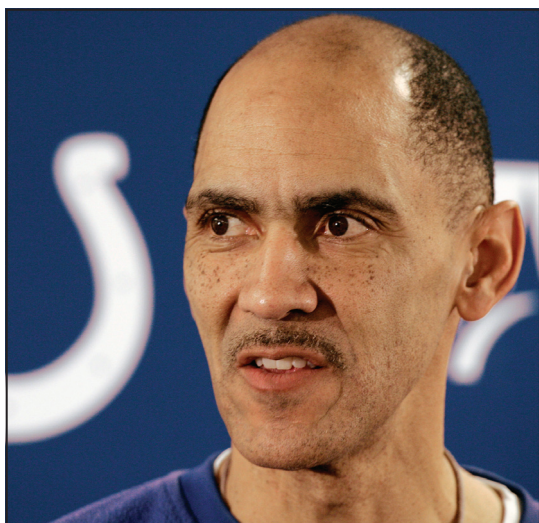




Chicago Bears coach Lovie Smith (left) watches the pre-game warm-ups before his team defeated the New Orleans Saints in the NFC Championship game. Indianapolis Colts coach Tony Dungy (right) answers questions during a press conference



four days before his team beat the New England Patriots in the AFC Championship game. Super Bowl XLI will mark the first time that two black coaches have gone to the Super Bowl. (AP photos/Charlie Neibergall and Michael Conroy)

Menino names police review board members

Dan Devine

In a surprising and unexpected move, Mayor Thomas M. Menino reportedly appointed the three members of the city's long-anticipated civilian panel to review reports of misconduct by members of the Boston Police Department.

While the appointments are a major step toward getting the board up and running, some still question how effective the mayor's plan will be in restoring trust between the BPD and the communities they serve.

According to a published report, the board members are John F. O'Brien, a dean at the New England School of Law who teaches courses on constitutional law; David Hall, a current professor and former dean at Northeastern School of Law who founded the university's Urban Law and Public Policy Institute; and Ruth Suber, a retiree who spent 12 years on the state's Parole Board. The members will serve three-year terms and be paid \$100 an hour for their work.

City officials said Monday that they hope the ombudsmen would begin reviewing cases in the next several weeks, after first undergoing training on the inner workings of the Internal Affairs Division (IAD).

Menino first laid out his plan for the civilian review board in August.

The board is expected to review all allegations of serious misconduct dismissed by IAD. One board member, rather than all three panelists together, will review each case and determine whether the IAD investigation was thorough and fair. Less serious cases are also eligible for review if a citizen triggers the process by appealing an Internal Affairs decision.

The board will make an annual report to the mayor — including statistics on cases handled, critiques of the police misconduct complaint process, and recommendations for improving the system — which will be available to the public.

A random sampling of all complaints will also be reviewed, according to City Corporation Counsel William F. Sinnott, to ensure the integrity of the process.

The board members can direct investigators to re-interview witnesses or investigate further in certain areas. They will have access to all materials contained within IAD files, but their review is limited to the process by which police investigators arrived at their decisions.

After reviewing the case files, if the reviewing board member is unsatisfied with the completeness or thoroughness of an investigation, the case will be returned to IAD with recommendations for additional investigation, clarification or review. If members still have concerns about an investigation after that, they can ask the police commissioner to intervene.

The board will make an annual report to the mayor — including statistics on cases handled, critiques

Community Gems a shining example of collaboration

Brian Mickelson

In the summer of 2004, Rev. Richard W. Richardson, former president and CEO of the Children's Services of Roxbury (CSR), met with Citizens Financial Group Vice Chairman Robert Mahoney in Richardson's office.

Richardson, a customer of Citizens, wanted to discuss a joint fundraising dinner for CSR, a community-based organization that provides services for economically disadvantaged children and their families.

"I think it's a new way of communicating and working together in collaboration to achieve a common goal," said Richardson.

For Mahoney, this would be an opportunity to do something great.

"I said, 'Why don't you find four

or five other organizations in the Dorchester, Roxbury and Mattapan areas that also serve families, and we'll have a bigger fundraiser,'" Mahoney recalled. "One fundraiser for everybody with one room, one band, one caterer, and we could actually make some money doing it. A month later, [Richardson] came back with four other organizations, and Community Gems was born."

Those four other organizations are the Boston Higher Education Resource Center, Roxbury Multi-Service Center, Roxbury Youthworks, Inc. and YouthBuild Boston, Inc. All four, in one way or another, provide educational and support services to children and families from inner-city areas. All stress the immense importance of community growth.

"Community Gems is not only an innovative program that brings agencies together in our community, but I think it also promotes the work that we do with children and families, particularly youth," said Richardson.

Yet, until the initiation of the Community Gems fundraiser, collaboration between these strikingly similar nonprofits was virtually nonexistent.

Given the nature of the programs and the problems they address, it doesn't seem to make much sense for these groups not to cooperate. Most of the organizations operate within close proximity to each other, have similar missions and use a lot of the same resources. Yet they often chose to work for community advancement without each other's

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Model credit union makes history

Serghino René

In what is believed to be one of the first collaborations between faith-based and community organizations, the Tremont Credit Union (TCU) opened its doors on 41 Warren Street in Dudley Square.

"It is the first time churches and community organizations got together to build a community-based credit union in Boston and in the country," said Bill Moran, TCU's community affairs advisor.

Their goal is to produce financially self-sufficient adults, youth and families in the community, as well as promote personal wealth and economic development.

"It was a lot of hard work, commitment and dedication," said Moran, who has been working on the project for the past seven years, "but all for the goal to help our community achieve what it has been lacking — an opportunity for economic development and financial literacy."

The 10-year project was developed by the Tremont Credit Union and the Boston Community Development Collaborative, a group that includes a host of local institutions — the Financial Investment Initiative Group (FIIG), Christ Temple Church, Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corp., Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corp., Mattapan Community Development Corp., Faith Partnership, Morning Star Baptist Church and the Jubilee Christian Church.

With TCU now open for business, supporters said that the decade-long

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Cutting the ceremonial ribbon at the newly-opened Tremont Credit Union are (left to right): Dwight Miller, Bill Moran, Darryl Elow, Rev. John Borders, Len Broderick, Rev. Melvin Massey, Candance Sealy, Tom Finneran and Spencer DeShields. TCU

represents the first credit union in Boston borne out of collaboration between faith-based and community organizations. The goal of the credit union is to produce financially self-sufficient community members. (Sandy Middlebrooks photo)

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