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Glenarden city manager resignation spurs dispute

City councilmembers say they didn't get adequate notice from mayor about departure

by Natalie McGill | Staff Writer

Glenarden City Manager Beatrice P. Tignor's last day on the job was Friday, and some council members say they were never informed of her resignation.

Mayor Gail Parker Carter said she received notification from Tignor on March 15 that she was resigning as city manager. But Councilwoman Barbara Armstrong (Ward 1) said Parker Carter never notified the rest of the council.

Parker Carter said Tignor was not obligated to inform both the mayor and council of her resignation and that she was not obligated to inform additional council besides the council president.

But Parker Carter said she notified Council President Margaret Dade on March 16 about Tignor's resignation and submitted recommendations to Dade for an interim city manager on March 31.

Tignor, a former Maryland state senator and chair of the Prince George's County Board of Education, served as city manager since 2009, first in an interim role before being selected as a permanent replacement, Armstrong said. Tignor did not return calls on Monday and Tuesday.

"Let me just restate that there is no policy that states that the mayor needs to notify the full council of any kind of resignation from the city manager and if there is they have not shown it to me," Parker Carter said. "The fact that I notified the council president, in my mind, is all I needed to do. In fact I put on the letter 'cc City Council', so it was put in plain writing that they needed to get the information too. I can't control how the City Council conducts their business."

Dade said Parker Carter told her that the city would be losing its city manager but said she did not take that to mean Tignor was leaving since she did not immediately receive a formal letter of resignation.

"I didn't interpret that as she had submitted a letter and she was leaving in a couple of weeks," Dade said. "I was thinking maybe she's having another bad day. Sometimes people have bad days but after things calm down then they're fine, and that's the way I looked at it."

Dade received Tignor's letter of resignation on March 31, the same time she received Parker Carter's recommendation for an interim replacement. She put both of those in each council member's mailbox on March 31, Dade said.

Parker Carter said that Tignor already included a status report of ongoing projects in her city manager's report which was also in the council's mailbox as of March 31 and that Tignor did not need an exit interview.

"She was only going to repeat what she put into her city manager's report so what was the point of having a

meeting?" Parker Carter said. "They already had the information."

Parker Carter said Tignor helped bring in more than \$500,000 in grants in her tenure with the city, which includes state bond bill money to go toward building an ADA accessible elevator at the James R. Cousins Jr. Municipal Center and money from the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention for police radios.

She said she tried to persuade Tignor to stay but Tignor said she wanted to pursue other interests. Parker Carter said she did not have specifics regarding those interests.

"She has done a phenomenal job for this community," Parker Carter said. "I was sorry to lose her. She has been one of the best city managers that I've worked with under this administration. I just wish things were different. I wish there was some incentive here in the city that would've outweighed her pursuing other things."

Councilwoman Elaine Carter (At large) said she heard Friday that Tignor resigned but as of Monday afternoon prior to an evening work session had not seen it yet in writing.

"I was shocked," Carter said. "I was hurt. I was angry. Not at Dr. Tignor but at the process of notification to the council."

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