Editorial: Kenneth Cockrel Jr. provided sober leadership when Detroit needed it most

THE DETROIT NEWS

After serving as interim mayor, Kenneth Cockrel Jr. now returns to the Detroit City Council. It's appropriate to note the difficulty of the assignment as interim mayor and the class with which he held the office. When Detroit needed a steady hand after Kwame Kilpatrick's unceremonious exit from Two Woodward Ave., Cockrel embraced the challenge.

He brought an atmosphere of calm and healing to a city that had seen months of ugly revelations, tension and legal hearings involving the former mayor.

Cockrel's dedication to the city was never in question. His children attend Detroit Public Schools. He and his family never left their Woodbridge home for the Manoogian Mansion, which was an immediate and powerful symbol that the self-indulgent Kilpatrick era was over and that responsible leadership had arrived.

Absent a mandate from the voters and the security of a full term in office, Cockrel's ability to enact meaningful reforms was limited. But he did a credible job, bringing in solid appointees, such as Finance Director Joe Harris and Police Chief James Barron.

His return to the council adds a serious and intelligent voice to that body. His concession remarks to his rival, Dave Bing, were gracious. Among the remarks was a pledge that the city had not heard the last of him. We hope not. He has a significant role to play in Detroit's future.

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