



CITY OF FLORISSANT

Honorable Thomas P. Schneider, Mayor

November 28, 2017

Mayor Schneider returns Budget Ordinance 8365 unsigned on November 28, 2017.

Budget Bill S9325 was passed by the City Council on November 27, 2017 and takes effect.

On September 28 I submitted the Administration's amended 2018 proposed budget which was in compliance with Section 6.6 of the City Charter and Section 67.010 of the Missouri Revised Statutes. This budget was sustainable and contained the framework to continue to operate the City in a professional, efficient and pragmatic manner while providing the high level of programs and services our residents have come to expect.

The Mayor's 2018 budget message acknowledged the financial challenges facing Florissant and most cities in the region and explained that revenue from the new public safety sales tax would help alleviate some of the burden of funding our law enforcement effort which comprises half of our City Budget. My message made it clear that all of the new Public Safety sales tax revenue would be used to benefit and improve our award winning Police Department including substantial pay increase for all uniformed personnel and additional equipment.

Unfortunately the budget that was submitted by the Administration was declared dead on arrival by a majority of City Council members. The main issue of contention was the recommended use of the new Public Safety revenue provided by the passage of St. Louis County Proposition P last April. It was expected and would have been useful to have a reasoned, thoughtful discussion concerning the merits of the Administration's proposed use and allocation of these funds but that did not happen.

The Council's stated approach to the use of the new sales tax funds was that it be used only for "new" expenditures. In practice this stated objective was not met as the Council amended the budget for the purchase of replacement police cars with Proposition P funds. These cars are new only in the sense that they are the latest model year but do not change the number of vehicles in the police fleet.

Although the Council replaced existing police cars with new police cars, continuing a long standing practice, they rejected the Administration's proposal that essential high tech Police telephone service, Police Workmen's Comp and Liability Insurance to protect our Police officers and Legal expenses to defend our police actions improves the Police Department's ability to protect our residents.

CITY HALL 955 Rue St. Francois Florissant, MO 63031 314 / 921-5700 Fax: 314 / 921-7111 TDD: 314 / 839-5142	POLICE DEPARTMENT 1700 North Highway 67 Florissant, MO 63033 314 / 831-7000 Fax: 314 / 830-6045	PARKS DEPARTMENT #1 James J. Eagan Drive Florissant, MO 63033 314 / 921-4466 Fax: 314 / 839-7672	HEALTH DEPARTMENT #1 St. Ferdinand Drive Florissant, MO 63031 314 / 839-7654 Fax: 314 / 839-7656	MUNICIPAL COURT 1055 Rue St. Francois Florissant, MO 63031 314 / 921-3322 Fax: 314 / 839-7663
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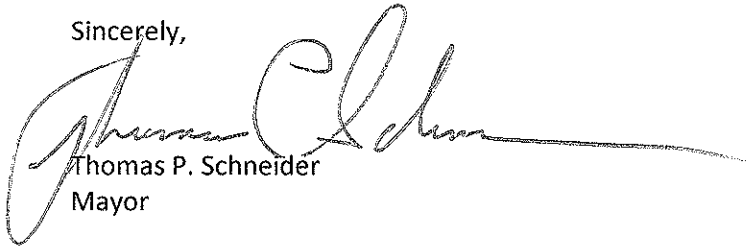
This narrow interpretation and action exacerbated the challenge to the general fund making it unsustainable and created an exaggerated sense of urgency to make massive cuts which the Council expected the Administration to embrace. The result was 6 arduous budget meetings when 2 is the norm and the certainty that the Administration will be compelled to request the Council for additional appropriations more often than is prudent for a successful separation of powers.

In an attempt to make up some of the shortfall to the General fund the Council made what I consider drastic and unnecessary cuts to the 2018 budget and took other actions that will compromise our ability to continue to deliver the services our residents have come to expect going forward. I am particularly concerned about cutting overtime funding in half after cutting it by a third last year. If we have severe winter weather Florissant could run out of overtime funds to pay for snow removal.

The timing of the passage of the budget just before the new fiscal year of December 1 means that a veto of the budget would create a drastic challenge to all departments especially the finance department and could potentially create disruptions of services to our residents. Therefore I will not veto the 2018 budget and allow it to go into effect.

Instead I hereby return the 2018 Budget, Ordinance number 8365 unsigned as an official protest and a bookmark for future Councils and Administrations to reference when they consider a more prudent and pragmatic approach to giving the maximum amount of service to our residents that city resources can provide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas P. Schneider', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thomas P. Schneider
Mayor