

Congresswoman Fudge, state Rep Bill Patmon, activists praise Cleveland Councilwoman Mamie Mitchell

Written by Kathy

Tuesday, 16 May 2017 07:05 - Last Updated Wednesday, 17 May 2017 03:56



Pictured are Cleveland Ward 6 Councilwoman Mamie Mitchell, who retired from city council on May 15, 2017, and her replacement of whom she recommended Blaine Griffin, the director of the Community Relations Board for the city, and a member of Mayor Frank Jackson's cabinet.

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CLEVELAND URBAN NEWS.COM- CLEVELAND, Ohio- Cleveland Ward 6 Councilwoman Mamie Mitchell announced publicly on Monday that she was retiring.

Hours later she named Blaine Griffin, the director of the Community Relations Board for the city and a member of the mayor's cabinet, as her replacement on the 17-member, all Democratic Cleveland City Council.

Mitchell was initially appointed in 2008 to the unexpired term of then councilwoman Patricia Britt when Britt became clerk of council.

She ran for a full term in 2009 in a crowded race that included Griffin in the primary, Mitchell facing activist and social worker John Boyd in a subsequent runoff election and again four years ago with Boyd a possible contender this year too, among others.

Griffin was appointed Monday evening at the regular council meeting, city council accepting Mitchell's recommendation in support of Griffin as it traditionally does when a fellow council member departs.

"I appreciate Councilwoman Mamie Mitchell's service to the community and wish her well," Griffin told Cleveland Urban News.Com, initially hesitating to say that he will run this year to seek to hold on to the seat but ultimately acknowledging that he will seek election during the upcoming Sept. 12 non-partisan primary for all contested council seats, the mayoral seat now held by incumbent mayor Frank Jackson also up for grabs in a crowded field of potential candidates.

"I am running," said Griffin, 46.

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Though Mitchell, who is in her early 70s, denied that health problems are responsible for her sudden exit from the political forum, sources have said for months that the councilwoman is allegedly sickly, and eventually came to terms with her illness, others saying she was pressured to make a decision since she and Griffin are both Jackson allies and Griffin now has an advantage over his election opponents as a newly installed councilman.

In the end it all came down to politics, and allegiances, illnesses aside.

Griffin and his wife have lived in the Larchmere neighborhood of Cleveland for 20 years where they raised three boys, the youngest a senior at John Hay High School.

Eleventh Congressional District Congresswoman Marcia L. Fudge, whose largely Black congressional district includes Cleveland and several of its eastern suburbs, issued a press statement on Monday and lauded Mitchell, a former BP American employee who worked in community relations and a former assistant county prosecutor, for her community service.

"It has been a pleasure to work with Councilwoman Mitchell," said Fudge. "She is a committed public servant, leader and advocate for the people of the city of Cleveland."

State Rep Bill Patmon, a former city councilman, told Cleveland Urban News.Com Monday morning that Mitchell "is an honorable and trustworthy public servant."

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City Council is roughly half Black and half White, all eight of the 17 Black council members representing the largely Black east side of the majority Black major American city.

The three-term Black mayor, who, to date, will likely face opposition from announced candidates Ward 10 Councilman Jeff Johnson, the only candidate to take out petitions for mayor thus far, Ward 2 Councilman Zack Reed, and a host of other wannabe's, now has Griffin to potentially endorse him for mayor, and Griffin can expect the mayor's likely support as to his bid for city council, sources said yesterday.

Mitchell was an avid supporter of the Cleveland Clinic, Case Western Reserve University, and University Circle, as well as numerous other initiatives, including the \$330 million Opportunity Corridor road expansion.

She was an advocate for the poor and fought for fair housing, and she was the most visible of all members of council in fighting with community activists against violence against women and girls.

She frequently rallied with activists on various women's and children's rights issues from the murders of 11 Black women on Imperial Avenue by serial killer and death row inmate Anthony Sowell, to the victims of the East 9rd Street serial murders, and the decade-long abduction and rape of Seymour Avenue escape victims Amanda Berry, Gina DeJesus and Michelle Knight.

"Councilwoman Mitchell would often stand with us at rallies for justice for murdered and raped

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women and girls, mainly poor and Black women and girls, some of their assailants still at large, and we thank her for her community service," said activist Kathy Wray Coleman, a journalist who trained for 17 years at the Call and Post Newspaper in Cleveland who now edits [ClevelandUrbanNews.Com](#)

and the

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and leads the Cleveland based grassroots group the Imperial Women Coalition.

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