December 26, 2008

Ups and downs of Cockrel's first 100 days

In his first 100 days in office, Mayor Ken Cockrel Jr. already has had his share of ups and downs.

Highs

Sept. 19: Sworn in as Detroit's 61st mayor.

Oct. 1: Names former Auditor General Joseph Harris the city's chief financial officer -- the third in a series of well-received appointees with Police Chief James Barren and Deputy Mayor Saul Green.

Oct. 14: Announces the opening of four police mini-stations.

Oct. 29-31: Leads annual Angels' Night effort to prevent arson. The number of fires dropped by 4% from 2007.

Nov. 7: Removes Human Resources Director James Tyler and fires nine appointees of ex-Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick. According to Cockrel, the Kilpatrick administration improperly moved them into civil servant jobs before Kilpatrick left office.

Nov. 12: Cancels $2 million in contracts with investment firms.

Dec. 17: Announces new Office of Energy and Sustainability to find utility savings in city buildings and attract environmentally friendly business to Detroit.

Dec. 18: City, suburbs near an agreement to end long-running feud over water and sewer system.

Dec. 19: Participates in all-night talks at the state Capitol to hammer out a deal to improve Cobo Center by selling it to a regional authority.

Lows

Sept. 25: Announces the shuttering of Detroit's crime lab with law enforcement officials after state audit discovers high error rate.

Oct. 8: Tells Free Press Editorial Board that city's deficit is at least $100 million. In December, he would revise the deficit to near $300 million as his staff continued to review the books.

Oct. 14: Files to run for mayor, signing a sworn statement that his campaign committee is in compliance with election law when it actually owed $42,000 in late fees. It set off a two-month flap in which his foes failed to boot him from the ballot and the state Attorney General's Office found insufficient evidence to charge Cockrel with perjury.

Oct. 17: Shooting at Ford High School kills one, injures three. Cockrel directs Detroit Police to work with the Detroit Public Schools' police to coordinate patrols and response to better secure the areas around schools.

Nov. 15: Detroit firefighter Walt Harris killed while battling a blaze at a vacant house on the city's east side.

Nov. 24: Tells City Council that the 2006-07 fiscal year audit, already almost 11 months late, won't be done until February.

Dec. 8: Says he supports the state's decision to name an emergency financial manager for the Detroit Public Schools.

Dec. 18: The Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix is canceled.
