

ACLU of Wisconsin, community organizations: Call for expansion of Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission

Posted on Monday, Nov 23, 2020

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

MILWAUKEE – The ACLU of Wisconsin, along with a number of other local advocacy groups, sent a letter to Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett Monday encouraging him to increase the size of the Fire and Police Commission, arguing that doing so would help alleviate ongoing tensions, strengthen community representation and enhance the capacity and competency of commissioners.

Adding more members to the FPC would help solve a range of short and long-term issues that have impeded the commission's ability to carry out effective oversight, a role which is crucial to ensuring that policing in Milwaukee is conducted responsibly, equitably and lawfully.

“Law enforcement policy is most effective when developed cooperatively with input from local citizens,” said Peggy Creer, president of the League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County. “A well-functioning Fire and Police Commission is critical to this effort.”

“Rigorous, independent oversight of policing is a necessary step toward building trust between law enforcement and Milwaukee residents,” said Chris Ott, executive

director of the ACLU of Wisconsin. “The FPC’s primary responsibility is to represent and work in service of the community’s best interests, and we believe that expanding the commission will put them in a better position to effectively do so. Mayor Barrett has previously pledged to make additional appointments, and now is time for him to follow through with that commitment.”

In addition to calling for the nomination of two new members to the FPC, the letter also lays out a set of criteria for prospective nominees. The proposed qualifications include:

1. Having first-hand knowledge about the issues young people are facing.
2. Representing targeted populations who have high degrees of police contact.
3. Having the ability to analyze data and think critically.
4. Having the ability to ask difficult questions of authority figures.
5. Having the abilities to advocate for the community regarding police issues in the City of Milwaukee and to work with diverse constituencies (i.e., the MPD, the MFD, elected officials, and the community) in an oversight role.
6. Having the ability to make policy and procedural recommendations.
7. Having the ability to develop and use outreach strategies to obtain and incorporate input into consideration of MPD policies and procedures and their impacts on the community.
8. Committing to attending substantially all FPC meetings, to actively participate in those meetings and other non-meeting work of the commission, and to work collaboratively with fellow commissioners.

A copy of the letter is available online at: https://www.aclu-wi.org/sites/default/files/field_documents/2020_11_23fpcvacancyletter.pdf

A copy of this press release is available online at: <https://www.aclu-wi.org/en/news/aclu-wisconsin-community-organizations-call-expansion-milwaukee-fire-and-police-commission>