

The Morning Call
Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion

The 2005 ALLENTOWN
MAYORAL ELECTION

KEY FINDINGS REPORT

October 28, 2005

KEY FINDINGS:

1. With just over one week left before the 2005 mayoral elections, Republican William Heydt maintains a slim lead over Democrat Ed Pawlowski, with a larger portion of voters yet to decide who they will vote for.
2. Former Mayor Heydt is maintaining a large lead among Republican voters in the city, while running very competitively among Allentown's large Democratic voter base.
3. The most important issue among Allentown voters is reducing crime within the city.
4. Among the majority of Allentown residents who are very dissatisfied with current Mayor Roy Afflerbach, Heydt has a significant lead over Pawlowski.
5. Heydt's strongest levels of support are coming from east Allentown while Pawlowski's strongest neighborhoods appear to be in the Center City area.

METHODOLOGY: The following key findings report summarizes data collected in a telephone survey of 422 voters in the City of Allentown between October 24 and 28, 2005. Individual households throughout the city were selected randomly for inclusion in the study. The sample of phone numbers used in the survey was generated by Genesys Sampling Systems of Ft. Washington, PA. Interviewing was conducted by the staff of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion and PMI of Easton Pennsylvania. This number of completions results in a margin of error of +/- 5% at the 95% confidence interval. However the margin of errors for sub groups (i.e. women, Republicans) is larger due to smaller sample size. Percentages throughout the survey have been rounded to the nearest percentage, thus many totals in the results will not equal 100. The survey questionnaire was designed by Christopher Borick, Ph.D. of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion in consultation with staff members of the *Morning Call*. Analysis and report writing were completed by the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion under the direction of Dr. Borick.

ANALYSIS

As Election Day 2005 draws nearer, the most recent Morning Call/ Muhlenberg College survey finds Republican William Heydt holding a slim lead over Democratic nominee Ed Pawlowski in the mayoral race in Allentown. However, there remain a very large number of undecided voters in this election, signaling an important final week in the campaign.

VOTER MOOD

The 2005 election in Allentown is taking place in an environment where voters view the direction of the city very negatively. Just over 8 out of 10 Allentonian voters indicated that they are dissatisfied with the way things are going in the city at this time. These high

levels of dissatisfaction were found in all areas of the city, with the highest pocket of negative perceptions located in the central areas of the city.

The very pessimistic mood of voters corresponds with extremely high disapproval ratings of current Allentown Mayor Roy Afflerbach. The first term Democrat received a meager 15% approval rating among registered voters in Pennsylvania’s third largest city, with 78% of these voters disapproving of the way Afflerbach is handling his job. The full breakdown of Mayor Afflerbach’s job approval ratings are found in Table One Below:

**TABLE ONE
APPROVAL RATINGS FOR
ROY AFFLERBACH**

Level of Approval	Percent
Approve	2%
Somewhat approve	13%
Somewhat Disapprove	24%
Strongly Dissapprove	54%
Not Sure/Refused	7%

KEY ISSUES

Survey respondents were asked to identify the issue that is most important to them in terms of their vote for mayor. The results show that reducing crime in the city is considered to be the most important issue in the election by 4 out of 10 registered voters. Closely behind crime reduction is lowering taxes, with 32% of registered voters identifying this issue as most important. Improving Downtown Allentown was seen as a distant third among the issues examined, with 13% of survey participants rating that issue as the most important in terms.

**TABLE TWO
MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE TO VOTERS**

Issue	Percent
Reducing Crime	40%
Lowering Taxes	32%
Improving The Downtown	13%
Other	7%
Not Sure/Refused	8%

PERCEPTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

Allentown voters were asked their perceptions of the two leading mayoral candidates. The results show some similar patterns in terms of voter views regarding Heydt and Pawlowski. More specifically, both candidates maintain about a 2 to 1 favorable to unfavorable ratio among registered voters in the city. Heydt possesses slightly higher favorable and unfavorable ratings compared with his Democratic challenger, with a higher portion of the public either neutral or not sure about their views of Pawlowski.

**TABLE THREE
FAVORABILITY RATINGS OF THE CANDIDATES**

	Heydt	Pawlowski
Favorable	45%	37%
Unfavorable	22%	16%
Neutral/Not Sure	26%	39%
Haven't Heard of Him	6%	6%
Refused	2%	2%

THE RACE

As Election Day draws closer it appears that the race for Mayor remains fairly tight, with Heydt holding a lead on Pawlowski that is within the surveys margin of error. Overall the survey finds that Heydt leads Pawlowski by 6 points when leaning voters are included. It is very important to note that even when you include voters who are just leaning to a candidate in the totals, roughly 1 out of 5 Allentown voters remain undecided on which candidate they plan to vote for. With a relatively tight race and a high undecided voting block it appears that the race remains highly competitive at this time. Table Four below details the poll results.

**TABLE FOUR
MAYORS RACE
INCLUDING LEANERS**

Preference	Voting %
Heydt	41%
Pawlowski	35%
Neither	2%
Other	1%
Not Sure	18%
Refused	4%

The survey also contained a question including independent candidate Michael Molovinsky among the choices. When including Molovinsky among the choices Heydt maintained a 7% lead over Pawlowski, with 23% not sure of their preference and 2% supporting Molovinsky.

**TABLE FIVE
MAYORS RACE
INCLUDING INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE**

Preference	Voting %
Heydt	39%
Pawlowski	32%
Molovinsky	2%
Neither	1%
Other	0%
Not sure	23%
Refused	4%

Former mayor Heydt’s slim lead seems to be bolstered by a number of factors. First, while Heydt is winning an overwhelming portion of Republican voters in the city (57% to 14%), he is also doing very well among the important Democratic voting block. Given the fact that Democrats far out number Republicans in Allentown it’s crucial that Republican candidates are able to do well in terms of luring crossover voters. The survey results indicate that Pawlowski leads Heydt among Democrats by a margin of 38% to 33%, demonstrating his ability to compete for this important group of voters.

Heydt is also performing better than Pawlowski among voters who identified the issues of reducing crime or lowering taxes as the most important issues in determining their votes. For voters who said reducing crime is their key issue, Heydt is beating Pawlowski by a margin of 36% to 29%. Even more expansive is Heydt’s lead among voters who said lowering their taxes is the most important issue. In particular, Heydt leads Pawlowski by a margin of 2 to 1 (48% to 24%). For voters who indicated downtown development is most important to them, Pawlowski and Heydt are running even at 33% each. Table Six provides details on the relationship between issues and voting preferences.

**TABLE SIX
Voting Preferences by Issue Saliency**

	Heydt	Pawlowski	Molovinsky	Not Sure/Refused
Reducing Crime	36%	29%	1%	34%
Lowering Taxes	48%	24%	2%	26%
Improving the Downtown	33%	33%	4%	30%

Finally, among voters most dissatisfied with the performance of current Mayor Roy Afflerbach, Heydt maintains a solid lead over Pawlowski. In particular, for voters

that said they strongly disapprove of the way Afflerbach has handled his job, 48% intend to vote for Heydt with only 29% planning to vote for Pawlowski. These findings may indicate a lingering effect of Pawlowski's association with the Afflerbach administration.

Christopher P. Borick, Ph.D
Director, Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion

**Morning Call/Muhlenberg College
2005 Allentown Mayoral Election Survey
Frequency Questionnaire**

Sample Size = 430 Registered Voters
Fielding Dates = October 24-28
Margin of Error = +/- 5 at 95% Level of Confidence
Fielding Method = Telephone RDD
Sample is Weighted
Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding

Q1: Which political party are you currently registered with?

1. Democrat	54%
2. Republican	34%
3. Independent	7%
4. or Other	1%
5. Not sure	2%
6. Refused	2%

Q2. Which of the following issues would you say is most important in determining your vote for Allentown Mayor. Would you say reducing crime, lowering taxes, or improving the downtown?

1. Reducing Crime	40%
2. Lowering Taxes	32%
3. Improving the Downtown	13%
4. Other	7%
5. Not Sure	7%
6. Refused	1%

Q3: In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in the city of Allentown at this time?"

1. Satisfied	10%
2. Dissatisfied	83%
3. Not Sure	7%
4. Refused	<1%

Q4. Which of the following best describes your level of approval of the way Roy Afflerbach has handled his job as mayor of Allentown. Do you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove of the way Roy Afflerbach has handled his job as mayor?

1. Strongly Approve	2%
2. Somewhat Approve	13%
3. Somewhat Disapprove	24%
4. Strongly Disapprove	54%
5. Not Sure	6%
6. Refuse	1%

Q5. Now I would like to ask you about your thoughts regarding The candidates for Mayor in the City of Allentown. For each name I read please tell me if your impression of the candidate is favorable or unfavorable. First, William Heydt?

1. favorable	45%
2. unfavorable	22%
3. neutral/not sure	26%
4. haven't heard of him	6%
5. refused	2%

Q6. Next, Ed Pawlowski?

1. favorable	37%
2. unfavorable	16%
3. neutral/not sure	39%
4. haven't heard of him	6%
5. refused	2%

Q7. If the election for Allentown mayor was held today and the race was between William Heydt and Ed Pawlowski, who would you vote for?

1. Heydt	37%
2. Pawlowski	32%
3. Neither	2%
4. Other	1%
5. Not sure	24%
6. Refused	4%

Q8:

As of today would you say you are leaning more to voting for William Heydt or Ed Pawlowski for Mayor? (ONLY RESPONDENTS WHO WERE NOT SURE)

1. Heydt	20%
2. Pawlowski	11%
3. Not Sure	59%
4. Refused	10%

Q7 and Q8 Combine

MAYORS RACE INCLUDING LEANERS

1. Heydt	41%
2. Pawlowski	35%
3. Neither	2%
4. Other	1%
5. Not sure	18%
6. Refused	4%

Q9. If the election for Allentown mayor was held today and the race was between William Heydt, Ed Pawlowski, and Michael Molovinsky ,who would you vote for?)

1. Heydt	39%
2. Pawlowski	32%
3. Molovinsky	2%
3. Neither	1%
4. Other	0%
5. Not sure	23%
6. Refused	4%