

Office of
the Mayor
Burlington,
Vermont



Miro Weinberger
Mayor
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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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