

May 23, 2024

Chairperson DiAndre Jackson, Judiciary and Legislation Committee  
City of Milwaukee Common Council  
200 East Wells Street, Room 301  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

RE: Paulina Gutiérrez's Confirmation to the Executive Director Position for the City of Milwaukee Election Commission

Dear Alderperson Jackson:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the appointment of Paulina Gutiérrez as the new Executive Director for the City of Milwaukee's Election Commission. Having followed her career and qualifications, and having worked with her in several roles, I am confident that she is the right person to lead our election processes and ensure their integrity.

Paulina and I were colleagues during the time she worked at MULS in the Restorative Justice Program where I served as an Adjunct Faculty member in the Dispute resolution program teaching the Negotiation Workshop. I knew her to be very capable, an excellent communicator, a deep listener and a person who could organize people and events well and do so with tremendous focus and commitment. We also crossed paths at UWM where she teaches as an Ad Hoc faculty in the Master of Sustainable Peacebuilding program at UWM, where I am a faculty associate and as I have lessened my course load, Paulina took on one of the classes and she and I worked together for the transition. Again, the process was easy and in large part due to her deep experience and skills.

I know from our interactions and discussions that Paulina has deep and broad skills and experience that will serve her well in this role.

- Paulina actively involved in coordinating and developing the vision of a unified 911 center for the City of Milwaukee and she served in an integral role by assisting local elected officials to navigate the complexities of emergency communications and where she led the multi-disciplinary team that developed the initial plans of an enterprisewide system.
- Paulina is trained as a Restorative Justice leader and mediator working under the vision and leadership of retired Supreme Court Justice Janine Geske, where Paulina facilitated restorative justice circles inside of prisons around the state. Paulina then re-engaged with the same young men upon their return to our communities, helping them to better connect to community programming and promote individual and neighborhood healing.
- Paulina began her career in public service as a community organizer, tirelessly advocating for public safety resources and ensuring that residents had access to essential services. Drawing from her own experiences as a child of immigrants, Paulina gained firsthand knowledge of systemic challenges faced by the community. This deep understanding is invaluable for effective community engagement, policy development and successful

program implementation. These skills have manifested themselves as she has worked with diverse community, law enforcement, and political entities to identify shared goals and develop mutually beneficial solutions.

- Throughout her career, she has consistently been willing and even eager to take on complex challenges in a wide range of specialized fields including emergency management, juvenile corrections, police/community relations, and restorative justice. This is a direct reflection of her commitment to our community, her professionalism, leadership, and demonstrated ability to understand and navigate successfully myriad complex issues.
- Paulina has been capably serving as Deputy Director and so the transition to this role should be seamless and will ensure continuity within the system during this very important election season.

I wholeheartedly recommend Paulina for this crucial role and urge you to confirm her appointment. I am confident that she will be successful and has the experience and support to administer fair and transparent elections with integrity, professionalism, and grace for the City of Milwaukee.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or need additional information. Thank you for your time and consideration and for your service to our community.

Sincerely,



Joanne Lipo Zovic  
Attorney  
Mediator- Mediate Milwaukee  
Court Appointed Chapter 128 Trustee  
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Cc: City of Milwaukee Common Council members  
Paulina Gutierrez