

Lassiter, Jackie A.

From: MY - mayorsoffice@cob.org
Sent: Wednesday, November 22, 2023 2:26 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Keller, Janice L.; Lassiter, Jackie A.; Martens, Kristina M.
Subject: Letter to Immigration Advisory Board Members

Greetings, Immigration Advisory Board members:

A number of you have found unsatisfactory the letter that I sent to Liz Darrow on July 17th, explaining why I did not appoint her to another term on the Immigration Advisory Board. Some urged that I reconsider.

Although, the reasons described in that letter are defensible, there was a more pointed reason that accounted for why I did not re-appoint Liz which I shall share with you now. As the deadline for the re-appointment approached last Spring, I, in fact, had decided that I would re-appoint her. When I expressed to council members my intention to make this appointment, I learned that a strong majority of council members would not support her re-appointment and that she was, thus, not confirmable. I knew that if I recommended her for appointment there would be a public discussion at a Council Meeting conveying their lack of support. I also knew there was interest from the press on this appointment and I knew press coverage was, therefore, a probability. I did not want to be responsible, in the midst of an election year, for generating the negative attention that would ensue and then be accused of impacting the election. So, I chose not to disclose the fact that Liz was not confirmable by Council.

Future IAB appointments and the process of selecting them for recommendation to Council will be up to the new Mayor. She takes office in January and will determine how she prefers to address board and commission appointments.

I understand, also, that you may be disappointed at the slow progress of selecting a consultant to continue the work on an Immigrant Resource Center. My team is short-staffed and balancing a great number of priorities. Moving this project forward remains a priority and I trust that, together with the IAB team involved, satisfactory progress will be made in the months ahead. We have appreciated your participation in this project, and I look forward to its future success.

Seth Fleetwood

Mayor

City of Bellingham

360-778-8100

mayorsoffice@cob.org

My incoming and outgoing email messages are subject to public disclosure requirements per RCW 42.56