
JUDICIAL NOMINATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
Conference Call
Friday, October 16, 2015

Hon. Richard Simonton, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. Other Commission members participating in the conference call were Mona Charles, Elizabeth Halverson, Lane Larson, and Nancy Zadick. Hal Harper and Ryan Rusche were excused. Lois Menzies, Office of Court Administrator, participated as staff to the Commission.

Judge Simonton opened the discussion on applicant interviews. The Commission discussed the applications submitted and public comment received. Members unanimously agreed to extend interviews to Chris Abbott, Melissa Broch, Marc Buyske, DeeAnn Cooney, Dan Guzynski, Barb Harris, Don Jones, and Mike McMahon. By unanimous vote, the Commission declined to interview Deborah Butler, Lisa Leckie, and Ed Sheehy. Interviews will be conducted on Monday, November 9 beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the third floor conference room in the former federal building (301 South Park Avenue) in Helena. Thirty minutes will be reserved for each interview with deliberations following the last interview.

Lunch will be catered on the day of the interviews, and lodging will be available at the Holiday Inn Downtown for Sunday night, November 8.

In other business, Ms. Menzies discussed a potential change to the judgeship application. Missoula attorney Shane Vannatta had suggested that the Commission consider having applicants report the same information required in the business disclosure statements filed by Supreme Court justices and District Court judges (2-2-106, MCA). Effective October 1, 2015, a justice or judge must file the following information with the Commissioner of Political Practices:

- the name, address, and type of business of the individual;
- any present or past employer from which benefits, including retirement benefits, are currently received;
- any business or professional entity or trust in which the individual holds an interest;
- any entity in which the individual is an officer or director; and
- any real property, other than a personal residence, in which the individual holds an interest.

Members agreed to amend the application to ask applicants if they would be prepared to disclose the information if appointed by the Governor.

The Commission adjourned at 2:10 p.m.