



GOOD GOVERNMENT

Committed to Honesty and Integrity in City Government

Kamau C. Marable — Editor-In-Chief

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FROM THE DESK OF THE IG

Importance of Self-Reflection!



Sometimes when we are so caught up in doing things from our “To Do List” or addressing the “*crisis du jour*,” we often forget to reflect the actions we’ve taken during the day. Setting time for yourself is nearly impossible when you are on the go all the time. I know this, because I’ve been there often, and I still struggle to find time for self-reflection.



IG Ellen Ha

Just how many times have you encountered the following situation at work? Something comes up that requires your immediate attention, so you never get to finish your lunch. You look up and it is past 4 or 5 pm. You have a headache or feel lightheaded and wonder why your stomach hurts so much until you realize you haven’t had a bite or a drop of water all day. You’ve been busy all day, but you feel you didn’t accomplish anything. Sounds familiar? I know, you’ve been there.

Getting the work done is important and it is a great feeling when you can cross-off something from your List. However, it is also important how you got things done. Because when you start thinking about the “how,” you are actually reflecting on your actions. Oftentimes, when we start to self-evaluate, we come to moments of “I should have...” or “I shouldn’t have...,” which can become “Next time, I will...” or “I will not...”

These are moments of self-realization, which allows you to critically think about how you may do things differently when you encounter a similar situation later in life. Some lessons in life are best learned through self-realization. So, do your best, but do even better next time.

Of course, in some instances, you may have a moment of, “I could not have done more,” “I did my best,” or “I gave it all I had.” Consider yourself lucky when these phrases are indeed true, because you’ve done your best and that is all you can do.

It is wonderful when someone acknowledges your work, but sometimes your achievements are rarely recognized because they were what was expected from you anyway. However, when you have a rare moment of self-affirmation, it will give you a sense of satisfaction in what you do. So, keep faith in what you do and do it well.





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EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

MEET...Kelechi

By Beverly Murray



Kelechi Akinbosede

Tell me about yourself and your family.

I am an interesting person. First, I am a woman of faith, I love God. And I love my family, friends and all people. I am very grateful for everything that I have been blessed with. In the Nigerian Igbo culture, a person's name is their identity and follows them wherever they go, so parents put a lot of time and thought into naming a child. My name says a lot about me. My parents named me Kelechi, which means give thanks to God. I believe that has been the story of my life that at every moment and every stage of my life, I have always had reasons to give thanks to God. And my middle name is Ngozi, which means the blessing of God. I believe I am a blessing of God and I am blessed to bless others.

How would you describe your role with the OIG?

My job as an Investigator is to look closely and critically at allegations made against someone or something, speak to the person who made those allegations to make sure that I understand exactly what they are concerned about. From there, I interview people and research things that may be related to the case in order to find out what happened.

I have worked at the OIG for the past seven plus years. Working for the OIG has made me a better Investigator. I keep gaining more knowledge and expertise with each investigation. This job has exposed me to so many subject areas where I'm learning more about so many different things and people in and out of the City.

What is your biggest achievement to date, either personal or professional?

I have had many important achievements in my life, and I do not know how to prioritize which is the biggest. So, I would highlight two big ones. First, I am blessed with a beautiful family, including a loving husband and the best children I could ever ask for. And my parents and siblings are amazing. We are a very close-knit family.

Second, I am proud that I accomplished my childhood dream of becoming a lawyer. From a young age, my mother reminded me of the time I told her I wanted to be a lawyer. I do not know where I got that dream from, but I believe my mother had a lot to do with it because she also wanted to become a lawyer, but ended up choosing a different career path that uses similar skills that lawyers do. I say just fulfilling that dream of getting there is an achievement and I look forward to greater things I can accomplish in my career, including becoming a judge.

What is something most people would be surprised to find out about you?

I am quite adventurous. It may not seem that way because I am more of an introvert and like doing things that are planned and predictable. But occasionally I enjoy taking certain risks depending on what it is, being spontaneous, and going on unpredictable adventures.

Describe an experience that has had a lasting impact on you and why?

One experience that shaped me is migrating to the United States from Nigeria. I don't remember so many things about my childhood, but I remember that period clearly. I was 11 years old. I remember what it took for me to leave everything I knew and adjust to a new environment and a new culture, make new friends, start a new school, learn how to transform my accent into something that Americans could understand, learn new foods, learn how to dress like others did, learn a whole new way of doing things, learn new standards of beauty and so on. So, it was a big transformative experience that took a season and that has had a lasting impact on me. And I did all that while being a preteen. That season was quite an adventure.



Kelechi, Husband, and Children



Kelechi at AIG

If you could snap your fingers and become an expert at something, what would that be?

I would want to be an expert in really understanding people and relationships, especially dealing with the difficult ones and how to relate with people based on their unique personalities, life experiences, and whatever else is going on. That would be very interesting and cool.



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RED FLAGS OF PUBLIC CORRUPTION



Impact of Fraud

By Jennifer Bentley

The impact of fraud in government goes far beyond financial loss. It undermines public confidence and trust in local government. Fraud impacts people, departments, contractors, and service. Understanding the impact of fraud allows the government and individuals to make better decisions and recognize the importance of reporting it.

Human Impact: Fraud is not a victimless crime. It can have a lasting impact on victims, their families, and communities. The people who rely on government services, such as children, the elderly, and the disadvantaged, are typically the ones most harmed by fraud. Fraud can have a devastating impact on these victims because it can increase the disadvantages and inequality they suffer. Fraud may also result in lost opportunities for individuals and businesses.

Programs Impact: Fraud may undermine the government's ability to deliver programs and services which can impact intended goals and outcomes. When people take money and services away from those who need it, the services delivered can be substandard or even lead to program failures.

Reputational Impact: Fraud can impact the reputation of a city. It can undermine public confidence and trust in the government. This is especially true when fraud is facilitated by corruption.

Contractor Impact: Fraud may lead to distorted markets where fraudsters gain a competitive advantage and drive out legitimate and honest contractors. It can impact the services delivered by contractors and may even place a greater burden on other community services.



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All the Queen's Horses

By Tiye Greene



By now, you may have seen Kelly Richmond Pope's award-winning film that illuminates one small US city's struggle with fraud. *All the Queen's Horses* documents the incredible and upsetting true story of how Rita Crundwell, the City Comptroller and Treasurer for Dixon, Illinois, stole over \$37,000 a day from the City of Dixon for over 20 years. What's worse, she stole \$53 million all while advocating for budget cuts, layoffs, and a reduction in emergency services, including police, fire, and EMS services.

Exactly how did a city with an annual budget of less than \$10 million fail to notice that \$53 million had gone missing from its coffers? Experts say it was a combination of several weaknesses in Dixon's internal controls. For those who don't know, "internal controls" are processes and records that ensure the integrity of information and prevent fraud. Here in the City of Detroit, we have oversight agencies like the Office of Inspector General and Board of Ethics that try to ensure that our city functions honestly and ethically. The requirement for City Council to approve the annual budget for each City department and their approval of contracts over \$25,000, is another example of an internal control that aims to prevent fraud and waste in the City of Detroit.

In the case of Dixon, Illinois, Crundwell was trusted to perform numerous important tasks with very little, if any, oversight. She signed checks, reconciled bank accounts, and was good at explaining away inconsistencies. The extraordinary level of trust placed in Rita Crundwell exposed major control deficiencies in Dixon's governance, so much so that after her arrest, they redesigned its form of government to separate the legislative role of city council from the executive role of the city manager. In addition, its entire city council was replaced, and the residents elected a new mayor. Although no form of government is immune from waste, abuse, fraud, or corruption, proper checks and balances make crimes like fraud and embezzlement much more difficult to pull off.

In Dixon's case the "check," and ultimate hero of the story was Dixon's former City Clerk, Kathe Swanson. Swanson discovered an account that Crundwell used to embezzle funds. She alerted the Mayor and the FBI. In addition to Swanson's discovery, the City of Dixon received a letter from a nearby community stating that based on their similar size and location, something wasn't quite right with Dixon's finances. The FBI initiated a months-long investigation that ended with Crundwell being arrested in the Mayor's office, believing she had been called there for a meeting.

So what did Rita do with her dishonest money? She bought lots of stuff! Rita Crundwell used money stolen from the "Catfish Capital of Illinois" to build a horse breeding empire. She bought herself expensive gifts, threw lavish parties in her multiple homes and sometimes gave expensive gifts to others, which helped her gain some favor around town. In the end, after she was convicted and sentenced, the U.S. Marshalls auctioned off approximately \$10 million in assets that essentially belonged to the City of Dixon, including a baby grand piano, \$250,000 in jewelry, 400 horses and a large quantity of horse semen used for horse breeding purposes.



For her crimes, Rita was sentenced to 19 years and seven months in prison. Although Dixon was able to claw back some of the money stolen from it, debts and attorneys' fees caused by years of theft and fraud mean that the city is still recovering from the damage. For any who haven't yet seen this hour-long film, it is worth the watch and is available on most streaming stations, including [here on Amazon Prime.](#)



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DID YOU KNOW?

By Kasha Graves & Kaniya Foster

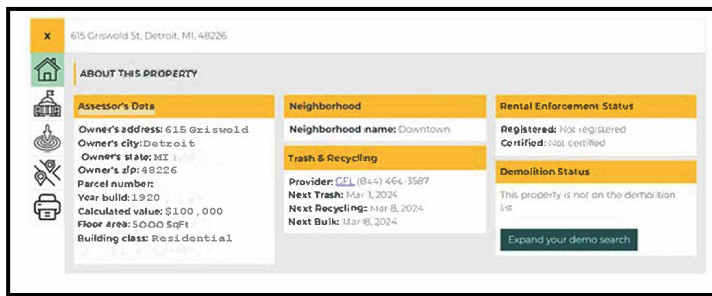
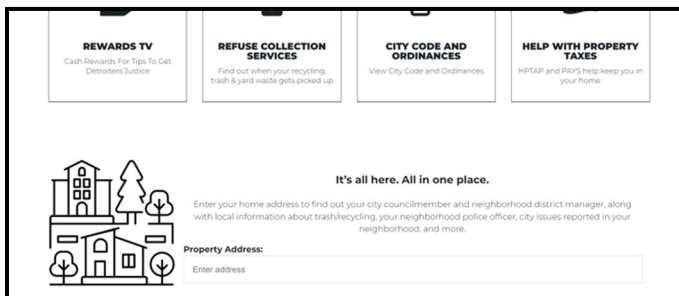


How to Identify Where Your Complaint Should Be Directed

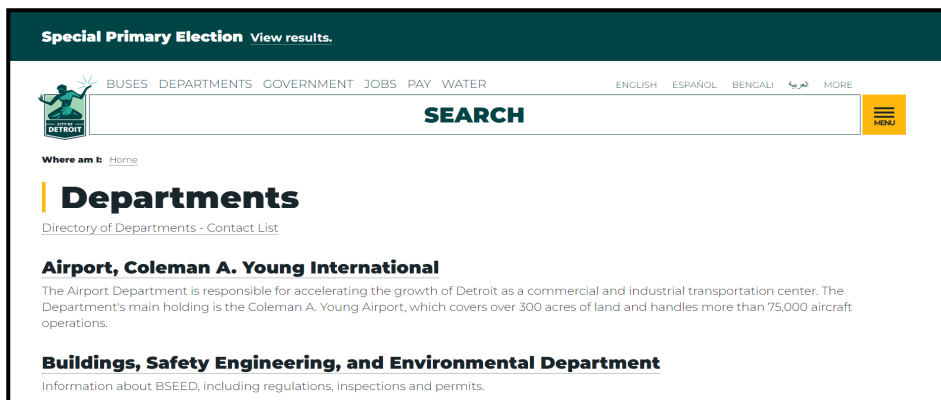
What department do I call to file a complaint? How do I get my trash or bulk picked up? How do I report a neighbor that never cuts their grass or clean up their yard? How do I report issues with my landlord on the property I am renting? How do I schedule to get a tree cut down?

The Office of Inspector General receives numerous calls that do not fall within our jurisdiction. Although we are always happy to assist our citizens and the public, we want to point you in the right direction.

You can file a complaint and obtain information by going to the City of Detroit website www.detroitmi.gov/. From the homepage screen, scroll down to "It's all here. All in one place." Enter your property address to find your city councilmember, and neighborhood district manager. You will also find local information about your neighborhood police officer, trash/recycling schedule along with a contact number, and more.



There is an option for citizens to click on the "Departments" tab located above the "SEARCH" bar at the top of the City of Detroit homepage that will list city departments sites to provide assistance as well. The "Departments" tab will display the role of each department to help you identify where your matter should be directed.



Did you know you can also download the **Improve Detroit** app on your cellular phone or search online to www.detroitmi.gov/ImproveDetroit to report different issues? These are methods to help you identify what City of Detroit department may assist with your complaint.

