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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES MARIA GUERRA LAPACEK TO BE DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS; NAMES SAMANTHA FIELDS AS COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced he has selected Maria Guerra Lapacek to be his Director of Legislative Counsel and Government Affairs, a key office that serves as liaison with elected officials, government agencies and community organizations at the local, state and federal levels. The Mayor also announced the appointment of Samantha Fields as the new Commissioner of the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP).

"Sam and Maria are incredibly talented, and time and time again they have shown their commitment to their work on behalf of Chicago residents," Mayor Emanuel said. "I have always been able to rely on their advice and counsel, and I know they will continue to serve the city well in their new roles."

Guerra Lapacek replaces Anna Valencia, who was recently appointed City Clerk. Guerra Lapacek presently serves as the Commissioner of BACP. As Commissioner, she has led the department at a time of substantial change in the marketplace, having implemented regulations to innovative business models including ride- and house-sharing.

"As a native Chicagoan, I love my city, and I take immense pride in working hard on behalf of all of its residents," Guerra Lapacek said. "I am honored and humbled by this appointment and look forward to working with elected officials and community organizations to achieve the Mayor's vision for strong neighborhoods across this great city."

Before being named Commissioner of BACP, Guerra Lapacek served as the First Deputy Director of the Office of Legislative Counsel and Government Affairs. She previously served as a Deputy Chief Financial Officer and in the Office of Management and Budget as a Deputy Budget Director, where she managed efforts to consolidate departments to save taxpayer dollars and implemented performance management measures for the City's human infrastructure departments. Guerra Lapacek grew up mostly in the Humboldt Park neighborhood and attended Maternity BVM grammar school and Lane Technical High School. She received a law degree and MBA from DePaul University, and an undergraduate degree from Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania. She lives in the West Town neighborhood with her husband and two children.

Samantha Fields, who will serve as the new BACP Commissioner, presently serves as the First Deputy Director of the Office of Legislative Counsel and Government Affairs for the Mayor's office, where she organizes City Council meetings, helps craft the Mayor's legislative agenda, and negotiates and drafts legislation on a range of issues. In this role, Fields served as a key strategist behind the house- and ride-sharing regulatory ordinances, as well as, legislation that sought to level the playing field for the taxi cab industry and, enhance penalties for tobacco retailers that don't follow the rules.

"I am honored by this appointment and look forward to partnering with the neighborhood businesses and future entrepreneurs across the city to create opportunities for all Chicago communities," Fields said. "Mayor Emanuel has laid out a clear agenda to protect consumers and workers in every part of Chicago and this new role will allow me to continue to work to strengthen it."

Fields previously served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for the Office of Governor Pat Quinn, where she had oversight of the operations and policies for human service agencies, including the Departments of Aging, Children and Family Services, and Juvenile Justice. She received a law degree from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, and an undergraduate degree from Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. Fields lives in Beverly.

Fields' appointment is subject to City Council approval. She and Guerra Lapacek will both begin serving in their new roles in January.

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