



City of Chicago
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Human Resources

Homero Tristan
Commissioner

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June 29, 2009

Mr. David Hoffman
Inspector General
City of Chicago
P.O. Box 2996
Chicago, Illinois, 60654-2996

Re: Response to the Inspector General's SUMMARY REPORT,
Case #'s 09-0481 and 09-0482, dated June 26, 2009

Dear Mr. Hoffman:

I am writing in response to the Inspector General's Report that was issued on June 26, 2009 and which contained, among other things, a recommendation for my removal as the Commissioner of Human Resources for allegedly not being truthful in an interview with Inspector General Investigators. The Report is a baseless assault on my character and integrity as well as the honesty and the professionalism of the Department of Human Resources (DHR). The facts in your investigation contradict the findings in your Report, taking statements and erroneously arranging them into a contrived conclusion that I was untruthful, and also tarnishing DHR personnel.

I have served as the Commissioner of DHR for nearly one year. In that time there have been no sustained findings of political influence of any kind in any employment action; this during a time of heightened human resources activity where DHR has overseen hundreds of layoffs, consolidation of departments and implementation of innovations that further give transparency to the processes administered in DHR.

As noted in your Report, an Alderman wrote a letter addressed to me, dated January 29, seeking consideration for a constituent city employee. As you state in your Report, while this letter was addressed to me it was not delivered to me. It was received by an Assistant Commissioner, who gave the letter to an Intergovernmental Affairs Liaison, who forwarded it to a City of Chicago Law Department attorney. Your own Report shows that the Alderman's letter did not sway policy; it did not impact the treatment of the employee or provide any special consideration. In fact, the employee was subsequently terminated. The proper outcome was achieved and the letter was forwarded to the Hiring Process Compliance Manager as required. There was no failure to report the letter, as you insinuate multiple times.

The next issue you raise is the most disturbing because it attacks my professionalism and personal integrity. Moreover, the charges leveled at me in reference to my answers surrounding the receipt of the letter from the Alderman, its chain of custody and my knowledge of its contents are not supported by any facts. My statements to investigators in your office were truthful and honest. Indeed, your conclusions are reckless.



Your insinuation regarding inquiries made by DHR staff members into the employee referenced in the Alderman's letter is equally without merit. Your Report implies that there is something wrong with a DHR employee inquiring into facts regarding an employee's work circumstances. This is our responsibility and duty. It is irresponsible to suggest that a DHR inquiry into facts regarding an employee is in any way suspect. Only grudgingly do you recognize -- in a parenthetical no less -- everything was perfectly proper and in fact no accommodation was given to the employee.

The final matter you raise involves the City Clerk's petition to DHR for a reclassification of title and job description for two open positions to be changed to a higher pay grade. When my staff investigated the request they found just the opposite -- that the pay grade should be lowered. The City Clerk appealed my staff's decision and asked us to review it, which we did. A second staff member was assigned to the task, and arrived at the same conclusion -- that the pay grade should be lowered as opposed to increased. I supported my staff's decision and upheld the lowered pay grade for the positions.

Somehow, after many pages of contorting my former political support of the City Clerk, your Report manipulates our unequivocal denial of his request and attempts to create something sinister from it. It is absurd on its face. Indeed, the fact that I did not avail myself of the right to override my staff's recommendation illustrates the objectivity, transparency and integrity I bring to this position.

I find it unfortunate that you have allowed your zeal to cloud your judgment and ignore the facts. Your assertion that I was not truthful is patently false. The conclusions contained in your Report are in error and violate the basic notions of logic and common sense.

Sincerely,



Homero Tristan

Commissioner, Department of Human Resources

cc: Mayor Richard M. Daley
Honorable Wayne Andersen
Mara Georges, Corporation Counsel, Dept of Law
Noelle Brennan, Monitor, Noelle Brennan & Associates
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