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United Russia Promotes Mayor, Expels Another

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Sobyanin was given Yury Luzhkov's vacant seat in the 20-member bureau of United Russia's Supreme Council. **Maxim Stulov**

The ruling United Russia party changed the status of two high-profile members Wednesday, purging Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky Mayor Vladislav Skvortsov from its ranks and giving Moscow's Sergei Sobyanin a seat on the Supreme Council's bureau.

Sobyanin, already a member of the 64-member Supreme Council, joined the likes of Kemerovo head Aman Tuleyev, Emergency Situations Minister Sergei Shoigu and Arctic-exploring State Duma Deputy Artur Chilingarov on the 20-member bureau, Interfax reported.

A founding member, Sobyanin was promoted because of his long history of cooperation with the party, said Boris Gryzlov, the Supreme Council's head.

Sobyanin filled the vacant seat left by former Mayor Yury Luzhkov, also a founding member who quit the party after being ousted from his job in September.

Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky's mayor was expelled from the party by the political council of the Kamchatka region's branch for “discrediting” himself, a local lawmaker with United Russia, Boris Nevzorov, told RIA-Novosti.

He was also advised to resign voluntarily from his city job, a recommendation the mayor promised to consider, Nevzorov said.

Skvortsov, who has headed Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky since 2004 and was re-elected last year on United Russia's ticket, came under fire recently over the dismal state of the city's public utilities.

Gennady Onishchenko, head of the Federal Consumer Protection Service, in August called Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky "the dirtiest and shabbiest city" in Russia, Interfax said.

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