

Office of
the Mayor
Burlington,
Vermont



Miro Weinberger
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 9, 2012
Contact: Mike Kanarick
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Mayor Miro Weinberger Appoints Eileen Blackwood as New City Attorney

Burlington, VT – Mayor Miro Weinberger today in City Hall Park announced the appointment of Eileen Blackwood, Esq., as the new City Attorney for the City of Burlington. Blackwood, who will be the first woman to serve as Burlington City Attorney, currently is a partner at the law firm Kohn Rath Blackwood & Danon in Hinesburg, having practiced law in Burlington for more than 21 years prior to merging her Burlington firm, Blackwood & Danon, with the Hinesburg firm Kohn & Rath in early 2009. Weinberger has asked the City Council to approve the appointment at its July 16, 2012 meeting.

“The City of Burlington will be very fortunate to have an attorney of Eileen Blackwood’s caliber serving City Attorney,” said Weinberger. “Eileen has extensive experience, excellent skills as a listener and communicator, is one of the most respected and admired attorneys in the Vermont legal community, and has an outstanding record of community service.”

In addition to more than 25 years in private practice, Blackwood was elected by her peers to serve as president of the Vermont Bar Association, has worked extensively as a mediator, and was appointed by the Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court to serve on the Commission on Judicial Operation.

“I am excited to be joining Burlington’s leadership team at a challenging but optimistic time in the City’s history,” said Blackwood. “I appreciate the Mayor’s confidence in my abilities and welcome the opportunity to partner with the City Council and the Mayor to tackle the many important legal issues facing Burlington today.”

Please see attached documents, including:

- *Memorandum from Mayor Miro Weinberger to City Council Members requesting approval of the appointment of Eileen M. Blackwood, Esq. as City Attorney*
- *Curriculum Vita of Eileen M. Blackwood, Esq.*

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MEMORANDUM

To: City Council Members

From: Miro Weinberger
Mayor 

Date: July 8, 2012

Re: Appointment of City Attorney

I respectfully submit for your consideration and approval Eileen M. Blackwood as the next City Attorney for the City of Burlington. I am requesting City Council approval of this appointment at your July 16, 2012 meeting.

Eileen is an excellent candidate for the position for numerous reasons, including her:

- **Extensive experience, including over 25-years of private practice** – Eileen’s work in employment, education, contract, and civil rights law, including more than 21 years of practice in Burlington, will be valuable in her duties as City Attorney. Her work as a mediator and as a member of the Williston Planning Commission for 12 years (including terms as Chair and Vice Chair) will also be very valuable. While there are some areas of the law that will be fairly new to Eileen, I am confident that she will quickly get up to speed in these areas, and that she will have many resources to draw upon for assistance during her early months. Eileen and Ken Schatz have already begun to discuss what support Eileen will need during this transition period, and Ken has made it clear that he will be supportive in any way he can.
- **Excellent skills as a listener and communicator** – Communicating complex legal concepts to the public and non-lawyers involved in local governance is one of the City Attorney’s most important duties. Eileen’s experiences, particularly working as a mediator, have frequently put her in positions where she must listen and communicate with laypeople. I am confident Eileen will excel at this element of the job.

- **Reputation as one of the most respected and skilled attorneys in the Vermont legal community.** This reputation is evidenced by her recent service as the President of the Vermont Bar Association (2009-2010). I have consulted with many attorneys about Eileen during the appointment process and it is clear to me that there is great support in the legal community for Eileen's nomination.
- **Long-standing, extensive record of service to her community.** Eileen has served the community in numerous ways throughout her life as a lacrosse coach, a board member of many organizations, and as a volunteer auctioneer for charities. I encourage you to review her remarkable record of community service on her attached CV.

If confirmed, Eileen intends to begin her work for Burlington either the last week in August or the first week of September. Ken has generously offered to continue to postpone his retirement until that time. Ken's selflessness and assistance to the new administration during this transition period have been enormously valuable for the City – it is difficult for me to imagine how we would have made it through these first months without his vast institutional knowledge and sound counsel.

Upon confirmation Eileen, who currently lives in Williston, intends to establish residency in Burlington.

I look forward to discussing this appointment with you soon.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Curriculum Vita

Eileen M. Blackwood, Esq.
Kohn Rath Blackwood & Danon, LLP
P.O. Box 340
Hinesburg, VT 05461

Formal Education

September 1983 to June 1986 Cornell Law School	<i>J.D. cum laude</i> Ithaca, New York
September 1976 to June 1980 Dartmouth College Special Major in Women and Education	<i>A.B.</i> Hanover, New Hampshire

Licensing

Licensed by Vermont Supreme Court as attorney through June 30, 2012. License #1953

Legal Employment

January 2009 to present Kohn Rath Blackwood & Danon, LLP <i>General practice concentrating in employment, education, LGBT, non-profit, and civil rights law, estate and disability planning, and mediation.</i>	<i>Attorney (Partner)</i>
May 1992 to present Blackwood & Danon, P.C. formerly Blackwood Associates, P.C. and Blackwood and Kraynak, P.C. <i>general practice concentrating in employment, education, LGBT, non-profit, and civil rights law and mediation; litigation practice involves primarily state and federal civil courts and probate courts; administrative practice involves primarily Vermont Dept. of Education special education hearings.</i>	<i>Attorney (Shareholder/Owner)</i> Burlington, Vermont
June 1997 to present State of Vermont Occupational Safety and Health Review Board	<i>Hearing Officer</i>
October 1987 to May 1992 Paul, Frank & Collins, Inc. <i>general practice concentrating in employment and education law</i>	<i>Attorney (Associate)</i> Burlington, Vermont
August 1986 to August 1987 The Hon. Franklin S. Billings, Jr. U.S. District Court, District of Vermont <i>researched and helped prepare opinions in many areas of federal law</i>	<i>Judicial Law Clerk</i> Rutland, Vermont

June 1985 to August 1985
Perkins, Coie
primarily legal research in areas ranging from antitrust to employment to probate

Summer Associate
Seattle, Washington

June 1984 to August 1984
Cornell Law School
Dean of Admissions Office

Student Assistant
Ithaca, New York

Other Employment

summers, 1999-2008
University of Vermont
taught Special Education Law as Continuing Education class

Adjunct Professor/Lecturer
Burlington, Vermont

fall 2004
Union University
Taught legal issues for child care directors

Adjunct Professor

April 1993 to June 2007
officiated high school girls' and college women's lacrosse games in Vermont and New Hampshire as a USWLA/USL rated official.

Women's Lacrosse Official

February 1993 to June 2000
St. Michael's College
Assistant coach for 5 years; became co-head coach in 1997 of Division II program.

Women's Lacrosse Coach
Colchester, Vermont

September 1980 to November 1996
officiated high school and college field hockey games in New England and NY as USFHA rated official.

Field Hockey Official

August 1981 to June 1983
Randolph Center Elementary School
Taught fourth and fifth grades.

Elementary School Teacher
Randolph Center, Vermont

January 1981 to June 1981
Georgia Elementary School
Taught fifth grade.

Elementary School Teacher
Georgia, Vermont

September 1980 to January 1981
Georgia Elementary School
Tutored children of migrant farm workers.

Title I-Migrant Tutor
Georgia, Vermont

summer jobs included chambermaid, farm laborer, and running a summer drug and alcohol recreation program.

Organizational Activities

Member, Access to Justice Committee, fall 2010 to present

Member, United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit Committee on Admissions and Grievances, 2007 – present

Member, Vermont Commission on Judicial Operations, fall 2008 to summer 2010

Town of Williston Planning Commission member (including terms as Vice Chair and Chair), 1990 - 2002

Member, Judicial Nominating Board, February 1997-2003

Member, Plain English Civil Jury Instructions Committee, 2004-2008

Member, Early Neutral Evaluator Panel, U.S. District Court, 1994 - present

Member, Vermont Professional Responsibility Board Hearing Panel, 2002 - 2008

Member, Northern Lake Champlain Advisory Committee, 2004-05

Vermont Bar Association

President, Sept. 2009 – Sept. 2010 (also served one year as President-Elect and one year as Past President)

Board of Managers member, 2004 - 2011

Pro Bono Committee Co-Chair, 2007 - present

Women's Division member, 1987 – present

Former Vice Chair, Chair & CLE Committee Chair

Employment Law Committee, 1996 - present

Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee, 2001 – present

Disability Law Committee member, 2001 – present

Roundtable on the Profession, 2007- present

Continuing Legal Education Committee member, 1990-2000

Ad Hoc Committee on Gender Bias in the Legal Profession, 1994-95

Ad Hoc Committee on Professionalism, 2008

Samara Foundation of Vermont, Board member (including Secretary), 1998-2003

U. S. Lacrosse, Inc., various positions, 2001-2007

Women's Division Executive Committee At-Large member

Women's Division Safety Education Committee Chair

Upper New England Region, Officials Council Chair

Vermont Chapter, Local Rules Interpreter

American Civil Liberties Union of Vermont

Cooperating Attorney, 1987 - present

Formerly Board member, including Vice President

Child Care Resource & Referral Center, Williston, Vermont
Board member, approx. 1988-1992

Bar and professional associations:

Vermont Bar Association (see above)

American Bar Association
Member, 1988 to present

Chittenden County Bar Association
Member, fall 1987 – present

Rutland County Bar Association
Honorary Member, fall 2009

Vermont Employment Lawyers Association
Member 1993 – present

Vermont Volunteer Lawyers Project
Member (unsure of starting date) to present

Education Law Association
Member, 2005 - present

Vermont Association for Justice
Member, (unsure of starting date) to present

National Employment Lawyers Association
Member until 2007

Vermont School Board Attorney's Association
Member, (including President), 1987-92

Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility
Member, (unsure of starting date) to present

Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce
Member, (unsure of starting date) to present

Other Activities

U.S. District Court for the District of Vermont Early Neutral Evaluation Panel
serve as early neutral evaluator for cases filed in federal court

Vermont Superior Courts mediation panels
serve as mediator for civil cases

Private mediator
provide private mediation services, particularly in employment-related disputes

Licensed auctioneer
volunteer as auctioneer for charity auctions

Publications

Revised fall 2010, Primary Author, *Employment Law Section, Vermont Guide to Health Care Law*, project of Vermont Medical Society, <http://www.vtmd.org/employment-law>.

Summer 2006, Author, “*Special Education: Will the “Improvements” Decrease Protections for Parents and Students?*” Vol. 32, No. 2, Vermont Bar Journal 52.

June 2002, Author, “*Discipline for Students with Disabilities: Ensuring Both School Safety and Access to Education*,” Vol. 28, No. 2, Vermont Bar Journal 44.

July 1995, Co-Editor, “*Gender and the Legal Profession: Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Gender Bias in the Legal Profession*”, A Project of the Women’s Section of the Vermont Bar Association and the Vermont Bar Association.

Spring 1992, Author, “*The Reasonable Woman in Sexual Harassment Law and the Case for Subjectivity*,” 16 Vermont Law Review 1005 (1992).

1991, Co-Author, “*Disabilities and Employment in Vermont: A Guide to State and Federal Laws Affecting Employers and Employees*,” pamphlet published by the Vermont Bar Association Young Lawyers Section and The Vermont Chapter, National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

November 1985, Author, “*Race as a Factor in Child Custody and Adoption Disputes: Palmore v. Sidoti*,” 71 Cornell Law Review 209 (1985).