



Boston City Council

**Erin J. Murphy**

*Councilor-at-Large*

November 15, 2024

To: Boston City Council Colleagues

From: Councilor Erin Murphy, At-Large

Subject: Ensuring Transparency in the Appointment and Replacement Process for City Appointees

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to follow up on an important issue regarding the process for appointing and replacing city appointees. As you know, the City Council plays a vital role in confirming appointments to various boards and commissions across Boston. However, it has become clear that there are significant gaps in transparency when it comes to understanding who is being replaced when we approve a new appointee.

Currently, the Council is often asked to approve a new appointee without being informed about who, if anyone, they are replacing. In some cases, appointees may be serving well beyond their original term, and in other cases, the Council is unaware of whether the new appointee is filling a vacancy or replacing an existing member. This lack of clarity can lead to confusion and unintended consequences, particularly when appointees are not informed that their term has ended or that they will not be reappointed.

This is not just about any one individual or appointment; it is about ensuring that we have a clear, transparent process in place for all appointees going forward. When the Council is asked to approve new appointments, we must be provided with all the relevant information — including who is being replaced and the reason for the change. This will ensure that the process is respectful of those who have served and that we avoid situations where appointees are unknowingly displaced.

I have filed a hearing order (Docket #1399) to review and improve these procedures. The intent of this hearing is to ensure that we have a clear system in place to notify the City Council and appointees alike when someone is being replaced. The goal is not to question the Mayor's authority to make appointments or to remove individuals whose terms have expired, but rather to ensure that the process is transparent and that appointees are treated with respect and dignity throughout their service.

I have been assured by the administration that moving forward, when new appointees are brought before the City Council for approval, we will be informed in advance of who, if anyone, is being replaced. This is an important step in making sure we are all on the same page when these decisions are made and that no appointee is left in the dark about the end of their service.

As we look ahead to the next series of appointments, I ask for your support in holding firm on the importance of transparency in this process. We must ensure that all appointees, both current and future, are treated fairly and that the City Council has all the information needed to make well-informed decisions.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. I look forward to working together to strengthen our processes and ensure that we continue to serve the people of Boston with integrity and transparency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Erin J. Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Erin Murphy

Boston City Councilor-at-Large

Chair of the Strong Women, Families, & Communities Committee

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