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Spectrum News / Siena College Albany Mayoral Primary Poll:

Incumbent Sheehan (50%) Has Strong, Early Lead Over Commisso (20%) & McLaughlin (13%) in Democratic Primary

All Three Viewed Favorably; Sheehan Most Known, Most Favorable

Democratic Voters Say 59-32% Albany Headed on Right Track; Police & Parks Get Strong Positive Ratings; Schools & Infrastructure Rated Negatively

Loudonville, NY. With four weeks until Democrats go to the polls, incumbent Mayor Kathy Sheehan holds a large lead in a three-way primary race. Sheehan currently has the support of 50 percent of likely Democratic voters, while Common Council Member Frank Commisso, Jr. is supported by 20 percent and Albany Common Council President Carolyn McLaughlin has the support of 13 percent, according to a new Spectrum News/Siena College Poll of likely Albany Democratic primary voters released today.

Sheehan has a 68-25 percent favorability rating, compared to a 45-18 percent favorability rating for McLaughlin and a 37-22 percent favorability rating for Commisso. Additionally, Democratic voters give Sheehan a positive 59-38 percent job performance rating. By a 59-32 percent margin, voters say Albany is headed on the right track.

“Kathy Sheehan has a large, early lead over her two Common Council challengers,” said Dr. Don Levy, Siena College Research Institute Director. “Sheehan has strong leads with men and women, as well as younger and older voters. While she has a commanding lead with white voters, Sheehan and McLaughlin are locked in a dead heat with black voters. Sheehan has a narrower lead among non-college educated voters and an overwhelming lead among voters with college degrees.

“Four years ago, days before the Democratic primary, Sheehan had a 76-12 percent favorability rating. Now, after four years as mayor, her favorability rating remains very strong at 68-25 percent,” Levy said.

Favorability Ratings					
		Total	Commisso Supporter	McLaughlin Supporter	Sheehan Supporter
Kathy Sheehan	Favorable	68%	24%	51%	96%
	Unfavorable	25%	69%	36%	2%
	Don't know	8%	8%	13%	2%
Carolyn McLaughlin	Favorable	45%	30%	85%	40%
	Unfavorable	18%	29%	6%	21%
	Don't Know	37%	41%	10%	39%
Frank Commisso, Jr.	Favorable	37%	92%	22%	22%
	Unfavorable	22%	1%	23%	35%
	Don't Know	41%	7%	55%	43%
Spectrum News/Siena College Poll – August 14, 2017					

“Sheehan is viewed overwhelmingly favorably by voters regardless of gender, age, religion, or race. Only Commisso supporters view Sheehan negatively,” Levy said. “While Commisso and McLaughlin both have positive favorability ratings, each is unknown to more than one-third of primary voters.

“Strong majorities of Albany Democrats think both New York State and Albany are headed on the right track. While 79 percent of Sheehan supporters and 56 percent of McLaughlin supporters think the city is headed on the right track, 71 percent of Commisso voters say it is headed in the wrong direction,” Levy said.

Voters were asked whether Albany was headed on the right track or wrong direction over the last four years on eight different issues. A majority of Democrats say Albany is headed on the right track on five: encouraging downtown business development, improving infrastructure, crime, city’s financial well-being, and obtaining appropriate funding from state government. A plurality think Albany is on the right track for giving young people an opportunity to be successful. A plurality thinks the city is headed in the wrong direction when it comes to addressing the needs of all communities fairly. Democrats are evenly divided on addressing vacant properties.

“Overall, voters give high marks for parks and recreation, and the job done by police,” Levy said. “The city gets far worse grades on responsiveness, quality of schools and condition of roads. Sheehan supporters are significantly more positive than are Commisso or McLaughlin voters.”

Aspects of Life in Albany					
		Total	Commisso, Jr. Supporter	McLaughlin Supporter	Sheehan Supporter
The condition of public parks & other recreational facilities	Positive	67%	62%	55%	76%
	Negative	27%	33%	41%	20%
The job done by the police to keep citizens safe	Positive	64%	68%	44%	73%
	Negative	30%	29%	51%	22%
The ability to obtain suitable employment	Positive	43%	37%	34%	50%
	Negative	34%	38%	51%	28%
How responsive local govt. is to the needs of citizens	Positive	39%	22%	20%	55%
	Negative	54%	74%	71%	40%
The quality of our public schools	Positive	31%	23%	27%	36%
	Negative	49%	65%	62%	42%
The condition of local roads, sidewalks & other public works	Positive	29%	17%	28%	36%
	Negative	70%	83%	73%	63%
Spectrum News/Siena College Poll – August 14, 2017					

“Four weeks is a long time in politics, however, Sheehan – with strong favorability and job performance ratings – is in a solid position to capture the Democratic nomination as she seeks a second term,” Levy said. “Commisso and McLaughlin have their work cut out for them as they seek visibility and popularity and try to find issues to move the electorate – which thinks Albany is on the right track – away from Sheehan and into their camps.”

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This Spectrum News/Siena College Albany Mayoral Democratic Primary survey was conducted August 2-7, 2017 by landline and cell telephone calls conducted in English to 600 likely Democratic primary voters. 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. This poll has a margin of error of ± 4.2 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 call Don Levy at [518-783-2901](tel:518-783-2901). Survey cross-tabulations and frequencies can be found at: www.Siena.edu/SCRI/SNY.