

June 27, 2019

Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway
Mayor's Office
Room 403

City of Madison Common Council
Council Office
Room 417
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Mayor and Common Council,

I would like to have offered these comments in person. However, I am on vacation enjoying some time with my wife and adult children. For those whom I have not yet met, I am one of the senior most Assistant City Attorneys in the Office of the City Attorney (OCA). I have been privileged to serve the City of Madison for over 23 years now. My background includes service as a police officer (Dallas, Texas), a federal agent, a US Army lawyer (JAG Corps), an attorney in private practice and even as a Dane County Circuit Court Judge (very briefly, that is). I am well qualified to speak on City Attorney May's qualifications and suitability for office.

I have read the Community Response Team's (CRT) letter to the Mayor requesting termination of City Attorney Michael May's contract. I appreciate the deep opinions that attend the subject of police use of force. We should never get comfortable with the use of force in a free society. However, to allow those strong opinions and beliefs to color the understanding and the reporting of facts is simply wrong. To permit ad hominem attacks to become the new normal in Madison discourse is equally wrong.

If the entire CRT letter is as off base as its first set of claims, it is not worthy of consideration. I cannot speak to the allegations except that first set. I was the Assistant City Attorney (ACA) who made the records calls, based on the law and nothing else. I stand by the advice I gave the MPD Records Custodian and the advice I gave our OCA staff. This was a routine public records request and a routine discovery request. Therefore, I never consulted City Attorney May during the processing of that public records request or the discovery request. He first learned of CRT's dissatisfaction by way of their letter to Mayor Rhodes-Conway. Had I consulted Attorney May, I am certain that he would have uttered his oft repeated instruction – "follow the law." City Attorney May has been the most staunch advocate and defender of open government that I have encountered in all the varied facets of my career.

What is worthy of your consideration is the dedication, professionalism and absolute love of this City as is embodied in Michael P. May. Before you discount what I am saying as the ramblings of some "brown-nosing" "minion" please understand this, there is

undoubtedly more risk than reward in writing a letter like this. I write this letter simply because it is the right thing to do, to correct the false impressions that have been laid before you.

City Attorney May is a person of unquestionable integrity and selfless commitment to public service. He cares very much about his client – the City. City Attorney May came to public employment from the private sector, giving up a lucrative position to serve this City. He inherited an office that had endured turbulence and controversy. He had to rebuild the office and he has done so. He has assembled one of the most diverse and well-respected public law offices in this state. He has assembled and leads a legal team that you can be justifiably proud of.

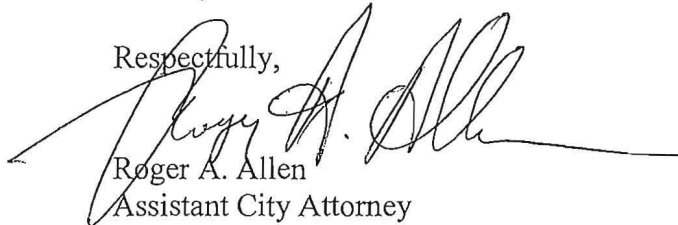
City Attorney May leads by example. He often works long hours and staffs many public bodies. He is accessible, his door is rarely closed and his mind is always open. If he is in his office, he will take your call or receive your visit. If he is not in your office he will promptly make contact with you upon his return.

The range of work performed in the Office of the City Attorney is extremely varied and complex. City Attorney May oversees legal specialists in areas that range from zoning to bonding, personnel/labor to elections, open government to telecommunications/broadband, to name but a few. He is, for all intents and purposes, the leader of a medium-sized law firm.

It is indeed unfortunate that there has been this breakdown of communication. Even more unfortunate is that this breakdown has led to a twelfth-hour airing of grievances in an effort to deprive a good attorney of his livelihood, his reputation and his professional standing. Some of these grievances, years old and short or wrong in their facts, would have been best addressed at the times they allegedly occurred.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. As always, it is an honor to serve the City of Madison.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger A. Allen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Roger A. Allen
Assistant City Attorney