Argument in Favor of Measure N

It is time to modernize the position of City Treasurer to provide more effective oversight and greater public transparency with regard to the city’s finances. Albany's voters have previously voted to convert the positions of elected Police Chief and elected City Attorney to professional positions. In light of the increasing complexity of municipal finance and the fiduciary obligations of cities, it is time to do the same with respect to the position of City Treasurer.

This change fulfills a recommendation of an outside consulting firm the City retained to conduct an Operational and Organizational Assessment of the city's Finance Department, which may be viewed online at http://albanyca.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=1860&meta_id=104321. The assessment concluded that consolidating the elected City Treasurer position with the staff position of Finance Director will: (1) bring Albany's practices in line with those of roughly 80% of comparable local jurisdictions, (2) result in cost savings to the city of approximately $77,000 per year, and (3) increase the accountability of the city staff to the City Council for the financial functions of the city as a whole.

The Operational and Organization Assessment further recommended a citizen Budget and Finance Advisory Committee be created to assure the change in structure enhances independent oversight and fiscal transparency. The City Council will be working to establish this Committee in early 2019. Such a committee, meeting in regular open sessions, will provide a far more effective and accountable form of public oversight than can be achieved through the election of a City Treasurer once every four years.

The current elected position will remain in place until December 10, 2020 unless it becomes vacant sooner.

Please join with the entire Albany City Council in voting YES on Measure N to modernize and improve the efficiency of our finance department.

Peggy McQuaid, Albany Mayor
Rochelle Nason, Albany Vice Mayor
Nick Pilch, Albany City Council Member
Peter Maass, Albany City Council Member
Michael Barnes, Albany City Council Member