

Good evening,

As one of the organizers of this forum, I would like to set the record straight and provide some context to how decisions were made regarding the invitation that was extended to Sarah Iwany. The organizations/community groups that organized these forms (Mayoral and City Council) had discussions of whether we were going to invite Sarah to participate and there were different views on the topic. Since this is a forum, and not a formal debate, it was decided that Sarah should be given the opportunity to share her ideas, along with the formal, balloted, candidates - this forum was organized by a group of organizations who made a decision (out of consensus and not 100% agreement) that is unpopular, but I stand by the decision that was ultimately made. I will take the proverbial stones that are/will be thrown.

Regarding why no other write in candidates were invited, Sarah has notified the Boston Elections Department of her write in campaign and they will notify the Wardens and Clerks of the precincts to flag her name as a write in candidate - as a clerk in Dorchester, these write in candidates have taken the appropriate steps to declare their candidacy (again as a write in and not a balloted candidate) - see Rayla Campbell (in her race against Rep. Ayanna Pressley. If there were other write in candidates who took this step to notify the elections department, they might have been invited to participate as well. Again, this forum is about ideas and vision, not advancing the status quo or gatekeeping. There was/is no preferential treatment being given to this, or any other candidate - as all candidates were invited to participate (that statement has appeared on the promotional materials). I find it unfortunate that two candidates for D9 are thinking of withdrawing from the forum, but that is their decision.

On the invitation, dis-invitation, invitation again - that was a rash decision that was made and I accept responsibility for those actions and the confusion it has caused. I folded under the pressure of a few and sent an email to Sarah notifying her that her invitation had been revoked - after sending a poll to the members of the planning committee, the majority of folks felt (again) that Sarah should be given the opportunity to participate (again by consensus, not 100% agreement) - 16 organizations agreed to have Sarah participate while 3 voted against.

Eric, I understand your frustration and apologize for any confusion that has been caused, but I stand by the decision to invite Sarah (and won't speak for anyone else). However, as a candidate invited to participate in a forum to share your ideas and vision for the neighborhood, you are welcome to voice your thoughts and concerns on the matter but the planning and decisions were left up to the organizations sponsoring this specific forum. If there are groups, organizations, or individuals who disagree with any of the decisions that have been made throughout this process - there are opportunities to host your own forum(s).

Lastly, I would like to raise issue with your specific calling out of my "disgusting lack of professionalism," I credit myself for being a professional and diplomatic, sometimes in cases that it is difficult to be such. I ultimately know this email will do very little to sway anyone's feelings on the topic, but thought I needed to respond to what I considered a personal attack.

J.

JASON DESROSIER

Manager of Community Action

Allston Brighton Community Development Corporation | t. 617-787-3874 x206 f. 617-787-0425
18R Shepard Street, Suite 100, Brighton, MA 02135 | www.allstonbrightoncdc.org

Working Together, Building Community

Please consider the environment before printing this email.

-----Original Message-----

From: 'Eric Porter' via Cleveland Circle Community <cleveland-circle-community@googlegroups.com>

Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 6:50 PM

To: homeowners-union-of-allston-brighton@googlegroups.com; homeowners-union-of-allston-brighton@googlegroups.com

Cc: cleveland-circle-community@googlegroups.com; cleveland-circle-community@googlegroups.com; allstonbrighton2006@googlegroups.com

Subject: [Cleveland-Circle] Inappropriate & biased handling for the District 9 Candidates Forum

As a long-time Allston-Brighton resident and candidate for Boston City Council from District 9, I have complied with all the Election Department's requirements to have my name on the ballot in the upcoming election. Michael Bianchi also followed the rules and got himself on the ballot. I would like to voice my concern about the integrity and reasoning of the Allston Civic Association (ACA) and the Allston-Brighton Community Development Association (CDC) - along with the supposed 24 other supporting organizations - with respect to their handling of the District 9 City Councilor Forum, scheduled for tomorrow, August 26.

The leadership of the two main organizations (ACA and CDC) seem to lack an understanding of the normal democratic process, nor are they willing to respect the candidates on the ballot in an unbiased manner. Because of this unfair treatment, both myself and Mike Bianchi are considering withdrawing from the forum tomorrow but I would like to get public opinion on the matter first.

Earlier this week, it was discovered that that ACA and CDC had invited one, but not all of the potential write-in candidates to participate in this forum along with the actual 3 balloted Candidates. They had specifically invited an ACA member Sarah Iwany to be a part of this public forum without making it known to the candidates nor the Allston-Brighton residents. Once revealed publicly, people became concerned about this unusual precedent, and the ACA and CDC committed to correct this situation.

On Monday afternoon (8/23), I was told by Jason Desrosier of the CDC that Sarah Iwany (who is not a recognized candidate) would be withdrawn from the Forum zoom call scheduled for this coming Thursday 8/26.

Sarah Iwany immediately posted on social media she was notified that she was uninvited to this forum - "the majority of folks shared the same concerns" Jason wrote her.

And yet, later that day in the evening Sarah Iwany posted on social media that she was re-invited to the

forum.

I contacted Tony (ACA) and Jason (CDC) on Monday evening and asked why I was NOT notified of this change as an actual balloted candidate, and why I had to discover it from my supporters via social media.

After this disgusting lack of professionalism, the next day I heard from my fellow balloted candidate Mike Bianchi. He was also not notified that Sarah Iwany was initially invited, then un-invited, and then re-invited to this public forum. I can only assume that Liz Breadon also had no knowledge of Sarah Iwany's oscillating invitations to this forum.

In my opinion this is an extremely unprofessional and undemocratic way to run this forum on behalf of the Allston-Brighton neighborhood.

Here are the facts as I know them:

- 1) Sarah Iwany attempted to get on the ballot and failed to meet the requirements.
- 2) Sarah Iwany does not have a campaign financial account, nor will she be able to get one at this point, to accept campaign donations. This makes her a very unlikely write-in candidate going forward and would be a distraction to the election process.
- 3) Sarah Iwany has a working relationship with the ACA and/or CDC which make this a conflict of interest and suggests preferential treatment.
- 4) Inviting write-in candidates to discuss shoulder to shoulder with actual balloted Candidates is way outside the norm. There are other potential write-in Candidates that were not invited nor contacted to be a part of this forum, I wager.
- 5) Jason Desrosier told me that the 26 organizers agreed to withdraw Sarah Iwany. He later told Sarah Iwany the exact opposite; that the 26 organizers agreed to re-instate her (posted on Sarah Iwany facebook page). I find this hard to believe that majority of the representatives of those 26 organizations made the opposite decisions on the same day.
- 6) There are 2 or 3 other people who consider themselves write-in candidates but have not been invited.

I have nothing against Sarah Iwany, I share/support many of her views, and I would have rather she properly qualified and properly set up her campaign bank account so that she could accept donations making her a more viable candidate.

But unfortunately, this is not the case and makes people of Allston-Brighton question why is the ACA, CDC and 24 others bending over backwards to lift this particular write-in person up so much and yet disregarding other potential write-in candidates? Having people as Write-in Candidates in this one forum becomes a distraction (intentional or not) to the people who legitimately followed the rules and got themselves properly nominated and more importantly disrespectful and/or deceptive towards the residents of Allston-Brighton.

The ACA, the CDC, and the 24 supporting groups have the ability to put on a separate Write-in Candidates forum to discuss the same issues. This would be my preference rather than forcing Mike Bianchi and I to withdraw from the forum due to an un-democratic and biased approach to include a non-balloted person with whom they have a working with.

It is unfortunate that these shenanigans go on behind the scenes and a shame that our local politics have to be this political.

I am only speaking on behalf of myself and my supporter, not Mike Bianchi nor his supporters with regards to the specifics of this email. I am not claiming to represent his views in ANY manner, merely stating that we spoke.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to share your opinion on this subject here or directly to the organizers of the Forum.

Eric Porter

P.S. Additionally - These are the 26(?) organizations that as a group within 12 hours decided to withdraw Sarah Iwany from the Forum and then re-instate her. I would like to hear from the leaders if this were true and their rationalization for inviting, uninviting and then re-inviting Sarah Iwany.

350 MA Allston Brighton (Sponsoring at-large candidate event ONLY), Allston Brighton CDC, Allston Civic Association, Action for Boston Community Development's (ABCD) Allston-Brighton Neighborhood Opportunity Center, Allston Brighton Health Collaborative, Allston Board of Trade, Artisan Asylum, Allston Village Main Streets, Brighton Allston Historical Society, Brighton Board of Trade, Brighton Main Streets, Brazilian Women's Group, Brighton Allston Community Coalition (BACC), Brighton Marine, Charlesview Inc, Charles River Community Health Center, Chinese Progressive Association, Faneuil Gardens Tenant Organization, Oak Sq YMCA, Presentation School Foundation, Sisters of St Joseph,
(The) Literacy Connection,
(The) Women's Table, Unbound Visual Arts, Ward 21 Democratic Committee, Ward 22 Democratic Committee