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## NEWARK HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR NAMED FOR NEW ADMINISTRATION

The former human resource manager for American Electric Power, Mike Buskirk, has been named the human resources director for the city of Newark, New Jersey. The position for Buskirk takes effect on January 1, 2012. Buskirk was appointed by the mayor-elect of the city, Jeff Hall, on Thursday evening. "During his 32 years with AEP, Mike handled all facets dealing with personnel," Hall said. "He has unparalleled experience regarding hiring, union negotiations, grievances, arbitrations and disciplinary hearings. This experience will make him a valued leader for our human resources department." Buskirk is a resident of Newark and a graduate of Ohio University. He also serves on the Licking Memorial Hospital Development Council as a volunteer, according to the Newark Advocate. "I moved (to Newark) five years ago, and I always believe where you live, you've got to get involved," Buskirk said. "I love the city and the people, and my goal will be to help (Jeff's) team to lead the city forward." Buskirk earned experience at AEP in the areas of workers' compensation, benefits, and negotiations while working in human resources at AEP. "I've done everything you can think of," he said. "I'm hoping to keep the team strong in those areas." Buskirk retired from AEP back in 2005 but did not stop following the human resource industry and all of its developments for the past six years. The previous appointments by Hall to his cabinet included that of City Councilman David Rhodes to service director and Assistant Fire Chief Bill Spurgeon to safety director. The final appointment to the cabinet will be the position of development director. "I am honored to announce the appointment of Mike Buskirk to the position of human resources director," Hall said. "I am very pleased that Mike has agreed to join my administration." Donna Sears is being replaced by Buskirk, who served as the human resources director for the city for six years. Sears was employed within the city's human resources department for 22 years. Sears said earlier in the month that she did not expect to be retained by the new mayor, but she did say that she was surprised she was informed of the news via email from Hall. Sears claims she did give Hall her resume. "He said he was considering me, but no interview, nothing," Sears said. "My problem is there should be some professionalism after 22 years, not an email. He kept saying he was going to bring professionalism back to city hall. He failed miserably in how he handled this." Sears will seek employment in the public sector, knowing she can retire in two years. Hall claims he was planning on meeting with Sears in person, but that she wanted to know the decision immediately. This prompted Hall to send Sears an email regarding the decision. "Generally, I'm doing it in person, but Donna sent me an email more than a week ago saying she heard I already appointed my person. I said that's news to me because I hadn't made my decision. I said this is not how I preferred to let you know," Hall said he wrote to Sears. "I didn't want you to find out elsewhere."

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