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- Public Safety Committee
- Public Works Committee
- Anti-Graffiti Policy Committee



ROBERT G. DONOVAN

Alderman, 8th District

Cutting corners in police hiring may come back to bite us

Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan

October 23, 2014

Yesterday I sent the **attached letter** to Michael Tobin, executive director of the Fire and Police Commission, regarding some disturbing information I have received from trusted sources pertaining to shortcuts that are now apparently taking place in background investigations of officer candidates.

Also attached is Mr. Tobin's emailed **non-response** to my letter.

For years I have been doggedly pursuing nearly every possible avenue to add police officers to Milwaukee's neighborhoods. However, I believe it is essential that each and every candidate be vetted thoroughly, and that background investigations are conducted accordingly. If my sources are correct, we are now cutting corners and not vetting appropriately, and that is unacceptable to me and should be unacceptable to every law-abiding citizen in our city!

Sadly, based on Mr. Tobin's non-response, it also now appears that even elected city officials are unable to get a straight answer from this administration.

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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

VICE CHAIR

- Public Works Committee

MEMBER

- Anti-Graffiti Policy Committee
- Judiciary and Legislation Committee



ROBERT G. DONOVAN
Alderman, 8th District

October 22, 2014

Mr. Michael Tobin, Executive Director
c/o Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission
Room 706A
City Hall

Dear Mr. Tobin:

I have been informed by sources that I trust that the Police and Fire Commission, in its desire to fill vacant police officer positions, has permitted staff to take what amount to shortcuts in their conduct of candidate background investigations.

Specifically, it is alleged that:

Investigators no longer check court cases and applicant records at the Milwaukee County Courthouse.

Investigators do not interview candidate references in person

Investigators do not interview applicants' neighbors.

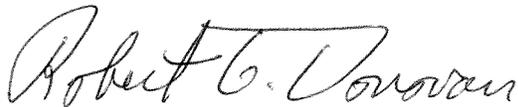
Investigators conduct employer interviews by telephone and do not view personnel files.

Investigators do not require applicants to obtain their employment files from employers who decline to provide information to investigators.

While few have been more passionate than I regarding the need to fill vacant police officer positions, I need not remind you or the Commission of the consequences of placing unqualified individuals into these positions of high trust. I would very much appreciate your prompt response indicating whether the shortcuts described are being tolerated and, if not, what steps will be taken to prevent their use.

Should you have questions or require any clarification, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert G. Donovan". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Robert G. Donovan
Alderman, 8th District

Cc: All Members of the Common Council
All Members of the Fire & Police Commission

Arnold, William

From: Tobin, Michael
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2014 12:52 PM
To: Donovan, Robert; Council Members _Aides; Patane, Cheryl
Subject: RE: Aspects of background checks dropped

Hello Alderman Donovan:

Your communication regarding background investigations for police officer applicants is inaccurate. While I am not in a position to discuss the specifics of our investigation process or the inaccuracies of your communication, rest assured that we have a very thorough background investigation process conducted by expert investigators and supported by several levels of review.

Mike Tobin
414-286-5000

From: Donovan, Robert
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2014 9:51 AM
To: Council Members _Aides; Tobin, Michael; Patane, Cheryl
Subject: Aspects of background checks dropped

Please see the attached letter from Alderman Donovan.

Patty Doherty
Legislative Aide
Alderman Donovan
8th District
(414) 286-3533