



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR CITY OF SCHENECTADY

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November 28, 2023

Hon. Marion Porterfield
President
Schenectady City Council
City Hall – Jay Street
Schenectady, New York 12305

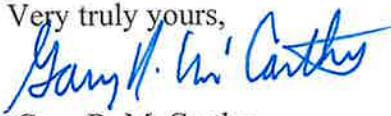
Dear Marion:

I have vetoed Schenectady City Council Ordinance number 2023-17 (Operating Budget for 2024). The process used this year in review of my proposed operating budget seemed flawed in the goal of obtaining a timely and balanced budget from the beginning. I asked for any recommendations or suggestions from the City Council on September 11, 2023 (copy of email attached), none were received. The scheduling of budget review sessions on Friday evenings. The failed vote on November 1, 2023, with no draft Ordinance even prepared or placed before the City Council was sloppy at best and can be interpreted as you did not intend to pass a budget that evening no matter what.

My major concern and position have been and continues to be that there is adequate revenue to cover daily operations and debt service in the Water & Sewer Funds and a fair allocation of raising costs in Waste Collection. You indicated that people had reached out in opposition to the increase in Trash Fees or Water & Sewer Fees. When I asked who these people were to better understand possible adverse impacts they might perceive from the proposed rate changes and to look for possible options & ways to mitigate those impacts, you declined to provide them.

The City Council's Finance Committee actions ranged from major cuts in proposed overtime for public safety employees. Then proposing fully restoring those funds and making major staff reductions in non-public safety employees, but then shifting proposed cuts across the budget with an emphasis on currently vacant positions (many of which given the opportunity to be filled will generate revenue). Leaving Outside Legal Services in the City Council's budget, an expense that has never in the history of the city been budgeted prior to this year, but not even expended, raises questions on the sincerity of reducing unnecessary expenses.

I look forward to continued review of our budget options that will produce a fair and balanced budget for the City of Schenectady.

Very truly yours,

Gary R. McCarthy