



# CITY OF NEW HAVEN

**JUSTIN ELICKER, MAYOR**

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SINCE 1958

June 26, 2026

Hon. Tyisha Walker-Myers, President  
New Haven Board of Alders  
165 Church Street  
New Haven, CT 06510

President Walker-Myers:

I am writing to formally request consideration from the Board of Alders regarding the City's application for an exception to the City Charter requirement concerning resident elector status for the Director of Youth & Recreation, Ms. Gwendolyn Williams.

As you are aware, the City Charter mandates that all appointed officials must hold resident elector status unless a case-specific exception is granted pursuant to the criteria outlined in Sec. 2-221 of the New Haven Code of Ordinances. Based on the recommendation from the Mayor and the certification of the City's Personnel Director as outlined by Ordinance, an exception is being sought for Ms. Williams in her role as the Director of Youth & Recreation.

Ms. Williams has worked for the City of New Haven since 2007, starting off as a contractor before being hired permanently in 2007. In her time working for the City of New Haven, she has developed a deep institutional knowledge of not only the City of New Haven and local government, but also the different communities that make up the rich tapestry of our city. Ms. Williams worked her way up through the ranks of the City and in August of 2020 was promoted to her current role of the Director of Youth and Recreation. In this role, Ms. Williams plays a crucial part in nurturing the well-being of the youth of the City of New Haven.

However, it is also relevant to note that Ms. Williams has owned a home in West Haven dating back to when she was originally hired by the City (and did not have a residency elector requirement applicable to her). Upon her promotion to the role of Director of Youth & Recreation, the prospect of selling her home came at a personal and financial cost. Regardless, Ms. Williams demonstrated her commitment to the city by renting in the City of New Haven to meet the Charter's residency requirement. Naturally, this continues to bear a personal and financial cost to Ms. Williams and her family.

In light of these circumstances, we believe that granting an exception to the resident elector status requirement for the current Director of Youth & Recreation is not only justified but also crucial for the continued progress and prosperity of our City.

Therefore, I urge the Board of Alders to carefully consider this application and to grant the necessary exception to allow Ms. Williams to continue serving our City in her capacity as the Director of Youth & Recreation. Doing so will not only acknowledge her exceptional contributions but also ensure the continued success and advancement of New Haven.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I am confident that your careful consideration will lead to a decision that is in the best interest of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sean Matteson', is written over the typed name and title.

Sean Matteson  
Chief of Staff