



City of Seattle
Office of the Mayor

News

For Immediate Release
April 26, 2013

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Mayor announces national police reform expert as new OPA director *Pierce Murphy to lead the Office of Professional Accountability in building relationships with community*

SEATTLE – Today Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn announced that after an extensive search process, he has nominated a new director of the Office of Professional Accountability, the office responsible for investigating complaints about police misconduct. The new director, Pierce Murphy, has served as the city of Boise's Community Ombudsman since 1999, successfully implementing a long-term plan to restore public trust and build stronger connections between community and police.

"As we work with the DOJ and Community Police Commission to implement reforms and earn public confidence in the Seattle Police Department, we knew we needed a strong leader with experience in bringing the community and police together to head the OPA" said Mayor McGinn. "Pierce Murphy has decades of experience in finding common ground on difficult issues, and is recognized as a national expert on police accountability and reform. He brings new ideas and a fresh eye to the challenges we face, and I look forward to working with him closely."

A seven member panel, led by Acting Chief Judge Michael Spearman of the Washington State Court of Appeals, reviewed over 150 applications in a nationwide search process for the OPA Director position. The panel interviewed eight of the most qualified candidates, and identified three finalists for the Mayor's consideration.

"Pierce Murphy brings to the Seattle Office of Professional Accountability well over a decade of experience and leadership in civilian law enforcement oversight" said Judge Spearman. "He has demonstrated the ability to reach out and listen in a meaningful way to all members of the community, but he also understands the very real concerns of the dedicated police officers who protect our streets. At this critical time for the citizens of Seattle and our police department, Pierce is an excellent choice for the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility."

The Mayor selected Murphy on the basis of his extensive experience and nationally recognized expertise. Since Murphy created the Office of the Community Ombudsman in Boise, ID in 1999, he has: investigated 18 officer-involved shootings and over 2,400 complaints and inquiries;

advocated successfully for over 50 changes to police policy, practice or training; strengthened the internal affairs process of investigating and resolving public complaints; and designed an alternate dispute resolution process to resolve minor demeanor and service quality complaints.

"The Mayor chose from three highly qualified candidates, each of whom I would've enjoyed working with" said court-appointed police monitor Merrick Bobb. "I have known Pierce Murphy for many years and respect him greatly. His deep attachment to community policing and to the welfare and safety of police officers, along with his independence and strong moral center, augers for him to perform exceptionally well in this new position."

The Mayor's nomination is subject to City Council confirmation. Murphy will begin work in June of 2013.

*All Mayor's Office press conferences, town halls and general public meetings are archived by [Seattle Channel](#). Many town halls and press conferences are also [broadcast live to the web](#). Sign up for *The Reader*, our office newsletter, at our [website](#). And learn more about your neighbors and the mayor's activities on our [blog](#).*



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