

# IN OUR OPINION

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## No qualifications like having friends

**W**henever there is an opening for a high-paying post in Jersey City government, the long-standing joke is that the administration will perform a nationwide search for a highly qualified candidate for the job. The punchline comes when the person eventually named always has close political ties to the administration.

And so it goes. Jersey City Mayor Jerramiah Healy is expected to name someone to fill the vacancy at the executive director's office in the city Department of Housing, Economic, Development and Commerce left by Barbara Netchert. Netchert's husband, William Netchert, is close to Hudson County Executive Thomas DeGise and is the legal counsel for the Hudson County Improvement Authority. It is all in the Democratic Party family.

Netchert left the city post in July when she was sworn in to take over the county clerk's job she won in a June election. Since then, Robert Antonicello, head of the city Redevelopment Agency, has been holding down the post in an acting capacity.

Now word is coming out of City Hall that Mayor Healy — presumably after that now famous nationwide search — has come up with the name of Carl Czaplicki, who is the mayor's chief of staff, to be the next director of the city HEDC.

Perhaps the mayor should consider the importance of the office. Its own Web site says the HEDC mission is to be responsible for planning and overseeing the orderly growth and development of Jersey City's residential, commercial, nonprofit, and industrial sectors through the regulation of land use, disbursement of state and federal grant funds, permitting, and code enforcement.

It is also responsible for contributing to the public welfare and quality of life by supporting social services providers, staffing boards, enforcing building codes, housing codes, rent and tenant laws, and issuing licenses to businesses.

What are Czaplicki's qualifications? He was a social science educator and after school coordinator at High Tech High School, North Bergen. He has also served as an aide for several mayors, including Gerald McCann, Glenn D. Cunningham and now Healy.

Antonicello, who ran a real estate agency and worked with city agencies and developers, has better qualifications. It would be preferable for the mayor to do a real and thorough search to find someone to lead the HEDC.

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