



POUGHKEEPSIE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Board Member

Nicole L. Williams, Ed.D.
Superintendent of
Schools

December 18, 2015

Dear Members of the Common Council:

On behalf of the entire Board of Education, I wish to inform you that, as of the date of this letter, the City of Poughkeepsie has failed to pay to the Poughkeepsie City School District approximately \$1.2 million to which the School District is rightfully and statutorily entitled. Specifically, the City owes the School District the following:

- a. **\$631,819** in unpaid and uncollected taxes from the 2012-13 school year owed by the City to the District since January 2, 2015 pursuant to RPTL section 1332 (5).1
- b. Delinquent taxes collected by the City since July 2015 and not paid to the District at least monthly as required by section 1332(5) of the Real Property Tax Law ("RPTL"). Based on prior years' experience, we estimate this amount to be **\$120,000**.
- c. Approximately **\$428,000** in PILOT (payments in lieu of taxes) payments received by the City for 2015 and not paid to the District within thirty days of receipt as required by law. This amount is based on the 2014 PILOT payments and assumes that the City has received these payments from the various payors.
- d. **\$28,636** for which, according to the New York State Authorities Budget Office report dated August 6, 2015, the Poughkeepsie IDA "shortchanged" the District in 2013 and 2014.

The total of these payments is **\$1,208,455**. In addition, the City will owe the District **\$678,310** in unpaid and uncollected taxes on January 6, 2016, from the 2013-14 school year. That would make the total almost \$2 million.

This has been a recurring pattern in the City for the past several years. We have repeatedly tried to work with the City to resolve these issues, but as soon as one year is resolved, the nonpayment reoccurs. Last October, in an effort to avoid litigation, we entered into a written agreement with the City. The City made the initial payments and then, once again, improperly began withholding funds. A copy of the agreement is attached to this letter.

1 RPTL section 1332 (5) provides in relevant part: "In the event that the city . . . shall bid in or shall be deemed to have bid in any real property or tax lien at any sale of such property or such tax lien on account of any of such unpaid taxes, or in the event that within two years after the return of the statement of unpaid taxes no tax sale on account of any such unpaid taxes was held, the city tax enforcement officer or other appropriate city officer, . . . shall pay over to the treasurer of the school district the amount of such unpaid taxes, including interest, for which such property or such tax lien was sold, or would have been sold if a tax sale were held in accordance with law, after deducting therefrom the additional five per centum of the principal of and interest on such unpaid taxes." Emphasis added

(over)

The Board has always sought to resolve these matters amicably, without engaging in time consuming and expensive litigation. However, given the continuing refusal of the City to honor its obligations and lack of responsiveness from City officials, it appears that this is not possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ralph Coates". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

Ralph Coates
President of the Board of Education

cc: Mayor John Tkazyik
Mayor-Elect Rob Rolison
Councilman Christopher Petsas
Councilman Robert Mallory
Councilman Joseph Rich
Councilman-Elect Mike Young
Councilwoman-Elect Lorraine Johnson
Councilman Lee Klein
Councilwoman Sharon McClinton
Councilwoman Ann Perry
Councilwoman-Elect Natasha Cherry
Councilman Randall Johnson
Councilman Tracey Hermann