



This week we've learned about the retirements of several prominent figures in our city and our city's government. One we've known was coming for some time though was that of outgoing president of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, [Lawrence Pijaux](#) — [it was first announced last October](#). A party was held in his honor on Wednesday evening at the Institute's home on 6th Avenue and 16th Street, South, drawing people from throughout the city to say "thank you" to the organization's leader since 1995. [As AL.com previously reported at the end of this piece from earlier this month](#), Priscilla Hancock Cooper has been named as its interim president while a nationwide search is conducted.

Tuesday morning saw the announcement of the retirements of [Renee Blalock](#) (executive director of the Birmingham Public Library); [Phil Turkett](#) (the city's zoning administrator); and Bobby Dorr (the city's director of information management services) during the weekly city council meeting. These announcements mean as much as nearly 40 years of institutional knowledge will be taking its final bow in municipal offices, and providing an opening for new voices and directions for the city.