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Inspector General chosen for N.O.

Tuesday, June 12, 2007

Times-Picayune

Robert Cerasoli, who served as inspector general for the state of Massachusetts from 1991 to 2001, has been selected as the first inspector general for New Orleans city government, according to City Councilwoman Shelley Midura.

He was chosen by members of the city's newly-formed Ethics Review Board from six finalists, all of whom have experience in rooting out government waste, she said. Duties of the \$150,000-a-year job include investigating waste, fraud and corruption, as well as proposing strategies to improve the efficiency of municipal agencies.

Before Cerasoli began working as Massachusetts' inspector general, he spent 16 years as a member of the Massachusetts state House, where he authored legislation establishing the state's first ethics commission and financial disclosure rules for elected and appointed officials.

For the past several years, Cerasoli has taught college courses in ethics and principles of finance. He has a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and a bachelor's degree in government and public administration from American University in Washington, D.C.

New Orleans voters approved a City Charter revision in 1995 requiring the creation of the ethics board and authorizing an office of inspector general, but neither was implemented until the City Council voted last fall to set them up.

The ethics board, which met for the first time four months ago, also is charged with enforcing provisions of the ethics code for city employees and contractors.

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