

October 7, 2024

**Task Force Public Statement: Governing Board of the Office of Inspector General and Ethics**

My name is Todd A Gray. I serve as the current Vice-Chair of the Governing Board of the Office of Inspector General and Ethics, and have served on the board since 2015.

I am appointed by the Atlanta Business League, and have served in this capacity with the upmost commitment, integrity, and leadership in which this position requires. With the singular mission, of assuring there is no safe place for unethical practices, crime, or corruption within the City of Atlanta's Government.

I have stood at the forefront in the fight for the full independence of the Governing Board, Ethics Office, and the Office of the Inspector General. In this fight for independence, it is mission critical that the City of Atlanta's best practice model for independence is upheld, and protected at all cost.

I stand with the Governing Board, Ethics Office, and the Office of Inspector General.

We have come to a critical juncture. Where we have the opportunity to strengthen the effectiveness of all three entities.

I want to thank this well qualified task force and its members, for not only the mission at hand, but for your countless individual contributions to the City of Atlanta, and the State of Georgia.

I would like to make the following recommendations to this Task Force as you seek to carry out this important work.

- 1) Receive in full account, the submitted statements from the OIG, and Ethics office leaders. In doing so, it is extremely important to understand the combined mission and role of the board, the distinguishing functions of the independent offices, and where their jurisdictions may overlap.
- 2) The Governing Board needs more oversight. While both offices operate in full independence, and it should remain as such. There is a dire need for required collaboration by way of the charter, to assure that industry best practices, due process, and collaboration is at the foundation of this work. No matter who holds the top position in either office.
- 3) It is of my option that the Governing Board who is charged with hiring the Inspector General and Ethic Officer. Is not only empowered with this administrative step, but also empowered by amendments to the charter, to provide more effective oversight and collaboration with the common goal of supporting the mission critical work these offices conduct on a daily basis.
  - There should never come a time, where this board is blindsided, uninformed, and limited in the feedback and support, we can provide towards our collective mission. Due to the potential leadership style of the individual who holds either position, at this time, or any future period.
  - The Governing Board should be proactively engaged, in addition to the rightfully constituted tools in which each office holds. At points of challenge, and times of necessary escalation. Whatever the hindrance may be.
  - The defining of a proper performance review process, by way of the charter and Bi-laws. To assure non biased performance evaluation of the office's top leaders by the board and its members.

In closing, the City of Atlanta got it right when it comes to the best practice independence model of the Office of Inspector General, Ethics Office, and nominated requirements of the Governing Board and Its Members. The Mayors Office and Executive Branch, have on numerous occasions made themselves available, and serve as champions of this mission critical work along with the board. To the accounts of the current leaders and staff of both the Ethics Office, and the Office of the Inspector General (established in 2020), there have been challenges and successes, over the decades in executing the daily tasks at hand.

I stand in support of this task force, both the Ethics Office, and Inspector Generals office, and the nominating organizations. I also stand in support of the best practice organizations across this nation who serve as advocates for the powerful work.

I trust in full, that the collaboration between this task force, and aforementioned entities, will result in further protection of the independence and effectiveness of both offices, and its Governing board.

We all work for the public, and this work to weed out corruption and unethical practice must be done in accordance to the charter and our bi-laws, all while upholding the rights of the individuals involved, no matter the circumstance, or actions at hand.

Sincerely,

Todd A Gray

  
Vice Chair, Governing Board of the Office of Inspector General and Ethics.