



**ALBANY COMMON COUNCIL**  
**FINANCE, ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**Meghan Keegan, Chair**

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**Meeting called by: Meghan Keegan, Chair | Date: April 15, 2026 | Time: 6:06 PM**

**Committee Members Present:** Keegan, Chair ☒ | Balarin ☒ | Brodie ☒ | Farrell ☒ | Lumpkin ☒

**Also Present:** President Kimbrough

**Council Members Present:** Adams, Hoey, Flynn, Powell, Williamson, and Zamer

**City Personnel Present:** Bryan Jimenez (Legislative Director), Robert Wenner (Research Counsel), Carly Johnson (Junior Legislative Aide); Christopher Ellis (Deputy Mayor), Liz Mariapen (Director of Intergovernmental Affairs); Miriam Dixon (Commissioner of Administrative Services)

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*Minutes*

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**Agenda Item:**

- **First Conversation on the City of Albany Budget**

**Public Comment:**

- Robert Ward, City of Albany – Potential support with the budget challenge

**Discussion:**

- Deputy Mayor Christopher Ellis and Commissioner of Administrative Services Miriam Dixon were invited to discuss updates on the municipal budget before the Committee.
- Council Member Sergio Adams asked if intergovernmental aid is still incoming, to which Commissioner Dixon responded that there are little documentation and institutional knowledge remaining in the Budget Office. Commissioner Dixon shared that some departments were unaware of the approved revenue.
- Council Member Deborah Zamer asked for clarification that departments were unaware that budget items had already been cut for Fiscal Year 2026; Commissioner Dixon responded that the departments were not informed of cuts.
- Committee Member Deirdre Brodie asked for clarification on the decreases between proposed and adopted budget not being noticed by department heads.
  - Majority Leader noted that communication may have been lacking and department heads were not made aware of the decreases.
  - Committee Member Brodie noted that this overall decrease of \$315,000 is miniscule compared to the scope of the problem.

- Council Member Zamer asked if there will be any changes to the number of seasonal hires at the municipal golf course and Lincoln Park Pool, to which Commissioner Dixon responded that the City is expecting there to be some degree of seasonal hires.
- Council Member Thomas Hoey noted that Albany County sales receipts increased last year and asked why the City remained short in sales tax revenue, to which Committee Chair Meghan Keegan noted that though receipts went up, it was still less than projected revenue.
- Council Member Hoey noted that the Albany County could tax short-term rentals under the hotel tax.
- Council Member Rachel Powell asked if the deficit is largely due to missing revenue and not expenditure overages, to which Deputy Mayor Ellis responded that the Fiscal Year 2025 deficit could be described in that manner.
- Council Member Powell noted various methods for increasing revenue and asked if the Administration had considered these options, to which Deputy Mayor Ellis shared that all options remained on the table, noting that the Administration has not come up with a single solution to close the budget deficit.
- Council Member Powell noted that closing out the previous fiscal year's budget appears to be a slower process than other municipalities and the State, and that the delay is straining work that can be done for Fiscal Year 2026. Deputy Mayor Ellis responded that the process is mainly addressed by the Treasurer's Office.
  - Committee Member Brodie noted that the Treasurer has until April 20<sup>th</sup> to file the annual financial report with the New York State Comptroller.
- Majority Leader Alfredo Balarin asked if there are any updates on receiving additional funding from New York State, to which Deputy Mayor Ellis responded that the City of Albany has reached out to State leaders to advocate for increased City aid.
  - Committee Member Brodie asked if there are any specifics that can be shared on the requests made for additional State funding, to which Deputy Mayor Ellis responded that the City has asked for \$15 million to address the preceding deficit.
- Committee Member Brodie noted that the City needs to shift focus to more broadly reducing expenditures.
- Chair Keegan presented on the City of Albany's budget process and fiscal information to-date.
  - Committee Member Brodie asked for clarification on the suggested transfer of approximately \$12 million for the fund balance to reduce the 2025 deficit.
  - Majority Leader Balarin noted that the Pay Equity study was important for retaining city personnel.
  - Council Member Hoey noted concerns about no longer having a Budget Director, to which Chair Keegan responded that it spurred the Common Council's request for access to the Enterprise Resource Planning system.
  - President Pro Tempore Farrell noted that the immediate concern is budget shortfalls, but protocols need to be put in place to avoid similar issues in the future.
  - Chair Keegan spoke on the Board of Estimate and Apportionment.
  - Majority Leader Balarin raised that the previous Administration was advancing controversial legislation at the end of last year that coincided with the Common Council's budget process.
  - Chair Keegan recalled that the 2025 Third Quarter Treasury Report was not received until after the budget passed when it's typically received before the budget process begins. She shared that some concerns were raised as the report reflected an anticipated

- \$7 to \$8 million shortfall in revenue, noting the difficulty to off-ramp a budget five weeks before the end of the year.
- Chair Keegan noted that this series of Finance, Assessment and Taxation Committee meetings may need to be rescheduled to ensure the attendance of other city personnel.
  - Committee Member Brodie noted that from the Treasurer's Office, she would like to receive reports on the Payroll Year-To-Date and the cash-on-hand the City possesses.

**Adjourn:**

President Pro Tempore moved to adjourn meeting, which was seconded by Committee Member Lumpkin and passed by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM.

**Meeting Link:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DoT\\_xowS3ww](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DoT_xowS3ww)

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Bryan Jimenez*  
Legislative Director  
*Carly Johnson*  
Junior Legislative Aide