



**CITY OF ITHACA**  
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**COMMON COUNCIL**

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Mr. Bill Troy  
Tompkins County Attorney

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Dear Mr. Troy,

In observing last week's Tompkins County Ethics Advisory meeting, I understand the immediate next steps of the investigation are to identify interested parties and to create a list of questions to which interested parties are asked to respond.

In furtherance of this effort, I am writing to share new information that may help expedite the work of the committees, as well as some observations.

I have been informed that it is NYS State Law General City Law §20(3) as well as the City of Ithaca's Gifting and Solicitation Policy that applies to my question of the policies governing soliciting and receiving municipal gifts of services. While it can be argued that State and City Procurement Policies may not be the governing policy to consider, I continue to feel that the City receiving gifts of services of such magnitude, services that include the development of reports providing studies and analysis, as well as proposing service and departmental changes that are partially funded by State and Federal funds, should require basic elements of review of qualifications and investigation of bias or conflict of interest.

The committee's discussion of the Art of Power transcript reminded me that Recommendation #1 – Replace the City of Ithaca Police Department with a Community Solutions and Public Safety Department - came not as a part of the collaborative City-County effort, but from former Mayor Myrick individually and unilaterally. Myrick's interview in [Gentleman's Quarterly February 22, 2021](#)<sup>1</sup> was publicly available before the City-County Public Safety Reimagined report, and there was a national media blitz around his proposal that the City of Ithaca would – among other things - lay off all police officers and have them re-apply. I do not know the extent of Center for Policing Equity's involvement in the creation and drafting of the 2021 report, as compared to the work done by City and County staff.

There was tremendous public pressure on City Council, perhaps influenced by paid activists, to adopt Recommendation #1 just a month and a half after the City-County report was published.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gq.com/story/ithaca-mayor-svante-myrick-police-reform>

While Common Council's March 31, 2021 resolution called for "creating a new department" rather than replacing IPD, it is my position that if the Reimagining Public Safety process had gone to referendum in 2022 and passed as originally proposed and lobbied for by People for the American Way and Ithacans for Reimagining Public Safety, the City would have set in motion several processes described by Myrick in GQ as well as by Dr. Goff in his Art of Power interview.

One example was voted out of executive session by Common Council on June 6, 2022. The creation of a new department led by a Commissioner would have resulted in changing the civil service point factors and authorities of the Chief of Police, their salary, retirement, and benefits. The Chief of Police would no longer be a department head. Despite Council's commitment to protect each officer's civil service, authority, and benefits, the creation of Commissioner and demotion of the Chief of Police from Department Head would have in fact done the opposite.

The role of outside funding throughout the reimagining process from 2020 to 2022 is sizeable. When I discovered in January 2022 that Myrick had recruited Alana Byrd from People for the American Way's Washington DC office to move to Ithaca to lead a campaign for a City referendum, and that PFAW was hiring additional staff to organize the community, I called Myrick to ask about it. He admitted to me that in 2021-2022, *while he was Mayor*, that he was fundraising via PFAW to hire organizers to pass Recommendation #1, and that his PFAW salary was not only paid for out of PFAW's non-profit arm, but its lobbying arm as well.

I sincerely appreciate your investigation into this matter.

Cynthia Brock

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