



Civilian review board needs more power

Dan Devine

A coalition of civil rights organizations working for public oversight of the Boston Police Department sent its recommendations to Mayor Thomas M. Menino on Tuesday on the city's Civilian Review and Mediation Program.

The recommendations share a single theme: for civilian review to work, the city's panel of ombudsmen must be built on a culture of openness and independence far beyond what has been proposed by Menino.

The recommendations come eight days after Menino appointed New England School of Law Dean John F. O'Brien, Northeastern University law professor David Hall and former state Parole Board member Ruth Suber to the three-member civilian panel charged with reviewing reports of misconduct by members of the Boston Police Department that are dismissed by the BPD's Internal Affairs Division (IAD).

Menino declined comment on the recommendations.

In their Jan. 30 letter, the American Friends Service Committee, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights

under Law of the Boston Bar Association and the Massachusetts chapter of the National Lawyers Guild commended the "excellent choices" to staff the panel.

But, they argued, "the ombudsmen will best be able to fulfill their mission if the civilian review panel operates in the open and effective manner that we propose."

"We continue to believe that for truly meaningful oversight, Boston needs a separate and independent board with the authority to accept both complaints and appeals of IAD decisions," the letter states. "In order to do so, an independent board would need the authority, funds and staffing to conduct its own investigations, subpoena witnesses (including police officers) and recommend discipline."

The lack of any independent investigative abilities, subpoena power and jurisdiction to make disciplinary decisions has led the civil rights coalition to question how much authority the mayor's board will actually have, a question emphasized repeatedly in their recommendations.

In the mayor's proposal, the *Review*, continued to page 25

Two murders, the KKK and modern-day justice

Allen G. Breed

RALEIGH, N.C. — As a deacon at Bunkley Baptist Church, Charles Marcus Edwards was responsible for opening up for Sunday school. And so on that sultry Mississippi morning, he and his wife were the first to arrive at the tiny brick chapel.

A minivan pulled into the gravel drive behind them. A black man got out and approached, followed by a younger white man carrying a video camera.

"Mr. Edwards," the black man said, extending a hand with a sealed envelope. "I have something for you, sir."

"What is this?" Edwards asked.

Inside were pages from an unfinished story.

The nine sheets, copied from a 42-year-old FBI file, told of Ku Klux Klansmen and secret codes and terror. They told of the kidnap, torture and killing of two black men — Henry Hezekiah Dee and Charles Eddie Moore.

KKK, continued to page 29



With the U.S. Capitol in the background, thousands of anti-war protesters from across the nation gathered last Saturday to march along Independence Avenue in Washington, D.C. The protesters assembled at the National Mall to voice discontent with President Bush's plan to commit over 20,000 additional troops to Iraq. See story on p. 14. (Bojah photo)

Back to square one: Search for a new superintendent

Serghino René

Boston is gearing up, once again, to find a new school superintendent.

The Boston School Committee announced last week that Dr. Manuel Rivera was turning down Boston's offer as superintendent to accept a job as deputy education secretary in New York under recently elected Gov. Eliot Spitzer.

In a letter to School Committee Chair Elizabeth Reilinger Rivera said he had received "an unexpected and very attractive opportunity to work

in a different educational context." Rivera called the possibility of creating statewide educational policy in New York an opportunity that "he couldn't say no."

A nationally recognized school administrator, Rivera was Mayor Thomas M. Menino choice to lead the Boston public schools after the resignation of Superintendent Thomas Payzant. Rivera would have been the first Hispanic to serve as superintendent in the history of Boston Public Schools.

Rivera had accepted the superintendent job last September, but ne-

gotiations over his contract with the city did not begin until earlier this year. Rivera was expected to sign a contract, which would outline his salary and benefits with Boston sometime this month or in early February.

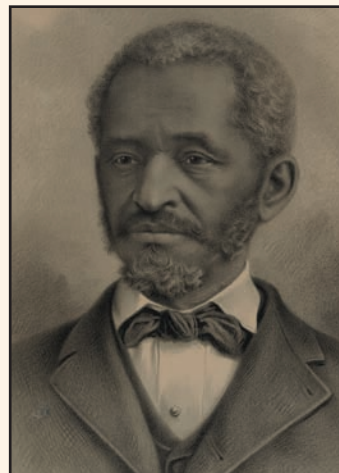
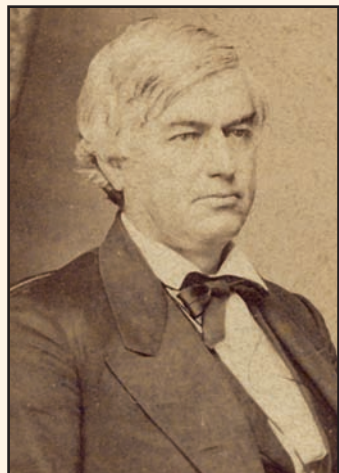
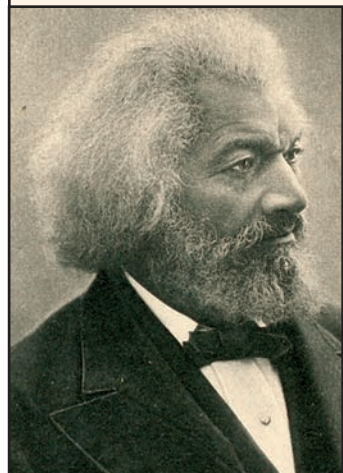
METCO's Jean McGuire says no one is to blame here.

"You can't look at [Rivera] as anything more than a candidate," said McGuire. "Until a contract is signed, he is not binded to anything."

Rivera's departure was a blow to Menino. Earlier this month, Menino *Search*, continued to page 11

Black History Month 2007

Patrick honors abolitionist governor



Howard Manly

His college friends at Bowdoin described him as having a "strong noble impulse."

They didn't know just how strong or how noble the impulse was that was imbedded in John Andrew.

As the 25th governor of Massachusetts, Andrew is given credit for providing soldiers for the Union Army during the Civil War. But that is only part of the reason that Deval Patrick, the state's first African American governor, decided to hang Andrew's portrait in his office in the State House.

It was Andrew who led the fight to have black soldiers in the Army. It was Andrew who pushed for both the 54th and 55th regiments.

But Andrew didn't do it alone.

Andrew was a Republican back in the glory

Andrew, continued to page 10

Gov. Deval Patrick recently displayed a portrait of John Andrew (second from right), the 25th governor of Massachusetts. Andrew's success in creating the 54th and 55th Regiments for the Union Army during the Civil War

was in large part due to the efforts of abolitionists Frederick Douglass (far left), Cassius M. Clay and Lewis Hayden. (Photos courtesy of the Museum of African American History)

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