

From: Christopher Browne

Sent: Monday, December 16, 2024 7:23 PM

To: City Clerk <cityclerk@grand-rapids.mi.us>

Cc: Ysasi, Milinda <mysasi@grand-rapids.mi.us>; Knight, Lisa <lknight@grand-rapids.mi.us>

Subject: Letter of Opposition for the 12/17 City Commission Meeting

Christopher Browne

Ward 2

12/16/2024

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed amendment on the agenda for Tuesday, December 17th, which seeks to reassign 13 of the 16 staff members of the City Comptroller's Department to the Fiscal Services Department. This proposal undermines the critical oversight function of the Comptroller's Office and contravenes the plain language of our City Charter.

The City Comptroller is elected by the People to ensure transparency and accountability in our City's accounting function. This amendment would significantly weaken the Comptroller's ability to perform these vital duties, jeopardizing the integrity of our financial oversight.

Furthermore, voters have already decided: a 2012 ballot initiative to change the City Comptroller from an elected position to one appointed by the City Manager was defeated 46,030 to 26,246. This proposal seeks to achieve the same outcome and is antithetical to our democracy. It's an audacious attempt to subvert the will of the majority of Grand Rapidsians.

I urge you to vote against this proposal and maintain the independence of the Comptroller's Office. It is essential to uphold the checks and balances our city relies on to prevent fraud and abuse.

If you are unwilling to vote against it, I urge you to at least table the proposal. Effective local government starts with transparency and ample time for community input and feedback from diverse stakeholders. Unfortunately, there hasn't been the slightest attempt at public engagement, awareness, or community feedback. Grand Rapids is better than this.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christopher