JUDICIAL NOMINATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 17, 2016
Phillips County Courthouse
Malta, Montana

The Commission convened on Monday, October 17, 2016, at 8:30 a.m. in the courtroom for the district court in the Phillips County courthouse (304 3rd Avenue West) in Malta, Montana. Judicial Nomination Commission members present and participated in the applicant interviews and deliberations were Janice Bishop, Karl Englund, Elizabeth Halverson, Hal Harper, Lane Larson, and Nancy Zadick. Judge Richard Simonton was excused. Elizabeth Halverson served as acting chair. Lois Menzies, Office of Court Administrator, provided support services.

The interview schedule was as follows:

8:30 a.m.	Peter L. Helland
9:05 a.m.	Yvonne Gaye Laird
9:40 a.m.	Dan Raymond O'Brien
10:30 a.m.	Randy Homer Randolph

Questions from the Commission followed the applicants' opening comments. Members questioned applicants in several areas including challenges facing the judicial district and how best to address them; providing access to legal services for low income litigants; reasons for seeking appointment to the position; attributes distinguishing the applicant from other applicants; experience in running a campaign; residency within the judicial district if appointed; range and depth of legal experience (e.g., Indian law; complex civil litigation); areas of weakness and strength; and opinion on scheduling orders. Some applicants were asked to clarify or expand upon information in their applications or public comment received. Following questions from the Commission, applicants provided closing remarks.

The Commission began deliberations following the last interview. Five members voted in favor of nominating Peter Helland (Bishop, Englund, Halverson, Harper, and Zadick) with one member opposed (Larson). Four members voted in favor of nominating Yvonne Laird (Bishop, Halverson, Harper, and Zadick) with two members opposed (Englund and Larson). Five members voted in favor of nominating Dan O'Brien (Englund, Halverson, Harper, Larson, and Zadick) with one member opposed (Bishop). Four members voted in favor of nominating Randy Randolph (Bishop, Englund, Harper, and Larson) with two members opposed (Halverson and Zadick). The reasons for each nomination are contained in the certificate and report submitted to the Governor, which are incorporated into these minutes and attached to them.

The Commission adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m.

CERTIFICATE

The Judicial Nomination Commission of the State of Montana hereby certifies to the Honorable Steve Bullock, Governor of the State of Montana that it has agreed and approved the qualifications of the following lawyers for appointment as District Court Judge for the Seventeenth Judicial District.

All of these we now certify are qualified for appointment under the laws of the State of Montana. We hereby certify the same to you, as required by law, and list them in alphabetical order:

Peter L. Helland

Yvonne Gaye Laird

Dan Raymond O'Brien

Randy Homer Randolph

REPORT

Pursuant to Section 3-1-1010, MCA, the Judicial Nomination Commission provides the following report:

Six members of the Judicial Nomination Commission were present and participated in the applicant interviews and deliberations. The applications of and public comments regarding the above-listed nominees are attached to this certificate and also may be reviewed at: http://www.courts.mt.gov.

Peter L. Helland received five affirmative votes to recommend his appointment. The Commission's reasons for recommending this nominee are that Mr. Helland:

1. meets the minimum qualifications for the position of district court judge;
2. appears to be electable to the position within the judicial district;
3. has a depth and breadth of legal experience;
4. demonstrates judicial temperament; and
5. has significant support within the community for serving in the position of district court judge.

Yvonne Gaye Laird received four affirmative votes to recommend her appointment. The Commission's reasons for recommending this nominee are that Ms.

Laird:

1. meets the minimum qualifications for the position of district court judge;
2. appears to be electable to the position within the judicial district;
3. has a depth and breadth of legal experience;
4. demonstrates judicial temperament; and
5. has significant support within the community for serving in the position of district court judge.

Daniel Raymond O'Brien received five affirmative votes to recommend his appointment. The Commission's reasons for recommending this nominee are that Mr. O'Brien:

1. meets the minimum qualifications for the position of district court judge;
2. appears to be electable to the position within the judicial district;
3. has a depth and breadth of legal experience;
4. demonstrates judicial temperament; and
5. has significant support within the community for serving in the position of district court judge.

Randy Homer Randolph received four affirmative votes to recommend his appointment. The Commission's reasons for recommending this nominee are that Mr. Randolph:

1. meets the minimum qualifications for the position of district court judge;
2. appears to be electable to the position within the judicial district;
3. has a depth and breadth of legal experience; and
4. demonstrates judicial temperament.

Done at Malta, Montana on the 17th day of October, 2016.

Elizabeth Halverson, Acting Chair

Janice Bishop

Karl Englund

Hal Harper

Lane Larson

Nancy Zadick