



Fire and Police Commission

Griselda Aldrete
Executive Director

Steven M. DeVougas
Chair

Nelson Soler
Vice-Chair

Ann Wilson
Fred Crouther
Angela McKenzie
Everett Cocroft
Raymond Robakowski
Commissioners

July 6, 2020

To: Mayor of Milwaukee, Members of the Milwaukee Common Council and Members of the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission

I write today to withdraw my name from consideration for the appointment as Executive Director of the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission (FPC).

This was not a decision I arrived at easily. I am extremely proud of the work I have led over the past eleven months to bring urgently needed reforms and improvements to the FPC. These have included:

- ensuring that the investigation of Police Officer Mattioli has been conducted properly, fairly and thoroughly;
- contributing to the investigation into the video leak of a controversial police interview in August of 2019;
- creating a strong foundation for good governance and compliance with the landmark ACLU stop-and-frisk settlement agreement;
- prioritizing and contributing to the citywide CAD/911 consolidation project, scheduled to launch in January 2021 to reduce city-wide call wait times;
- prioritizing promotional examinations for detective, lieutenant and sergeant for the Milwaukee Police Department to be completed at the end of August 2020;
- overseeing and completing COVID-19 emergency temporary hires for the Milwaukee Fire and Police Departments;
- assisting the FPC Board of Commissioners in the review and reforming of Standard Operating Procedure 460- Use of Force, while working with the City Attorney's and Milwaukee District Attorney's offices to review and reform Police Officer training and de-escalation techniques -- which are essential to rebuilding community-police relations to protect the city and officers.

However, it is clear that this decision – difficult as it is - is the correct decision.

Although my appointment received subcommittee approval last month, the climate at City Hall today sadly puts a premium on political point-scoring and conflict. This state of affairs presages a confirmation hearing based on spectacle, not merit. Furthermore, the looming threat of a politically-motivated hold of my appointment -- as well as for other cabinet members -- has already cast a shadow over the entire process.

The position of FPC Executive Director is vital to public safety in Milwaukee, and integrity is at its core. I cannot in good conscience allow myself and, far more importantly, the critical work we have advanced at the FPC over the past year, to become casualties of political brinkmanship.



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It should not be lost on any municipal observer that the next appointee to this post will be the fourth executive director of the FPC in three years. Regrettably, it is hard not to argue that dysfunction has been baked into the FPC governance structure for far too long, with too many interests pulling in too many dissonant directions, in the end undermining the vision of a strong, independent civilian oversight body envisioned by the City Charter.

I urge Milwaukee policymakers to use this new vacancy to refresh their commitment to needed change, and to support the people who come to work every day and give all of themselves to make that change real -- as I proudly did.

I want to thank key FPC staff for your dedication and support for the betterment of the Department and City. Your work has and will not go unnoticed, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. To those supporters from the Milwaukee Common Council; those supporters of the Board of the Fire and Police Commission; fellow City Department heads; the City Attorney's office; the Milwaukee Fire Department and Milwaukee Police Department members; and key community supporters. I thank you for your partnership and commitment to change and reform.

Finally, I wish to say thank you to Mayor Tom Barrett, for having the faith in me to work in this important position, and for providing me the opportunity to serve my City. It has truly been an honor.

I plan to remain in my post until a successor is identified, and stand ready to help fully with the smooth and orderly transition to the next FPC Executive Director. While I leave City Hall, I will never stop fighting for Milwaukee; I remain ready to do more and better for our City outside government, just as I always did within it.

Sincerely,

Griselda Aldrete