

# Actions Speak Louder than Words: LaToya Cantrell Will Be Inaugurated in Just Days

by Lyndon Jones

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As recent as mid-April there were interests in and around New Orleans and musings over Mayor-elect LaToya Cantrell's transition and what she was or wasn't saying about how she would move the city smoothly from the one administration to the next.

A Nola.com article published on April 13th reminded its readers that although Cantrell's transition was longer than unusual, her transition team has shared very little information with the public. *Folk wanted answers.* They wanted names. They wanted details. It seems as if there are those waiting and wanting to hear the new mayor rattle off names, etc.



Now a little more than two weeks after the April 13th article criticizing the fact that Cantrell had not yet officially named appointees to top City Hall offices, her camp released statements announcing several appointees, including health director, deputy chief of staff, director of community and economic development and several other positions.

It wasn't long after that criticism that she announced the names of 18 people—three honorary co-chairs and 15 transition team members that would support the transition process. To see the members of Cantrell's transition team, visit [www.forwardtogetherneworleans.com/transition-leadership](http://www.forwardtogetherneworleans.com/transition-leadership). The transition team is an interesting and varied mix of people including Min. Willie Muhammad and activist Norris Henderson. She later began assembling subcommittees surrounding key issues like criminal justice, housing and economic equity.

Of course, it's great that Mayor-elect Cantrell has announced some of her job picks. But what does any of that really mean. Other than announcing those appointees and giving them a general vote of confidence, Cantrell has not said much else.

The question is whether the people who criticized the incoming Mayor about not naming transition team members or not officially filling jobs know any more now than they did before about how she will lead and how our city will fare with her at the helm.

It's time to scratch beneath the surface. On May 7, Cantrell will be inaugurated as Mayor of New Orleans—the first woman in the city's history. Hopefully at that time, the 'folk' that have been clamoring for announcements and names will be ready for Cantrell to lead. Naming transition team members and filling organizational job slots are important tasks. Providing real leadership—which entails much more than making announcements—is far more important.

More important than who is Cantrell's communications director or even chief financial officer, is what will SHE do as Mayor. And the buck stops with her.

Now would be a really good time to revisit last year's election coverage. What did Cantrell say she would do about affordable housing? What were her plans for addressing job creation? Pushing for a hike to minimum wage?

Those are the questions *folk* should be asking. Better still, May 7th is just around corner. The waiting will be over. And actions speak louder than words.

Mayor-elect Latoya Cantrell has promised that New Orleans—all of New Orleans—will move forward together. For the best interest of the city and its people, the hope is that she keeps her promise.

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