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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Milele A. Coggs
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Alderwoman Coggs calls for transparency in FPC, MPD strip searches probes

Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs has introduced a Common Council resolution for immediate adoption urging the Milwaukee Police Department and the Fire and Police Commission to strive for and maintain transparency in their investigations of alleged illegal strip searches and body cavity searches by MPD personnel.

The resolution, which comes amid a secret John Doe investigation by Milwaukee County prosecutors into the allegations, also requests the Police Department and the Fire and Police Commission to report the findings of their investigations, highlighting the lessons learned from those investigations, within 30 days of conclusion of the investigations.

Alderwoman Coggs said she believes the complaints against certain MPD personnel – including allegations that they sexually assaulted people and violated their civil rights while conducting body cavity searches for illegal drugs – demand transparency in the investigations. “Residents deserve to know what facts and information police and Fire and Police Commission investigators are finding during the course of the investigations,” she said.

“Without transparency and information sharing, I believe the public will likely have very little faith in the integrity of the investigations,” the alderwoman said.

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Police searches /ADD ONE

Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr., a co-sponsor of the resolution, said he is encouraged that the investigations are drawing the attention of federal authorities. “The media reports this week stating that the FBI and the U.S. Attorney’s Office could launch their own investigation (if not satisfied with the outcome of the current probes) are an indication of how serious this matter is. To me that makes the issue of transparency ‘the issue’ going forward with the local inquiries,” he said.

According to the resolution, MPD policy and state law prohibit police personnel from conducting body cavity searches under any circumstances. It states further that a body cavity search may only be conducted by a doctor, physician assistant or registered nurse upon the issuance of a search warrant.

The file will be considered for immediate adoption by the Common Council when it meets at **9 a.m. on Wednesday, April 11** in the third floor Common Council Chamber at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St.