



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 27, 2018**

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***The Community Needs to Hear From the Mayor Regarding his  
“Different Direction for Fire and Police Commission”***

Dear Mayor Tom Barrett and Common Council Members,

The community is responding after the resignation announcement of former Fire and Police Commission (FPC) executive director MaryNell Regan over the weekend. Recently, under the direction of MaryNell Regan the FPC finally appeared to moving toward operating independently and appropriately using their power. After reading in the Journal Sentinel that Mayor Barrett’s new chief of staff Paul Vornholt said you wanted to “take the FPC in a different direction,” the community is curious about the direction.

We are concerned by the haste of this appointment. Although you have the authority to appoint the executive director and board members of the Fire and Police Commission, there was no opportunity for others to be considered. There has also not been any mention from the mayor’s office about a public hearing to allow the community an opportunity to meet the nominee, Mrs. La Keisha Butler.

According to the “Mayoral Appointment” page on the city’s website, being appointed to a board or a commission is a public process and the community wants to ensure that remains true. It states during this public process there could be a public hearing to learn about potential nominees background and experience. **We urge the Common Council to schedule public hearings with Mrs. Butler that are accessible and will allow the public enough time to plan, prepare and be present.**

Over the last few months, we’ve seen the FPC create spaces for the community to hear from the chief of police candidates and want to see the same opportunity for this critical position.

Lastly, there are several Fire and Police Commissioners whose terms will be expiring soon and Milwaukee has waited long enough to get a community voices represented on the FPC. As efforts from our State capitol look to dismantle the independence of one of the oldest and most powerful oversight boards in the country, we urge you to appoint one or more commissioners backed by the community voices. Potential commissioners should have a strong commitment to eliminating racial profiling and other forms of bias in the departments.

With commissioners setting the overall policy and the work of the Milwaukee Collaborative Community Committee to ensure proposed policy from the community are uplifted from the Department of Justice's draft report are prioritized, it's essential a community voice is appointed. This has been a request of the community for years and most recently after Dontre Hamilton was killed in April 2014.

We see this as another new day in our city. We should not continue making the same errors again and again of years past. The community looks forward to continuing to be at the table and being heard and valued as we discuss the leadership and direction our city is moving in.

Sincerely,

Markasa Tucker  
Director, African American Roundtable

Brenda Bell-White  
Maria Hamilton  
Minister William Muhammad  
9to5 Wisconsin  
ACLU  
Centro Hispano MKE  
Coalition for Justice  
Leaders Igniting Transformation  
Milwaukee Turners Confronting Mass Incarceration Initiative  
Mothers Against Gun Violence  
NAACP Milwaukee Branch  
Peace Garden Project MKE  
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Sherman Park Community Association  
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