
JUDICIAL NOMINATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Conference Call

Friday, March 27, 2015

Hon. Richard Simonton, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

Commission members participating in the conference call were Mona Charles, Elizabeth Halverson, Hal Harper, Lane Larson, and Nancy Zadick. Ryan Rusche was excused. Lois Menzies, Office of Court Administrator, participated as staff to the Commission.

Ms. Menzies noted that all applicants for the 4th Judicial District vacancy are in good standing with the State Bar of Montana and Commission on Practice.

Judge Simonton welcomed Hal Harper and Elizabeth Halverson as new members to the Commission. He explained that the Commission must forward three to five names to the Governor and can choose to interview all of the applicants or select certain applicants to interview. The Commission unanimously agreed to interview all of the applicants (Brenda Desmond, Leslie Halligan, Lisa Kauffman, Tom Orr, Brian Smith, Shane Vannatta, and Leta Womack) on Monday, April 13 at the Holiday Inn Downtown in Missoula. Thirty minutes will be reserved for each interview with deliberations following the last interview. Applicants will be invited to make a brief statement at the beginning of the interview.

In regards to the 8th Judicial District vacancy, the public comment period on the eight applicants closes Monday, April 27. The Commission will hold a conference call on Wednesday, April 29 to review the applications and public comment. If the Commission decides to conduct interviews, the interviews will be scheduled for Monday, May 18 in Great Falls.

The Commission adjourned at 1:55 p.m.