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Alderman, 8th District

FPC's change of heart in Schoen case sets dangerous precedent

**Statement of Alderman Bob Donovan
December 11, 2012**

Today's reversal by the Fire and Police Commission on the reinstatement of Officer Richard Schoen should be very troubling to Milwaukee residents.

Very simply, what happened today is akin to a jury changing its verdict because certain individuals stood up in the courtroom and raised their voices in disagreement. This reversal is mind boggling, and I believe it could expose the city to a very damaging lawsuit. As I have stated previously, I have not been privy to the testimony heard by the Commission in the Schoen case, and I do not know whether his firing by Chief Flynn should be upheld, or whether he should be reinstated.

I have raised my strong concerns about the outrageous, disruptive behavior displayed during last week's Commission meeting. The use of profanity and veiled threats uttered by some at that public meeting cannot stand, and I am expecting justice to be done. At the very least, the Milwaukee Police Department should be moving forward with issuing disorderly conduct citations to certain individuals.

Just imagine if Officer Schoen's firing had been upheld by the Commission, and a group of MPD officers stood in the meeting room and yelled expletives and threats at Commission members? While I have always believed that Milwaukee police officers should be held to a higher standard, that doesn't mean that the rest of us should not be held to any standard at all.

I have always advocated for the public to be involved in the workings of government, but the individuals who disrupted the Commission meeting stepped over the line. If they go unpunished it sets a terrible precedent and will only serve to embolden them (and we can then expect them to display further disruptive behavior!).

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