



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Department of Finance & Administration
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3100
www.kirklandwa.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: Kathi Anderson, City Clerk
Marilynne Beard, Deputy City Manager
Robin Jenkinson, City Attorney

Date: April 5, 2013

Subject: City Council Vacancy – Selection Process

RECOMMENDATION:

City Council finalizes the process for filling the Position 2 vacancy and determines which applicants will be interviewed.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

At the April 2 City Council meeting the Council discussed the process they would use for filling the vacant City Council position 2. Staff presented a series of considerations and questions that Council discussed. A summary of their discussion follows:

Timeline Considerations

Council agreed to a goal of April 16 for making the appointment with the appointee's first regular Council meeting on May 7.

Nomination versus Application

The City Council chose to accept applications from all qualified and interested residents. A call for applications was released on Wednesday, April 3, 2013 with applications due by 5 p.m. on Tuesday April 9. Applications will be forwarded to Council on April 10 as a City Council meeting packet.

Application Form

The City Council suggested changes to the draft application prepared by staff. A question about the length of time the applicant has resided in Kirkland or the annexation area was added as well as further detail on the question regarding top issues facing the City Council. Written responses were limited to 250 words each. The question about whether the applicant intends

to file for the position two seat was amended to ask whether the applicant intended to file for any of the City Council seats.

Preliminary Selection Process

The City Council will conduct a special meeting at 6 p.m. on Monday, April 15, 2013 to discuss applicants' qualifications and to choose which applicant to interview on April 16. The Council agreed to choose three to five finalists to interview from the applications received. Each Council member should come to the April 15 meeting prepared to offer their top three applicants.

Interview Process

The City Council will hold a special meeting at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 16, 2013 to interview selected candidates. Each interview will last 30 minutes. The City Council identified questions they would like to ask. A list of sample questions will be provided to the City Council at the April 15 meeting. The City Council also asked Human Resources to provide advice on questions that should not be asked in an interview.

Final Selection Process

Staff presented two options for the final selection process:

1. The Mayor calls for nominations and all Council members wanting to put forth a nomination would do so. Once all of the nominations were made and seconded, Council would discuss the qualifications of each nominee. The Council would then vote on the nominees in the order they were nominated. The first nominee to receive four affirmative votes would be appointed.
2. The Mayor calls for nominations. Once a nomination is made and seconded, the Council would discuss the qualifications of the nominee. Following discussion, a vote would be taken. If the nominee receives four affirmative votes, that individual would be appointed. If the nominee fails to receive four affirmative votes, a second nomination would be made and follow the same procedure. The process would continue until a nominee receives four affirmative votes, at which time no further nominations would be taken.

During their discussion the Council expressed concern about the order in which Councilmembers would be called upon by the Mayor to make a nomination and that they would prefer that the final vote to appoint would provide the opportunity for a unanimous affirmative vote.

Councilmember Nixon suggested a process whereby each Council member would identify their top candidate. Once the top candidates were named, Council discussion could take place. The Mayor would call for a nomination once Council discussion was concluded. This process still allows for the potential of a "de facto" appointee if four of the six Council members identify the same top candidate. Again, the order in which the Council is called upon by the Mayor may influence the decision.

Staff offered a variation to Councilmember Nixon's process whereby each Councilmember would offer their top two candidates. This would allow for more discussion and provide an indication of whether there is a consensus among the Council.

Another option is to use amendments to the nomination motion. The Mayor would call for a nomination and, once the nomination is made, Council can discuss the candidate. If, through discussion, there does not appear to be sufficient support for the nomination, the nomination could be amended by a Council member offering another name. An actual vote would be taken on the amended motion when it appears there is sufficient support for the nominee.

One way of reducing any concerns about which Council member is called upon first is to have the Council draw numbers from one to six (or five if the Mayor defers to the Council to make nominations) and the Mayor calls for nominations starting with number one and proceeding as needed to the remainder of the Council. The random numbers would only be used to start the Council nomination process and could be used with any of the voting processes mentioned above.

Another alternative would be for a roll call vote format, whereby Council members would be asked to nominate individuals based on the order in which a roll call vote would be taken. In this format, the Mayor may wish to defer her nomination to the final spot. Assuming the Mayor goes last and based on the current seating, nominations would be taken in the following order:

Councilmember Walen
Councilmember Sweet
Councilmember Asher
Councilmember Nixon
Deputy Mayor Marchione
Mayor McBride

Following the appointment, the City Clerk will make arrangements to formally swear in the individual prior to the May 7 meeting and staff will arrange for an orientation. A ceremonial swearing in will take place at the May 7 City Council meeting.