

Hey Team:

As I mentioned in our meeting on Thursday and in the email I sent out a couple of weeks ago, we find ourselves in the middle of (much-needed) change in our country. And I deeply believe our job right now is not only to cover that change journalistically, but to be part of it ourselves. Philly Mag needs to evolve.

While I'm proud of the steps we've taken toward greater diversity on our editorial team and in our editorial products over the last few years, it's clear to me there have been moments when I've needed to listen and do more – that much more progress is essential. And yet, I'm also aware that greater diversity is something we as an editorial team can't – and shouldn't – be doing alone. The truth is, our department has done more than almost any other in our company to make strides on diversity. This is a company-wide issue; it needs to be treated as such.

Which is why, on Friday, I asked for a meeting of the Metro Corp. board to address this matter; that meeting happened earlier this afternoon. In it, I told the board (mostly members of the Lipson family) that deep and meaningful change in their company is not something that should fall solely to employees, managers or even the CEO; it really needs to begin with an expression by them, the owners, that real diversity is something they *want* and *value*. Without that, nothing meaningful and permanent can happen. And if it is what they want, then they need to make a commitment to it – by which I mean not just sharing their intentions, but putting some resources behind it.

In the meeting, I also informed the board that the September issue will be my last as editor, and that my plan is to leave the company at the end of the summer. In part this is a very personal decision. I've given almost every ounce of energy I have to this job for the last decade, and at the moment I'm not sure I have enough in my tank to do the job as well as it needs to be done. But I also have in my head the column that our colleague Ernest Owens wrote last week, noting that real change in our world will only come about when some power is redistributed. Which is why I told the board that, in my opinion, they should prioritize finding an editor of Philly Mag who doesn't look like me – who isn't, in other words, a middle-aged white guy. While I can't – and haven't asked to – choose my own successor, I do pledge to use whatever capital I have to try and bring that about.

I'm incredibly proud of the work we've done here in the last 10 years. The continued vitality of our print publications. The innovation – and large audience growth – we've seen digitally. The creation of meaningful events like ThinkFest (which ran so successfully last week) and Be Well Philly Fest (which I know will be a success next month). The scores of awards and nominations we've garnered. Mostly, though, I'm proud of my association through the years with an incredible group of writers, editors, designers, photographers and artists. Magazines are the ultimate team sport, and I've been blessed to be part of an extraordinary team for a long time. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

-Tom