all prioritize care for our community, we will continue to be divided and unable to function to support the needs of Troy residents. We need strong social institutions we can believe in right now. This is a turning point- a moment where the city has a chance to listen to residents and respond to their needs. I urge you to listen and respond now.

Invest in Black Communities. Support the education, employment, housing, childcare, well being, and sustainability of our community.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Cardinal, Bleeker Ave. Troy

I am writing to state my support for The City of Troy's Police Department and I am very much opposed to any legislation that may defund this department. I reside at 4th Street in South Troy and I see first-hand how our policemen/women are constantly dealing with various incidents and also the increase in gun violence in our City. I can't understand how someone could contemplate and support such legislation to cut funding and think this would be a positive move for our City's residents. I have family who serve on the Police Department and the Fire Department as well, and I constantly worry for their safety. I believe and many others that I have spoken with, all very strongly feel now more than ever we need to SUPPORT and BACK THE BLUE!

Therefore, I wholeheartedly oppose any legislation defunding our Police and risking the safety of the residents within the City of Troy!

Most Sincerely,
Darcie Casey, 4th Street
Resident / Tax Payer

Dear City Council Members / County Legislators ,

I am a resident of Troy in the Cedar Park apartment complex between Lavin and 21st ST. I have lived in this city for almost six years now and regularly participate in many community events. 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 and projects led by and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing**. The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to community centers for youth involvement, after school activities for middle and high school students, community art programs, enhancing events like the Farmers Market and Enchanted City with more community activity, etc. It is important for officers and their community to have great levels of trust and respect for each other. Recent national, and local, events have eroded that trust because of over enforcement, arrest quotas, and hiring practices based on historical data that keeps systemic racism alive.

I am writing in solidarity and support with the demands of Troy 4 Black Lives. The City Council has done nothing to address these demands, nor the historic rally last month of 11,000 people. The City Council continues to be complicit in the murder and harm of Black people in Troy.

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,
Ross Siegel, PhD, Cedar Park Apartments

Dear City Council,

I am a Troy resident who demands that the police are defunded in our area and across the country and that these funds are directed back into communities most effected by police brutality: working class Black and Indigenous communities. We know that prison and police are systems need complete transformation into restorative justice systems, and when funds are redirected into healthcare, housing, job opportunities, education, etc, we ALL FLOURISH!!! I do not support Ordinance #46. A quarter of the city's budget goes to putting people in cages?!!!! This is a disgrace and inhuman to the core.

So here we all sit in the afterlife of a slave society, voting on Ordinance 55 to approve contracts & salaries for 3 police administrators between \$120k - \$135k ?!?! When you put money into police state, you are REfunding a system build to control and punish Black people. We need to DEFUND police and direct those funds back into OUR community.

Instead of ignore the realities of our country and collective, let's come together to support our community by putting Black liberation at the center of our focus. Because when Black people get free, everybody gets free. I love Troy and it's residents; let's come together and be leaders for the nation to follow in transforming our society into one that supports our people !

Sincerely,
Aidan Bardos, 3rd St Troy, NY

To the Troy City Council,

I'm happy for the opportunity to send my thoughts for tonight's meeting as you consider ordinance 46 and 55. I am writing as a Troy resident on behalf of myself and my family - a one-year old baby girl and my husband. We live on 15th St between Jacobs and Peoples.

I would like to invite you to consider the purpose of public institutions, which is to create safe and vibrant places in which to enjoy our lives and raise our families.

Our goal should be to strengthen our local community and economy such that Troy residents have the support we need to build thriving citizens and families. Our goal should be for police presence to get smaller and smaller instead of larger and larger. The highest purpose of a police department should be to help support a community in moments of true crisis, lending specialized skills when no other option is available.

Accepting additional funding from the state of New York to increase police headcount and add new weapons into our community is not how we would like public dollars spent. Please reject ordinance 46 and set an example for other towns and the state of New York, who should be routing public investment into community services like childcare, education, green spaces, and local food systems...not into an increasingly heavy police force.

In regards to ordinance 55, I invite you to consider that the 2017 median household income in Troy was \$40,911 (Ref.) I deeply believe that workers deserve a living wage, and wish this number was higher. But approving salaries and contract provisions that would allocate between \$120-135K dollars each to just 3 TPD administrators feels egregious and unjust, given, again, the need for additional resources to be spent on direct community support. Please remember that the police department exists to support the community and not the other way around.

To highlight the excess of this idea, consider that according to the US Census, Law Enforcement Workers are already among the highest paid workers in Troy. This money is needed elsewhere. We understand that it isn't as simple as rejecting this ordinance and rerouting the money elsewhere, but it is the duty of local government to act in alignment with data and principles, and in this case, both would suggest rejecting adding more public dollars to resourcing the police. Please reject ordinance 55.

We have enormous gratitude to the community members in Troy who have welcomed us and helped us get up to speed with direct engagement in local politics. In case it is not clear, there is a large and growing group of passionate and able organizers here who are resolved to interrogate our local institutions until the demands of Troy for Black Lives are met. We have so much energy for this work, and you will continue hearing from us until our communities are safe for us all, or we will do everything in our power to unseat you in future elections.

With gratitude for your consideration and time,
Vanessa Arcara, 15th Street

Dear City Council Members,

I am a resident of Troy residing on Sherman Avenue, and I am writing to discourage you from passing Ordinance 46 and Ordinance 55. Following the historic rally last month of 11,000 people, I was at first encouraged to see and hear all of the support for the Black Lives Matter movement. However, in the weeks that followed, the City Council has done nothing to address the demands of Troy 4 Black Lives. In fact, Ordinance 46 and Ordinance 55 are in direct opposition to these demands. I am shocked to hear that a department that already receives a quarter of the city budget requires even more funding to be effective.

Instead of passing these two resolutions, I urge you instead to invest in local parks and recreation programs, additional community-based youth programs, and the restoration of abandoned properties. As a recent homeowner, I feel a strong sense of duty to the exploited communities that will suffer if we do not show our support.

Please do your part to ensure that Troy comes out on the positive side of history.

Sincerely,
Emily Olsen, Sherman Ave

Hello,

I am writing to oppose resolution #46 and resolution #55. We need more services and less policing in Troy. We need youth employment and programs. We need mental health counselors and health care workers. We need affordable housing and child care.

I live in Troy. I volunteer in Troy. I shop in Troy.

We need a government that listens to the people.

Mark Emanatian, South Lake Avenue, Troy, NY

Dear City Council Members,

My Name is Adam Cybulski, owner and resident of Parkview Ct. in the Albia neighborhood of Troy.

We have long been told that the cities prior poor fiscal management and debts are the reason for reduced services in our community, however it is increasingly clear that our bloated police budget is the more pressing strain on our finances.

I am aware that tonight you are voting on two ordinances that will even further increase the TPD budget, through a grant from the state, and through over generous contracts equating to almost a million dollars in pay and benefits for a mere 3 administrators. I am requesting you vote down both of these proposals, and work towards reallocating \$10Million from the TDP budget towards the city's services, especially focusing on increasing funding for Parks and Recreation and youth mentorship programs.

Mayor Madden in a public letter asserted that "Troy should be proud to add its voice to that outcry – that black lives do matter." on June 7th 11,000 people marched in Troy to deliver you all that exact message. Any council member voting to increase policing in our fair city is sending a clear message back to those 11,000 people that their voices have not been heard. Rest assured that that message will be remembered in the next election.

Empty words and platitudes will not stand in the place of substantive changes. 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. We will remember them still in November.

Adam Cybulski, Parkview Court

Dear City Council Members / County Legislators ,

I am Jaimie Drozdal, a resident of Troy at 2nd Street.

I came to Troy 7 years ago as an RPI student and became an official resident just last year. As a student at RPI we were always told to avoid certain areas of Troy because they were "bad". We were told to accept that these communities are poor-off and focus on the historic downtown, small business district. Our freshman orientation activities focused on only this portion of Troy, leading us to believe this is representative of Troy. I remember the first time driving to Snowman's years later thinking, wow... this is still Troy? There were entire sections of the town and communities that I was completely unaware of. Was this intentional? Probably.

There is a fear of our inner-communities and we are associating their needs for services as a need for policing. I want to say that again. We are associating the communities' needs for services as a need for policing. We are depicting these communities as being composed of criminals and not as full of our own brothers and sisters.

Today 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 and projects led by and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing. I do not support Ordinance #46 nor do I support Ordinance #55.

I spoke with the Sergeant on Duty for Troy PD yesterday to complain about 3 separate instances where one or more officers were not wearing masks while they were interacting with community members. This is a basic measure of safety for our community that officers are not taking. How can we trust these officers when they can't even wear a mask when talking to our neighbors and community members? Wearing a mask is a basic measure of respect for the community, and the police officers cannot even do that.

In the conversation with the sergeant, he made the comment that I "did not sound like someone who would be arrested". When I pressed him what that meant, what did I sound like, or how does someone who's likely to be arrested sound, he told me I was reading too much into it. However, the fact that he is not looking into his own comments shows how these biases are thriving in TroyPD. He became defensive instead of taking a moment to reflect on how his words came across to his community. Experiences like this are why I do not believe TroyPD deserves more funding or more officers.

I believe the excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to the youth in our community. Ensuring that they have access to youth employment, safe parks, safe recreational activities, and reliable transportation methods. I also think the money should go back in to restoring abandoned properties to ensure low income housing. It breaks my heart to see brand new, expensive apartments going up on 4th street when you pass blocks of abandoned buildings all over Troy.

I do not believe that Troy PD needs more money nor do they need more officers policing our streets. Instead of making our current officers stronger and better at their job, they want to add to their army and rely on intimidation tactics. As a white woman I have never felt Troy PD was approachable. They don't wave or say hello when you pass them. At the Troy Rally for Black Lives, one of the speakers called for officers to introduce themselves and get to know the people of their communities better. What is TroyPD doing to answer her call? From my experiences, they don't even smile at me when they make eye contact driving by.

I am writing in solidarity and support with the demands of Troy 4 Black Lives. The City Council has done nothing to address these demands, nor the historic rally last month of 11,000 people. The City Council continues to be complicit in the murder and harm of Black people in Troy.

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 will not be forgotten or ignored.

Defund Troy Police now! Invest in Black Communities!

Sincerely,
Jaimie Drozdal, 2nd Street

In regards to Ordinance 46 - I would like to suggest instead of doing the exact opposite of what protestors have called for, we should forgo funding more people with batons, tasers pepper spray, and, of course, guns, and seek to reduce gun violence with more community-minded solutions. Since we have approved a group to cover just these kinds of topics, maybe we can wait to allow them to find a better answer than GIVE.

And in regards to ordinance 55 - I take issues with a few elements here, firstly that as we call for defunding the police the pay and benefits being offered to them make much of the rest of Troy look like peasantry. but more importantly I do not think we should be encouraging overtime from anyone in our police department, due to a number of studies concluding over work and lack of sleep increase implicit bias and worsen decision making skills. I will add a link to a site that's collected this research if any of you want to check my sources.

We do not need to hand over this much money to our police. As someone who knows several people who were negatively impacted by police showing up to what should be non-police related jobs like welfare-checks, I believe we at least need to narrow their role.

Zak Guthrie, 8th Avenue, Troy

Link: [My source](#)

Hello,

My name is Zachary Hayes. I live on 4th St in Troy. I have lived in Troy for 3 years, and attended college here for 4 years prior to that. I love and respect this community and ask the city council to respect the community by listening to the concerns that continue to be brought forth.

I am writing to ask the members of the city council to vote against Ordinance 46 and Ordinance 55. It is time for the mayor and city council to listen to demands of the community and take action to defund the police and redistribute that funding to the community. Under no circumstances should the city be increasing the police budget at this time.

The city should be listening to community demands such as the following demands as listed by Troy 4 Black Live

- increased budget to ensure that 100% of our youth that are eligible participate in summer and fall youth employment*
- increased budget in our parks and recreation to ensure ALL POOLS are open and safe for our families and children.*
- restoration of abandoned properties to ensure housing for our low income and houseless population.*
- funding to ensure Youth Mentorship and Apprenticeship.*

The way to prevent crime never has been and never will be aggressive policing. If we want to address these problems we need to address the issues of social and economical inequality that exist within our community.

Zachary Hayes. 4th St, Troy

To the members of this council and the administration:

My name is Dara Silbermann. I am a Troy resident, farmer & food justice advocate. For the last three years, I've grown and managed a food project in the Ironworks neighborhood of South Troy at 2nd Street. I am a constituent in District 6, represented councilperson Eileen McDermott.

It's hard for me to believe with any sincerity that the GIVE program will be at all effective in curbing the gun violence that exists in Troy. First and foremost, the police have shown themselves as an entity to be deadly and dangerous with their own guns through the killing of Edson Thevenin and near-fatal shooting of Dahmeek McDonald. They have shown that they are not capable of enforcing any sort of accountability among their officers in response to excessive uses of force such as the incidents above. Rather, they have exposed themselves as an organization committed first to their own preservation, to their own PR campaign. Justice, rule of law, and community service don't seem to rank highly on the list of responsibilities, particularly in my South Troy neighborhood. It's painful to see our city's administration and city council collaborate in covering up the injustices inflicted on my community, particularly through the harassment of my Black and Brown neighbors.

I strongly urge this council, particularly my councilperson, Eileen McDermott, to reject Ordinance 46. If this body wanted to curb gun violence, it would elect to invest in properly-funded housing and community services. Despite already spending over a 1/4 of this city's budget on policing, we are still experiencing rising gun violence. You can choose to be the council that continues the legacy of funding police at the expense of all other services or you can choose to be the council that invests in people - not punishment. If this council were truly committed to curbing gun violence in this city, you would start with the violators on your payroll.

Earlier this year, as each City department was asked to tighten its budget, the police budget remained largely unchanged. Officers were denied raises but each was able to keep their job. Other departments, however, experienced layoffs and significant budget cuts in addition to stagnating salaries. I see Ordinance 55 as a direct insult to the people of this city, providing a backdoor for giving raises to the police administrators at a time when other departments are asked to cut services. At a time when the city will lay off every reading teacher in the schools.

On June 7th, 2020, Troy 4 Black Lives organized the biggest rally this City has ever seen. Their demands are clear - have been clear - for years. The deafening silence ringing from the Council and Administration in response to these demands has been staggering. Rather than act on or even respond to any of the direct demands of the organizers, you have chosen to attempt to placate a crowd hungry for justice with crumbs. I hope you see the rising tide of people who will not be satisfied with anything less than substantial action. Your committees and review boards without the powers we demand are just more stumbling blocks for us. We don't need research or fact finding - the research is there and the facts have been found. We need action. We need teeth.

I urge you to vote NO on both ordinances 46 and 55. I urge you to begin funding community development initiatives for our neighborhoods that will provide opportunities and stable services. These are the true violence prevention strategies. In his letter to the public, Mayor Madden insisted that Black Lives do matter. How is this council holding the Mayor to his word? Ask yourselves what you're doing to put resources into Black communities so that we can overcome violence together.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dara Silbermann, 2nd Street Farm

Dear council members,

My name is Ellie Irons. I live with my husband and young child on 9th Street in Troy. This is the third time I've written to you in recent weeks because, along with many of my fellow community members, I am still frustrated and disappointed by your failure to act quickly and decisively for real change around racially unjust policing in Troy. My statement today is specifically against Ordinances #46 and #55, but my prior comments urging you to reference and respond to the demands put forth by Troy 4 Black Lives are still relevant.

Regarding the ordinances under consideration today, please do not support Ordinance 46 in support of GIVE program funding for the Troy PD. While this NY State grant program is focused on reducing gun violence, it has been used by other police departments to hire additional officers and equipment, and increase police presence in already over-policed neighborhoods. As many have noted, there are other ways to ensure the safety and health of communities beyond additional police presence. Greater funding for mental health and crisis intervention services could go a long way towards reducing the perceived need for heavy police presence in neighborhoods where community members are already traumatized by police brutality. In contrast with the approach of the GIVE program, programs like SNUG, described as a “public health approach to addressing gun violence” have an emphasis on street outreach and a much less active role for police.(1) The SNUG approach has the potential to reduce gun violence dramatically, as shown by a 2017 report on the program in the Bronx and East Brooklyn.(2)

I also urge you to vote against ordinance 55, providing additional funding for police administrative and officer salaries. Again, the upwelling of support for defunding police departments (or “de-obligating” them, as was mentioned last week) demands freezing and shrinking the budget of the Troy PD. Not issuing raises but then providing a loophole through which officers can earn time and a half over 90 hours reveals a disingenuous approach to this issue. We’re calling for real, systemic, and far-reaching change. You can start today, rather than slowing this process down with a work group while simultaneously supporting an increased budget for the police department.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Ellie Irons, 9th Street, Troy

(1)<https://lawcenter.giffords.org/investing-in-local-intervention-strategies-in-new-york/>

(2)<https://johnjayrec.nyc/2017/10/02/cvinsobronxeastny/>

Dear Council Members,

I am writing as a resident of 2nd Street between Jefferson and Adams in Troy, NY. I am disappointed in the Council's failure to address the demands of Troy for Black Lives. I am even more disappointed to learn of two new mechanisms proposed to add to the Troy PD's already outsized (as compared to education, etc.) budget.

Ordinance 55 includes the authorization of compensatory time for police officers at the rate of 1.5 hours per hour. This means that City Hall is spending money on an entirely new benefit for the city's police officers when demands to fund community-based and -driven solutions have seen no real movement from this Council.

In addition, the consideration of Ordinance 46 would also funnel more funding into a police department that has proven to be both violent against the community and largely above the law. I strongly request that the Council not only not increase funding sources--from the City or State--but follow the will of the people and channel funding for TPD to accountable, community-based programs that center those most impacted by systemic oppression and violence.

The police already receive \$20.7 million dollars a year, a quarter of the city's budget. It is with this budget that they have harassed and abused Black people in this city for years. The solution to gun violence is well-funded and supported community services, NOT more policing. NOT an increased budget for the TPD.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I sincerely hope you will do what is right.

Linden Horvath, 2nd Street, Troy

We are facing two major problems as a city and as a nation at this time: a global health pandemic, and police brutality, specifically the murder of Black individuals at the hands of the police. It is therefore shocking to see in our 2020 budget that the least amount of money will be spent on public health, and the most will be spent on police.

In specific regards to ordinance #46 and ordinance #55, I fail to see how we can give a penny more to the Troy police department at a time when there is already so much distrust in the police, when there is a public outcry for the abolishment of the police, and when it's been proven that additional officers, more equipment, and increased policing lead to more violence. Until we have real reform, reform that involves community input, money should be spent elsewhere. How could anyone think this is the time to give more money to the police?

Other communities and cities across New York State and the country are envisioning, and beginning to act on, ideas for reform. Does Troy have no creative vision for a better future for all its citizens?

I see nothing thus far to indicate that our city government is in any way actively trying to understand the needs and concerns of the communities most affected by police violence.

When will Mayor Patrick Madden issue a timeline addressing Gov. Cuomo's executive order no. 203 on police reform and state funding?

When will we have a public safety meeting to discuss police reform?

When will you give the Police Objective Review Board subpoena power?

How are you responding (with action) to the 11,000 person rally held in support of Black Lives Matter?

Meet with, and meet the demands of, Troy 4 Black Lives

Read (and reread) the Dear Mayor Madden letter

Justice for Edson Thevenin

Justice for Dahmeek McDonald

Black Lives Matter

Thank you.

Jennifer Bartels, 2nd Street

Dear city council members,

My name is Raquel Velho and I am a resident of Troy. I write today regarding Ordinances 46 and 55 regarding funding for the Troy Police Department and new contracts and salaries for three administrative positions within TPD. It is disheartening that, after four council meetings in a row of sustained support for Troy 4 Black Lives in the public forum, I find myself having to write another letter to you regarding your continuous affirmation for Police in our city and lack of imagination of new just futures for Black residents.

Council, you continue to be called time and again to become bolder in your moves. We have yet to hear you say the names of Edson Thevenin and Dahmeek McDonald, to affirm the ways in which systemic racism is also prevalent in our city, and how it manifests in police brutality locally. Between your lackluster resolution last week to create a committee whose nomination process and tasks remain vague, and these ordinances today, it is clear that this council is being purposeful in its disregard to the calls for police transparency, accountability, and defunding.

As we know, there is nothing stopping the city council, and especially our so-called progressive Democrat majority, to act. Many of us have read to you the Troy 4 Black Lives demands, many of which you can move quickly to respond to. We are not wavering in our resolve to support these demands. I ask that until you have responded to the Troy 4 Black Lives demands and proposed progressive resolutions that affirm those demands, you refrain from increasing our city's already substantive expenditures in policing.

Thank you,
Raquel Velho, 4th Street, Troy

Hello,

My name is Rhea Drysdale and I live on Massachusetts Avenue in Troy, NY.

I'm writing in support of Troy 4 Black Lives' demands for the City of Troy and to urge you to vote against Ordinance #46 in support of the Troy Police receiving NYS grant funds through the Gun Involved Violence Elimination (or GIVE) program.

After reading the GIVE Initiative and Crime Analysis Center Network's materials on their site it became abundantly clear that the culture of these police departments dictates the use and effectiveness of funding.

I'd like to call attention to the tone and implementation differences between the Monroe County Sheriff's Office and the Buffalo Police Department.

Todd Baxter, Sheriff with Monroe County Sheriff's Office said:
"The NYS GIVE initiative provides resources enabling the Monroe County law enforcement community to target violent criminals, and those possessing weapons, in a coordinated effort to

reduce violent crime in Monroe County. The ultimate goal of this partnership is to support targeted firearm and violent crime reduction efforts within Monroe County. By partnering with DCJS, the Monroe County Sheriff's Office is able to use GIVE Funding to support the salaries of a Sheriff's Criminal Investigator assigned to MCAC, a Road Patrol Deputy assigned to the Monroe County Firearm Project, and a Jail Deputy assigned to the Jail Intelligence Unit. Funding also supports overtime costs of the Sheriff's participation in joint anti-crime efforts, long term investigations, targeted offender details, warrant details, and hot-spot policing details with the other GIVE agency partners."

In comparison Barbara Lark, Deputy Police Commissioner with Buffalo Police Department said:

"While we are still working to reduce the impact of gun violence in Buffalo, we are pleased to report that the two hot spots identified at the very start of the GIVE initiative show dramatic improvement in 2018. The total firearm crime in these areas fell by 10% and 8%, compared to an overall City-wide increase, which speaks to the effectiveness of these strategies. As a result of GIVE funding, we have been able to deploy additional resources to those areas, identify high risk individuals suited for Custom Notification visits, and host a series of community events. Our street outreach partners SNUG and the Peacemakers have played a major role in helping us strengthen relationships between police and community."

There is a significant and violent difference between the Monroe County Sheriff's Offices' use of force and salaries and Buffalo PD's community events and SNUG and Peacemaker outreach.

Until we have a statement from the Troy Police Department outlining how these funds will be earmarked for the community in line with Troy 4 Black Lives' demands, this should NOT be supported by this City Council.

It is wishful and ignorant thinking that will turn a blind eye to the systemic racism and culture of cover-ups and fraternal order that exists in our police force today.

Additionally, Ordinance 55 should not be approved.

While I support the safety and efficiency of a police department, we know the Troy Police Department is operating out of step with the needs of this community and has yet to address how it will reform the department. Meanwhile diverted police funds have not been discussed publicly or earmarked for community safety and opportunity.

There should also be a visible and stated approach to how the City of Troy will reduce rates of incarceration for BIPOC, homeless, mentally ill and disabled persons.

The City Council should also:

- acknowledge the unjustifiable murder of Edson Thevenin by then Troy police officer, Randall French, which was subsequently covered up by Mayor Madden, Rensselaer County D.A. Joel Ablove and the entire official structure of the City of Troy, including the police department, the city council, and the legal department.

- admit wrongdoing by the City in the murder of Edson Thevenin, the shooting of Dahmeek McDonald, and in exonerating the perpetrators and covering up, justifying, and defending these acts.
- pledge, by City Council resolution, to revisit and undo the coverup, secrecy, and defense of these two acts of extreme racist police violence.
- and refuse to continue to participate in the coverup/defense and publicly reveal the contents of the secret report about Edson Thevenin's murder.
- amend or pass a new resolution for developing a plan in response to Black Lives Matter.
- Incorporate into the plan specific references to the demands of Troy for Black Lives as reiterated and amplified by the 11,000 people who rallied to the cause of Black Lives in Troy on June 7th, 2020.
- acknowledge that rally was a response to police violence HERE IN TROY and commit to a process of implementing the changes demanded.

Thank you,
Rhea Drysdale, Massachusetts Avenue, Troy

My name is Angela Beallor. I am a Troy resident living in the Hillside neighborhood with my partner and child. I am writing to address tonight's Council vote on Ordinances 46 & 55.

In late May, George Floyd was killed by Officer George Chauvin, while Officers Tou Thao, Thomas Lane and J. Alexander Kueng aided and abetted this heinous crime. What brought the police to that bodega in Minneapolis on that day? George Floyd supposedly paid at that bodega with a counterfeit \$20 bill. Today, the news reports that Officer George Chauvin has been charged with felony tax evasion for more than \$38,000.

This case and the horrific murder of George Floyd have made clear to so very many that there is (and has been) a crisis in U.S. policing. This crisis is largely borne by Black and brown communities in this country. I raise Chauvin's charge of tax evasion to highlight the grave inequity produced when so-called justice is taken into the hands of law enforcement, by force, in our communities.

We don't need to look outside of Troy for cases of police violence that remain unchallenged by all levels of Troy administration: for instance the 2016 murder of Edson Thevenin or the 2017 shooting of Dahmeek McDonald.

Something must change.

This moment of heightened attention to systemic racism and police violence should cause us to reexamine what role the police should play in this city. Rather than extending additional funding

(in Ordinance 46) which includes the hiring of additional officers, the purchase of new equipment, and an increase of policing in “hot-spots” (already heavily policed) neighborhoods, the city should consider a redistribution of funding to community services. Additionally, Ordinance 55 increases benefits for police officers without any intention for City Council or the Mayor’s Office to substantively address the problems of police violence in this city.

Organizations such as Troy 4 Black Lives have put forward demands that have not yet been addressed by the City Council. The "Reimagine Troy Community Services Justice Services Work Group" was created last week—I implore you to consider that you cannot really honor and uplift Black Lives without addressing the long violent crisis in policing. Particularly that in our own city.

Troy needs to take these vast sums of money and apply them to community services. NOT more policing.

Thank you,
Angela Beallor, Jacob Street, Troy, NY

Dear Troy City Council, Mayor, Deputy Mayor,

This is a public comment for the 7/23/20 City Council Meeting.

My name is Sylva Menard. I am a resident of Troy, on Fifth Ave. As of today, Thursday, July 23, 2020, I am writing to encourage you to freeze all additional funding for the police department, and writing in opposition of both Ordinance 46 and Ordinance 55.

At \$20.7 million dollars annually, the current police budget is nearly one quarter of the almost \$75 million Troy, NY 2020 city budget. As a resident of our city, I encourage you to reallocate \$10 million dollars into community services led by and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing.

If your intention for our community is harm prevention and protection, not punishment of race and class, then the issues of Poverty and generations of trauma needs different tools and resources besides increased policing. Would you hire a fox to patch a hole in a chicken coop? Of course not. You’d have to bring in someone else and stop trusting the fox. Every morning you come out and have lost more of your flock to a fox. Your handyman shows up and you have not realized once that he’s the fox in disguise. Today he starts “patching the hole” and for some reason, it doesn’t resolve your losses.

Telling Troy and the Black community that increasing the police administration salary and adding more police programs is compatible with Black Lives Matter is like telling the chickens that the fox just needs bigger teeth and more food, to punish the violence happening inside the chicken coop.

The chickens sure don’t believe you, and it doesn’t solve the problem.

You might convince the cows or pigs, who aren't the targets of the fox in the first place, that giving more resources to the fox stops the chickens from killing each other.

What action are you taking to stop the damage, or what action are you taking that magnifies the damage? Every decision that gives more resources to the fox kills more chickens under your very nose.

How can you advocate and legislate for your community, including those whose skin is a different color? You are the city council, the representatives of the people. 11,000 peaceful and disciplined angry people marched in the streets last month. These 11,000 people were respectful of our city that had done its best to re-traumatize every Black man, woman, and child and every other human by boarding up every piece of glass in anticipation of the rally. The police spread rumors about violence in the capital region, adding fuel to the flames of an already tense situation. It's time to spread some other resources to the areas most in need.

The hens know the problem but you keep asking the pigs, the foxes, and the cows what the problem is. The chickens are sick, and tired, and cold, and wet, and they keep being told the fox is their friend and that the fox will fix their problems but they need more resources. The chickens know full well that no fox or pig is going to provide more than scraps and temporary illusions of protection.

Look to Troy 4 Black Lives. Look to All of Us. An angry Black woman or an angry Black man is not dangerous to you as a human. Anger is justified here. Anger is not violence. This damage has been done to the Black community for decades. When you, City Council, and Mayor, actually listen to your 11,000 protestors, it does get dangerous to the corporate entities and foxes that profit off their backs. Somehow the farmers seem to benefit when they protect these interests.

And that is the biggest shame here. At nearly a quarter of the entire city annual budget, every year, the city employees, the Troy Police benefit off the need for policing, justified by violence in the community. But police departments are not established to prevent violence, they're most effective at policing, not at taking care of a community.

It's not enough to say that Black Lives Matter. What will you DO that shows it? When Black Lives truly Matter, you'll reach out to the angry Black men and women and listen to what they say, and include them in the leadership of change. Here is what they say:

INVEST IN BLACK COMMUNITIES. Invest in these Black Communities – with the goal of raising THE BLACK COMMUNITY UP. Don't bring in a white business that can "help". Do bring in the young Black leadership that has been shut out for three years. They're angry, and rightfully so. Acknowledge their anger. Include them in change. It's not time to approve salaries, hefty benefits, and illegitimate overtime for the chief, deputy, and assistant police when our communities are HUNGRY getting scraps of food.

That's just my opinion. You'll have to bring in others who live this every day to know more.

Sincerely,

Sylva Menard, Fifth Avenue, Troy

Hello,

As a constituent I'd like to voice my opposition to the implementation of Ordinance #46 and #55.

The citizens of Troy need action in the form of funding community aid and support, mental health resources, investment in the arts, and de-escalation/mediation training as the primary means of conflict resolution and community safety. Diverting more funding to police budgets and salaries is a grave misuse of resources and does not rectify, even exacerbates the problems we see at hand. I urge the Council members and our leaders to consult with community leaders and the leadership of organizations, such as Troy For Black Lives (as outlined in the literature from the Working Group To Reimagine Justice Services) or Justice For Dahmeek for comprehensive strategies and actionable plans for how reallocation of these resources serves the greater good of the city at large and will ensure the wellbeing of all of our citizens. I urge you to position yourselves in the right side of history and take the necessary steps to restore rapport and protect us.

Emily Musial, 1st St, Troy

Hello. I live in downtown Troy NY and am writing in regards to ordinance 46 and 55.

Today we are dealing with a global health pandemic as well as confronting our local and national racial histories, including the fact of police brutality and the over-policing of Black people and persons of color. With that in mind, I don't see why more money is not being allocated on public health, and less money spent on policing the local community. How can we have a conversation able to meaningfully address the deep sense of wrong felt throughout our country, as expressed by the flood of protests and Black Lives Matter movement? Is this really the time to give more money to police departments, rather than envision ways to strengthen our communities and provide opportunities to historically under-resourced and over-policed populations?

How will Mayor Madden address Gov. Cuomo's executive order on police reform and state funding? How will the demands by Troy 4 Black Lives be addressed regarding police reform, giving subpoena power to the Police review board, and having impartial investigations take place with any use of deadly force by a police officer?

Brandon Tankersley, Downtown Troy
Instructor, English Department
University at Albany, SUNY

My name is Laura Rabinow and I live on Madison Street, in District 5, in South Troy. I wrote to you ahead of the last two meetings of the City Council, as did so many others, to voice concern over the City's inaction regarding systemic racism, and to voice concerns about and urge the passage of Resolution 71. I write today regarding Ordinances 46 and 55, funding for the Troy Police Department, and new contracts and salaries for three administrative positions within TPD.

Given the concerns we've heard from residents during the past months, concerns long shared and too recently elevated, it seems ill-fitting at best to consider passing these ordinances, policies, and funding now - particularly without substantive reflection about how you see their meaning aligning with or in tension with the demands that Troy for Black Lives and other groups and residents have shared.

How do these pieces of legislation, policies, and funding bring us closer to or farther from justice? How do they bring us closer to or farther from an end to police brutality? How do they bring us closer to or farther from doing more than performing allyship in affirming Black Lives Matter, while doing nothing to change the policies that underpin systemic racism?

I ask you to stop and ask yourselves these questions, before you vote on these policies. Consider the message you send when increases to police funding - increases, instead of the redirection of funding - comes before and unattached to implementing any measures to increase accountability and transparency.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Laura Rabinow, Madison Street, Troy

Dear Troy City Council Members,

I urge you to consider the decision of assisting with Funds for Ordinance #46 & voting on Ordinance #55. Recently our city took part in the massive Black Live Matter movement, it was seen on major news outlets and around the world what our city of Troy, NY looked like when over 11,000 people marched in the names of its own Black citizens and those around the country who have been wronged. The Troy Police Department even handed out Pizzas to Protestors as a sign of good faith that day. And even when a white-supremacist private militia came to the protest with violent intentions against those voices of unity, the Troy Police Department held up their end and protected us from them.

But since that beautiful, sunny day of protesting, unity, photo-ops, and pizza, there was an opportunity given by the Rensselaer County Legislature to recognize Systemic Racism in our community and with a landslide vote of 16-3, the resolution was defeated. In an article by WNYT News Channel 13, one lawmaker, Chuck Peter went on the record stating such things as they "weren't going to stand for the attacking of the founding of their country or their Police Force," and "the decision was ultimately made because of their use of hyperbolic language." I wasn't present, I don't know what was said word for word or even truly understand what Chuck

Peter's definition of hyperbolic language is, but I do know if a community and it's people are suffering, that can't be ignored just because you don't like what is being said. As a white woman, I have had to educate myself on an immense mountain of knowledge that was never made available to me at a young age via the education system; and also because I assumed if a teacher teaches you something, it MUST be correct, it's in a textbook. One such thing is the concept of White-Fragility: that being of White Ethnicity, you are made uncomfortable and become defensive about information about racial inequality & injustices. I believe this is what happened at this meeting and after things were said, decisions were made based on White Fragility.

From this point on us as people, as human beings need to look past what makes us uncomfortable, and upset, and see that an ENTIRE percentage of our population has been suffering. That horrible injustices have been made. We have seen actual murders caught on people's camera phones and posted online. If that doesn't make us absolutely, horribly uncomfortable to our core, then why does just a room of lawmakers discussing our country's history and actual on-paper past regressions by our police department, make them so uncomfortable to address making changes to better our community? I am asking you today to help. Yes, it might make you uncomfortable & cringe every time you think or hear about how our country was founded on the slavery, rape, and murder of black, brown & indigenous people, but we all know this, and it's 2020, and those same people are STILL being treated unfairly & in-humanely. What can we do to change this?

Today, YOU have the opportunity to instead of assisting with Funds for Ordinance #46 & voting on Ordinance #55, to look at the BROAD PICTURE. What does our great City of Troy really need financial help with? The Troy 2020 accepted Budget states that the Police Department was granted \$20,728,556 while Public Health received \$207,327, Housing Development received \$454,198, & 911 services got only \$700,000. That is very surprising. If you ask me, I feel like the number of Police calls that would be made daily would decrease if enough financial assistance would be made in those areas. If housing in areas such as North Troy where I currently live was made more livable for low-income families (and I don't mean make more swanky lofts that low-income families can't afford), then the crime rate wouldn't be as high because people would have a MUCH better standard of living. If Public Health resources had more funding (for example: more accessible for those with mental disabilities and mental illness to have better care in this area) there would be less need for the Police to be called out when someone who is developmentally disabled needs a ride to their Group Home or the Hospital. I say this specific instance because a relative of mine works at a local pharmacy, where a 30-year-old man has come in several days this past week and will fill up a cart with anything he finds on the shelves and just walks around the store and talks to customers. He is black and severely developmentally handicapped. When asked by my relative if he needs help and is ready to make a purchase, he says he can't buy anything. They talk for a while and my relative finds out he has been staying at Samaritan Hospital. He asks if he has any family that can come help him, to pick him up, and they are unreachable. Then a call is made to his Group Home where they told him to "Just call the Police." This is where I am confused. Why should the police be called? He didn't commit a crime, he's developmentally disabled. He said he just wanted to go back home or to the hospital, and it was blisteringly hot outside. This is where I ask you, why can't we consider funding for Public Health, giving more resources to assist the Mentally Ill & the Disabled people of our community? The Police Department got \$20,521,229 more dollars in

funding than Public Health. I need help understanding the logistics of that, especially after we have issues in our community of Police Brutality. The ending of my story isn't a great one. My relative didn't call the police, most likely because he too is Black and has a greater understanding of what the situation could bring. He kept calling the young man's family with no avail, and the young man wound up just walking out...to do the same thing the following day, and the following day. And will probably do the same thing today.

I ask you City Council members to think of these numbers, this small story, and my personal thoughts I share with you. I have been trying to lift up the voices of my black friends, & of my family members, because even though I do not and cannot begin to comprehend what it is they go through on a daily basis, I personally ache for them and see it as a complete and utter injustice on humanity. Our Mayor in a letter made public recently stated, "Troy should be proud to add its voice to that outcry – that Black lives do matter." I am hoping, pleading with you that we can make good on this statement and do our community right.

Thank you,

Penelope Barbalios, 5th Avenue, Troy

Dear City Council Members / County Legislators ,

I am a resident of Troy on 2nd street, where I have been a resident downtown for over four years. A resident of this city and a state worker and union member I recently attended a protest in front of Diamond Hill nursing home, demanding that two nurses, women of color, who stood up for themselves, their coworkers and those in their care and was fired for that, be rehired, workers at the home have more control of the work, and better protection. The two nurses were rehired. This action taken by social justice groups, unions, workers, and the community has so far done more for the community and its residences in the time since the last meeting of the Troy City Council than any of the council has, the mayor or any police in the city. I don't believe I saw any of you, the mayor, or any police officer standing in solidarity with nurses, the front line during this pandemic. Funny, what is the point to police having a union if they don't show up in solidarity with other union members? I am again 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 and projects led by and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing. The fact that I have to write again, while you continue to pump more money into a broken policing system is exhausting, but not surprising. The community has made their voices heard and you choose not to listen, or lead. History is happening, and you can be part of it, or you can continue to try to ignore it and hope it goes away, so you don't have to do the hard work that being an elected leader entails. It's simple, defund the police and reinvest it into the community where it will really help us all. Why is it so hard to defund the police when we as a society do it so easily to our schools while treating our educators with such disdain?

I am writing in solidarity and support with the demands of Troy 4 Black Lives.

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,
Mickey Dobbin, 2nd Street, Troy

Hi. My name is Oz McClamrock, and I am a lifelong resident of the city of Troy. I'm emailing you to express my concern about two ordinances the city council is voting on tonight - ordinances 46 and 55. I would like to express my disdain for the continued overfunding and over-militarization of the Troy Police Department, especially in the wake of the nationwide protests against this very problem.

Ordinance 46, which is set to reallocate funding for the NYS GIVE program to the Troy PD, is a perfect example of why these protests are happening - militarization of local police is clearly not the solution to gun violence. Increasing the presence of the police in neighborhoods where they are already far too prominent is not the solution either - it has been proven time and time again that the solution to gun violence lies in well-funded community services. The \$20 million that has already been allocated to the police department is already far more than they need, and they certainly do not need the extra funding that was intended to PREVENT gun violence. The city of Troy should be working to eliminate police violence towards people of color, not pouring more money into the organization that causes its very existence.

Ordinance 55 is set to approve increased contracts and salaries for 3 police administrators, including an overtime bonus - this is, of course, in spite of the fact that police officers are "generally not eligible to receive overtime or compensatory time" (a direct quote). This will add up to almost \$1 million. These overtime bonuses are not only allocating more money to the police department, but encouraging these officers to work more hours, thereby likely increasing police presence in neighborhoods in which people of color have been terrorized for far too long.

Despite the nationwide wave of protests and marches, including a significant march in Troy, I have seen no action from our elected officials on this subject matter. I am calling on the Troy city council to allocate more of the city budget to ensure that 100% of our eligible youth are able to participate in youth employment if they so choose, to ensure that all our parks and pools are open and safe for all families, and to ensure housing for low-income and homeless residents by restoring any suitable abandoned properties.

Thank you for taking the time to read this message, and I strongly encourage the city council to do the right thing and strike down these ordinances. Troy is better than this.

Oz McClamrock, Jesse Court, Troy

Dear City Council Members / County Legislators ,

I am a resident of Troy residing on Whitman Ct. I have lived in Troy for 15 years, am raising a family here and have businesses located in Troy. Our family was part of the inspiring 11,000 strong rally last month in our city.

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 and projects led by and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing. The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to organizations that pledge to dismantle systemic racism in our community and provide essential services and opportunities to the Black and Brown communities in Troy.

This is urgently important because Troy will not be an authentically liveable city until justice is served— on a multiplicity of levels.

I write in solidarity with the demands of Troy 4 Black Lives.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Woodbury Kasius, Whitman Court

Dear City Council Members / County Legislators ,

I am a former resident of Troy, NY as I left the region for college and grad school, but my family currently lives in Troy. *I attended School 14, Doyle Middle School (Troy Middle School), and Troy High School. I am a former employee of Troy City School District at the Alternative Learning Program. From elementary school to high school, I grew up going to the Troy Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, and CYO. I've participated in Spring Little League, Armory Little League, South Troy Pop Warner.*

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 and projects led by and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing.** The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to Black owned businesses and services, youth programs (Central Little League), public housing (Taylor Apartments), Covid-19 relief efforts and the school district.

This is important because I fear for the safety of my younger brothers who are often out in the community and other family members who still live in Troy because Troy police are racist and abuse their power. It is immoral and dishonorable for the police budget to be so much larger than other budget items. There are many ways that we can rethink community safety that does not require the police. I do not want to get pulled over on Hoosick St for speeding and have a police officer talking to me with his hand on his gun. I don't want to have to worry about Troy residents being killed or injured if they are suspected of committing a crime because even if you are guilty, you don't deserve to die. The Troy police force does not need any more money because obviously whatever sensitivity training officers receive is a waste of money.

Additionally, I have seen the community lose benefits. The South Troy Boys and Girls Club was replaced with an athletic facility for SAGE years ago, and now that building is empty. The South Troy Boys and Girls Club served the youth of South Troy and traveling to the main Troy branch was inaccessible for many people at that time. Armory Little League used to operate out of RPI's softball field and when that closed down, I could no longer walk to my baseball games and practices. School 12 was repurposed from an elementary school to the alternative learning program and students attending School 12 had to be redistricted to schools that are outside of their community so they can no longer just walk to school. Being able to walk to resources and services in the community is a big deal. The building for School 1, the school district's alternative learning program, was replaced with apartment lofts that mainly benefit transplants to the city. Additionally, the recent housing developments downtown are not catered to local residents. I am tired of developers and the city continuing to gentrify Troy and those involved in the gentrification should be ashamed of themselves as they have contributed to the displacement and disenfranchisement of the Black community and low income residents. For the past 26 years I have seen RPI spread into the community like a parasite and offer very little back to the community. Also there is no grocery store below the middle of Hoosick St. and alternatives near Hudson Valley and in Lansingburgh are inaccessible. It is shameful that Troy residents have continued to lose and be forgotten as the city's greed and interest in serving gentrifiers have become a priority.

Lastly, while I was a high school student (c/o 2011), my peers and I who participated in sports and the arts had to attend school board meetings to advocate for ourselves as the school district was preparing to cut extracurricular activities. I remember crying while facing former superintendent Atiba Weza and other members of the board because the music department and sports were a major part of my life. At the time I did not know what the police budget was, but to know that the Troy police received an excessive amount of money to murder and harm Black residents, such as Edson Thevenin, and that their budget could be reallocated deeply saddens me as it displays the lack of integrity of the city of Troy.

I am writing in solidarity and support with the demands of Troy 4 Black Lives. The City Council has done nothing to address these demands, nor the historic rally last month of 11,000 people. The City Council continues to be complicit in the murder and harm of Black people in Troy.

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,

Anansa Benbow, MA, Taylor Court, Troy
Pronouns: she, her

Non-Troy Residents

My name is Karen Bellamy. My address is Treasure Lane in Halfmoon, NY. I am writing with concerns about Ordinances #46 and #55. Specifically, the GIVE Program and the increased salaries for police personnel.

I shop in Troy; I am a regular at the Farmer's Market year round. I also patronize Troy businesses, including shops and restaurants. I would like to see the Mayor put his actions where his words are and please start making changes to the budget that uplifts Troy's marginalized community. Reallocate monies and invest in education and housing! Hold community leaders responsible for their constituents instead of adding more policing- we have seen that does not necessarily work. Please, please work together- police and community members- to make Troy equitable for all. Please, please help heal Troy, the Capital District, and ultimately this world. Make the investment and reap the benefits! Thank you for listening!

Karen Bellamy. Halfmoon, NY

Dear City Council Members / County Legislators ,

I am a former resident of Troy on River St. *My family is long time residents with a history of serving the police force in 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 and projects led by and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing**. The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to

-rehab programs
-infrastructure
-youth activities

This is important because if the root issues of crime are addressed, then the need for increased policing will no longer be required.

I am writing in solidarity and support with the demands of Troy 4 Black Lives. The City Council has done nothing to address these demands, nor the historic rally last month of 11,000 people. The City Council continues to be complicit in the murder and harm of Black people in Troy.

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,
Abigail Harris, Former Resident

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Kathryn McTeigue. I appreciate the Council's willingness to hear my statement.

First, I would like to state that according to the language of the City Charter, "members of the public shall have the opportunity to address the Council on meeting agenda items". My understanding is that the Open Meetings Law also does not exclude non-residents from submitting comments. I bring this up in response to Council President Mantello's refusal to hear statements last meeting from those writing with residences in adjacent cities. I ask that the Council clarify this issue, and humbly request that my comments be heard with respect to the deep care I have for Troy after living and working here for several years. (Indeed, I have been here since 2013, longer than President Mantello has been President Mantello. But I digress.)

I write to express concerns about Ordinances #46 and #55. Both of these measures seek to funnel more funds into Troy PD's already bloated budget. This continues to subvert the demands of Troy 4 Black Lives, from whom I quote: "We demand that cops stop killing us and our children" and "We demand the exploration and creation of diversion programs away from criminal justice involvement to community-based treatment alternatives, especially for youth, the mentally ill, and in cases involving drugs or substance abuse and sex work, with a view to reducing unnecessary incarceration which disproportionately impacts economically exploited communities and specifically Black, Indigenous and People of Color."

I worry that allocating even more funds and manpower to the Troy Police Department will only further exacerbate the dangers faced by Black people and other People of Color in Troy. Cities around the country have frozen new hires in their police departments and have committed to divesting from their oversized police budgets and investing instead into initiatives that reimagine public safety and community care. What is preventing the Council from following suit? These ordinances seem deliberately tone-deaf when the Council has, week after week, all the opportunity in the world to respond with meaningful action in support of Black life in Troy, NY, yet continues to drag its feet. It is gravely disappointing and I beg you to do better.

Thank you for listening.

Regards,
Kathryn McTeigue, Kenosha Street, Albany, NY

Dear City Council Members / County Legislators ,
I am a resident of Albany, NY living at Willoughby Dr. Albany NY 12205. *While I do not live in Troy, I am invested in the BLM movement and the view we need to do better as a society to treat the most vulnerable members of our community, such as black lives, with fairness and equality.*

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 and projects led by and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing**. The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to meet the following listed demands of the community listed at this web site.

<https://troy4blacklives.com/>

Additionally, I would submit to you on a personal level that specific efforts to make police the last responders via funding and support of programs that serve to address the underlying issues such as economic insecurity that contribute to crime would lead to the police being able to focus on their area of expertise and not be used as a one size fits all punitive solution.

To that end, defunding them to re-allocate funding to programs with longer term benefits to reduce the need for police should be examined and in order to do that as well as increase accountability police unions must be ended.

These unions prevent police from being held accountable for their actions. The police should not be able to police themselves. That accountability belongs firmly in the hands of the people they serve. Otherwise, all we have are people that are holding themselves above the law being asked to police themselves and that is patently absurd. It leads to this exact problem that we are having across the nation.

I am writing in solidarity and support with the demands of Troy 4 Black Lives. The City Council has done nothing to address these demands, nor the historic rally last month of 11,000 people. The City Council continues to be complicit in the murder and harm of Black people in Troy.

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,
Asaf Fabbi, Albany, NY

Hello,

My name is Suzanne Davis and I am a resident of the community. I am calling on you to vote no on ordinances 46 and 55. If you are truly seeking to serve the community and area that you represent, investing in systems dependent on violence, distrust, and racism is not the answer. To reduce gun violence, crime, and untimely death, these funds (including additional funding for TPD) must be reallocated to community services and projects led by and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing. The safest communities are the ones with the

most community health, wellness, recreational, educational, and spiritual opportunities which are informed by the community members themselves. Adding more money to TPD for weaponry and other equipment will only result in an increase in recorded crimes, gun deaths, and further dissolving of trust and community stability and wellness.

Be on the right side of this movement, listen to your community members, and vote no on ordinances 46 and 55 (reallocating those funds to community wellness).

Thank you,
Suzanne Davis, Niskayuna, NY

Dear City Council Members,

I am a resident of Niskayuna, whose family and friends have long lived and contributed to the Troy community. From working and living there to going to school there. 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 and projects led by and centering Black communities most impacted by violent policing.** The excessive TPD Budget should be redistributed to:

- to ensure that 100% of our youth that are eligible participate in summer and fall youth employment*
- use the money towards our parks and recreation to ensure ALL POOLS are open and safe for our families and children.*
- restoration of abandoned properties to ensure housing for our low income and houseless population.*
- funding to ensure Youth Mentorship and Apprenticeship.*

It is important that you use this money to invest in black communities and make Troy and even better living space for its residents of color.

I am writing in solidarity and support with the demands of Troy 4 Black Lives. The City Council has done nothing to address these demands, nor the historic rally last month of 11,000 people. The City Council continues to be complicit in the murder and harm of Black people in Troy.

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,
Mackenzie Denofio, Niskayuna

Dear Troy City Council,

I am an Asian man living in Niskayuna, Merlin Dr. I am writing to you because I am learning so much during this time. Learning how much my community means and that the lives all around me are a part of that community. We all have been too unmoved and ignorant of the past! There is a historical precedent of the police targeting marginalized people in our own neighborhoods. The two names from recent memory are Edson Thevenin and Dahmeek McDonald, who were killed and nearly executed respectively. These "hot zones" that this GIVE program is attempting to target are clearly areas of black/ low income communities. Communities that if you invest in the people will be able to flourish and make their neighborhoods grow. Rather than investing in the people who have the power to create the narratives they want all the time, listen to the people who live there. They have put up demands.

- increased budget to ensure that 100% of our youth that are eligible participate in summer and fall youth employment
- increased budget in our parks and recreation to ensure ALL POOLS are open and safe for our families and children.
- restoration of abandoned properties to ensure housing for our low income and houseless population.
- funding to ensure Youth Mentorship and Apprenticeship

If you choose to listen to your community it can set a precedent for other communities. To really change the racist institutions and beliefs that remain. If you do not listen, you are actively choosing that the people you serve do not matter. Troy 4 Black Lives, the group that is asking for these demands, are your community members. I know them, I talk to them, I love them. Are you willing to even try and change their communities for the better? Or will you deny them of their basic rights and force them to live in fear.

From,
Henry Park, Niskayuna