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Spectrum News / Siena College Mayoral Primary Polls:

Albany: Incumbent Sheehan (51%) Maintains Strong Lead Over Commisso (26%) & McLaughlin (13%) in Dem. Primary

Sheehan's 25-Point Lead Down a Little from 30 Points in August

Buffalo: Three-term Brown (49%) Continues to Have Big Lead Over Schroeder (26%) & Grant (11%) in Dem. Primary

Brown Lead Dips to 23 Points from 27 Points in August

Loudonville, NY. Days until Democrats go to the polls, incumbent Mayors Kathy Sheehan (Albany) and Byron Brown (Buffalo) continue to hold significant leads in their respective three-way primary races, according to new Spectrum News/Siena College Polls of likely Albany and Buffalo Democratic primary voters released today.

Albany: Sheehan 51%, Commisso, Jr. 26%, McLaughlin 13%, Undecided 10%

Sheehan (51 percent today, up one point from 50 percent in August) leads Frank Commisso, Jr. (26 percent, up from 20 percent) and Carolyn McLaughlin (13 percent, same as in August), with 10 percent undecided (down from 17 percent). Sheehan's 25-point lead is down a little from a 30-point lead she had last month.

Sheehan has a 65-24 percent favorability rating, similar to 68-25 percent in August. McLaughlin has a 49-25 percent favorability rating (45-18 percent in August). Commisso's favorability rating slipped to 38-37 percent, from 37-22 percent in August.

As primary day approaches, Mayor Sheehan, with the best favorability rating among the three candidates, maintains a strong lead, albeit down slightly from last month, said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg.

Sheehan has a 31-point lead among white voters, same as last month. While McLaughlin and Sheehan were tied with black voters in August, McLaughlin now leads Sheehan among black voters 34-28 percent.

Albany Democratic Mayoral Primary						
	September 10			August 14		
	Kathy Sheehan	Frank Commisso, Jr.	Carolyn McLaughlin	Kathy Sheehan	Frank Commisso, Jr.	Carolyn McLaughlin
Likely Dems	51%	26%	13%	50%	20%	13%
<i>Men</i>	49%	32%	10%	52%	24%	8%
<i>Women</i>	53%	21%	16%	48%	17%	17%
White voters	60%	29%	5%	57%	26%	6%
Black voters	28%	18%	34%	32%	10%	32%

Spectrum News / Siena College Poll – September 10, 2017

“Treating all neighborhoods fairly is the most important issue for 51 percent of McLaughlin supporters and 32 percent of Sheehan supporters. For Commisso voters, city taxes was the most important issue,” Greenberg said. “Ninety-two percent of Sheehan voters and 91 percent of McLaughlin voters say they are absolutely or fairly certain they will vote for the candidate they currently support, while 79 percent of Commisso supporters say they are at least fairly certain to vote for him.”

“Sheehan and McLaughlin saw their favorability ratings slip ever so slightly in the last month, while Commisso’s favorability rating fell from a 15-point positive rating to a now nearly break even one-point positive favorability rating,” Greenberg said.

Albany Candidate Favorability Ratings			
		September 10	August 14
Kathy Sheehan	Favorable	65%	68%
	Unfavorable	24%	25%
	Don't Know	11%	8%
Frank Commisso, Jr.	Favorable	38%	37%
	Unfavorable	37%	22%
	Don't Know	25%	41%
Carolyn McLaughlin	Favorable	49%	45%
	Unfavorable	25%	18%
	Don't Know	26%	37%
Spectrum News / Siena College Poll – September 10, 2017			

“While each candidate’s supporters view their candidate overwhelmingly favorably, McLaughlin is also viewed favorably by both Commisso and Sheehan voters. Sheehan is viewed favorably by McLaughlin voters and strongly unfavorably by Commisso voters. Commisso is viewed strongly unfavorably by both Sheehan and McLaughlin voters,” Greenberg said.

“Strong majorities of likely Albany Democratic primary voters continue to think that both New York State and Albany are headed on the right track. They say the State is on the right track by 63-27 percent margin and the City is on the right track by a very similar 63-30 percent margin,” Greenberg said. “Not surprisingly, Sheehan voters overwhelmingly think the City is on the right track, however, strong majorities of Commisso and McLaughlin voters say Albany is headed in the wrong direction.

“Little has changed in the overall dynamics of this race over the last month. The widely popular Sheehan continues to enjoy a sizeable lead over her two Common Council competitors. While Commisso cut the lead a little, those who view him unfavorably has jumped considerably, and while McLaughlin is still viewed strongly favorably, she has not been able to increase the size of her support at all,” Greenberg said.

“With the electorate strongly saying that Albany is headed in the right direction and that there is little chance they will change their vote choice in the closing days, it appears Kathy Sheehan ó assuming she can get her supporters to the polls on Tuesday ó is headed toward capturing the Democratic nomination, and a likely second term as Albany mayor,” Greenberg said.

Buffalo: Brown 49%, Schroeder 26%, Grant 11%, Undecided 14%

Brown, with 49 percent support (down slightly from 51 percent in August), leads Mark Schroeder (26 percent, up slightly from 24 percent in August) and Betty Jean Grant (11 percent, down slightly from 13 percent), with 14 percent (up slightly from 12 percent) undecided.

Brown’s 70-24 percent favorability rating is down a little from 74-22 percent in August. Schroeder has a 56-12 percent favorability rating, compared to 52-10 percent in August. Grant’s favorability rating fell over the last month to 43-27 percent (down from 52-17 percent).

“While the campaign has intensified over the last four weeks, Mayor Brown has maintained his wide lead over Schroeder and Grant. Brown continues to lead by at least 20 points with men, women, voters with and without a college degree, and voters from union and non-union households,” Greenberg said. “The race has tightened with white voters to nearly dead even after Brown led Schroeder by 17 points in August. However, Brown slightly extended his lead over Grant among black voters to 32 points.

“While Brown polls well with black and white voters, Grant only garners the support of five percent of white voters and Schroeder has the same five-percent support with black voters,” Greenberg said.

Buffalo Democratic Mayoral Primary						
	September 10			August 14		
	Byron Brown	Mark Schroeder	Betty Jean Grant	Byron Brown	Mark Schroeder	Betty Jean Grant
Likely Dems	49%	26%	11%	51%	24%	13%
<i>Men</i>	51%	28%	9%	54%	28%	9%
<i>Women</i>	47%	24%	13%	49%	21%	17%
White voters	43%	42%	5%	50%	33%	9%
Black voters	56%	5%	24%	52%	14%	22%
Spectrum News / Siena College Poll – September 10, 2017						

“Nearly half of both Schroeder and Grant voters say the most important issue in determining who they will vote for is treating all neighborhoods fairly. That’s the second most important issue for Brown voters, who cite economic development as the most important issue in their decision to support Brown,” Greenberg said.

“As we approach primary day, voters appear locked in with their candidate. Eighty-four percent of Grant voters, 90 percent of Brown voters and 93 percent of Schroeder voters say they are absolutely or fairly certain that they will not change their minds before Tuesday,” Greenberg said.

Buffalo Candidate Favorability Ratings			
		September 10	August 14
Byron Brown	Favorable	70%	74%
	Unfavorable	24%	22%
	Don't Know	7%	4%
Mark Schroeder	Favorable	56%	52%
	Unfavorable	12%	10%
	Don't Know	32%	37%
Betty Jean Grant	Favorable	43%	52%
	Unfavorable	27%	17%
	Don't Know	30%	31%
Spectrum News / Siena College Poll – September 10, 2017			

“Brown continues to have a very strong favorability rating, down only slightly from August. Schroeder and Grant remain unknown to about one in three voters. And while Schroeder’s favorability rating has improved a bit since August, Grant has seen her favorability rating fall by net 19 points,” Greenberg said. “Brown is viewed favorably

by at least 62 percent of voters regardless of gender, age, religion, ideology, race, income, or education.”

Likely Democratic primary voters say New York State is on the right track by a 63-16 percent margin, little change from 67-19 percent in August. They say Buffalo is on the right track by a 73-18 percent margin, down a little from 78-15 percent last month.

“By a huge margin, Brown voters say Buffalo is on the right track, as do Schroeder voters. Grant voters are more evenly divided on the direction of the City. Supporters of all three candidates think the State is headed on the right track by large margins,” Greenberg said. “The three candidates’ voters also strongly agree on viewing Governor Andrew Cuomo favorably and President Donald Trump unfavorably.

“After 12 years as mayor, Brown continues to be well liked by Buffalo Democrats. Those Democrats also are overwhelmingly satisfied with the direction Buffalo is headed in. Those two factors – combined with a better than 20-point lead heading into the final days and little movement by the electorate over the last month – position Brown to be in a very strong position to win the nomination for a fourth term as Buffalo mayor,” Greenberg said.

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These Spectrum News/Siena College Democratic Mayoral Primary surveys were conducted September 5-7, 2017 by landline and cell telephone calls conducted in English to 512 likely Buffalo Democratic primary voters and 500 likely Albany Democratic primary voters. For both surveys, calls were made to a stratified weighted sample of voters from the L-2 Voter list via both land and cell phones, supplemented with additional cell phone sample from Survey Sampling International. A likely-to-vote probability was computed for each respondent based on both their stated likelihood to vote as well as by virtue of the imputation of a turnout probability score based on past voting behavior applied to their specific voting history. This probability to vote was applied as a weight along with a weight that considered age and gender. The Buffalo poll has a margin of error of ± 4.8 percentage points and the Albany poll has a margin of error of ± 4.6 percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in NYS. SRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, please contact Steve Greenberg at steve@greenbergpr.com or 518-469-9858. Survey cross-tabulations and frequencies can be found at: www.Siena.edu/SCRI/SNY.