

SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION NO. RS2025-1655

A resolution calling for the Mayor's Office and the Department of Emergency Communications to enact various reforms relative to departmental leadership and workplace culture.

WHEREAS, the Women's Caucus of the Metropolitan Council has been working with current and former employees of the Department of Emergency Communications ("DEC") regarding allegations of a toxic workplace, intimidation, and retaliation; and

WHEREAS, a 2023 study by law firm Ogletree Deakins found that staff was disgruntled with the department's director and other management staff. The Women's Caucus requested another survey in May 2025, which was conducted by the Metropolitan Government and completed by DEC employees in June 2025. The results found that many staff members were still dissatisfied with executive leadership, and morale remained extremely low; and

WHEREAS, based on the results of the survey and further conversations with staff, the Women's Caucus asked the Mayor's Office, Director Steven Martini and Human Resources Director Shannon Hall several questions about staff and internal processes in September 2025; and

WHEREAS, the responses received in October were insufficient and failed to completely address the questions presented, so the Women's Caucus publicly called for disciplinary action against the director and internal DEC policy changes requested by staff; and

WHEREAS, these reforms are particularly needed in light of the alleged conduct of Director Martini, who received two years of outside coaching after allegations of intimidation and threatening behavior. In the intervening period, DEC employees have largely reported no improvement in the department's workplace culture to the Women's Caucus; and

~~WHEREAS, Director Martini's alleged conduct should be reviewed for a possible violation of three parts of Section 6.7 of the Civil Service Rules of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County—using abusive or profane language so as to create a disturbance in the workplace; using or threatening violence or intimidation when directed toward another person; and conduct unbecoming an employee of the Metropolitan Government; and~~

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper for the Metropolitan Council to stand by the DEC employees and work to resolve these long-standing issues within the Department of Emergency Communications; and

WHEREAS, the conduct of the director of the Department of Emergency Communications should be addressed by the Mayor's Office in order to promote a healthy work environment for employees.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

~~Section 1. The Metropolitan Council requests that the Mayor, as the Appointing Authority, investigate the conduct of the director of the Department of Emergency Communications in light of Section 6.7 of the Civil Service Rules of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. The Council requests that this investigative process take place within 90 days of the adoption of this resolution.~~

~~Section 2. The Metropolitan Council requests that the Mayor's Office and the Department of Law hire an outside investigator with no direct connection to previous reviews of the Department of Emergency Communications to review new allegations made by current and former department employees.~~

~~Section 3. The Metropolitan Council requests that the human resources coordinator within the Department of Emergency Communications create a formalized electronic procedure for submitting grievances.~~

Section 1. ~~Section 4.~~ The Metropolitan Council requests that the Department of Emergency Communications increase the compensation for employees who take on training duties in the Department of Emergency Communications during the upcoming budget cycle.

Section 2 ~~Section 5.~~ The Metropolitan Council calls on the Department of Emergency Communications to develop a strategy, to include an accessible list of frequently asked questions, within 90 days of the adoption of this resolution, to communicate with supervisors and employees about changes that affect operations and employee functions.

Section 3. ~~The Metropolitan Council requests that the Mayor, as the Appointing Authority, take investigative or disciplinary action relative to the conduct of the director of the Department of Emergency Communications.~~

Section 4 ~~Section 6.~~ This resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

INTRODUCED BY:

Joy Styles
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Members of Council