



Snohomish County Council

Committee: Committee of the Whole

Contact: Heidi Beazizo

ECAF: 22-1008

Proposal: Mot. 22-410

Date: 9/24/2022

Consideration

Consider appointing a nominee from a list of nominees to fill the unexpired term of a vacant councilmember position for Snohomish County Council District 3.

Background

Stephanie Wright resigned from elected office as county councilmember in Snohomish County Council District 3 on August 29, 2022. The Snohomish County Charter Section 4.15 does not identify the office of Snohomish County councilmember as a non-partisan elective office. Ms. Wright affiliated with the Democrat Party.

Vacancies occurring in a partisan elective office shall be filled by appointment of a county legislative authority pursuant to Article II, Section 15 of the Constitution of the State of Washington and Snohomish County Charter Section 4.80. The person appointed must be:

1. From the same council district as the councilmember whose office become vacated; and
2. Affiliated with the same party as the councilmember whose office became vacated; and
3. Selected by a county legislative authority from a list of three nominees selected by the party county committee.

If a nominee is not appointed within sixty days of a vacancy occurring, then the governor appoints a nominee within the thirty days following the end of the first sixty days.

The current term for the District 3 position expires on December 31, 2023. The nominee will fill the position until the certification of the general election in November 2023. The person succeeding in the election of November 2023 would serve the balance of the current unexpired term beginning on the day of certification, subject to taking the oath of office, until December 31, 2023 and would serve in the term from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2027.

Nominees for Vacancy

On August 29, 2022, the Snohomish County notified the county committee of the Democratic Party of the vacancy. The Democratic Party convened to select three nominees meeting the requirements of Article II, Section 15 of the State Constitution to fill the vacancy. Following the party's bylaws, the party submitted three names, in order of preference, as follows: Carin Chase, Strom Peterson, and Colin McMahon.

As required by the State Constitution, each of the nominees: (1) resides in council district , (2) is affiliated with the same party as the councilmember who resigned from office, and (3) was nominated by the appropriate party.

Questions & Interview

On September 23, 2022, nominees were asked to submit a one-page resume and responses to the following by September 26, 2022:

1. Please explain in 200 words or fewer your qualifications to serve as a county councilmember.
2. Please describe in 200 words or fewer the role of a county councilmember.
3. Please identify and summarize the three most important issues facing Snohomish County and how you would begin to address them.
4. Please describe in 200 words or fewer how you will work with people with different points of view than you.
5. Please describe in 200 words or fewer your experience working with others to advance policy and budget issues.

Written responses were received on September 26, 2022.

Process

At the meeting on September 29, 2022, each councilmember will be invited to ask additional questions of the nominees. The meeting will be done in a hybrid setting that is open to the public. Nominees will be encouraged to participate in person, with remote participation possible if necessary. After an introduction is made to the meeting and public comment is held, nominees have agreed to be placed "on hold" if remote or wait in the lobby if in person while other nominees are being interviewed by the Council.

After each interview, nominees may be moved to the attendee list if remote or remain in chambers if in person. Council may elect to move into executive session. A Councilmember may move the main motion, amending the motion to include a nominee's name. A majority vote of Councilmembers present is required for a nominee to be appointed.

Current Proposal

Scope: The proposed motion, when amended to include a nominee's name, would appoint a nominee to the vacancy.

Duration: The appointee would serve until the certification of the 2023 general election at which point the succeeding candidate will serve in the unexpired term of office until December 31, 2023 and also the term beginning on January 1, 2024 and expiring on December 31, 2027.

Fiscal Implications: N/A.

2022 Budget: N/A.

Future Budget Impacts: N/A.

Handling: Normal. If a nominee is not appointed by October 28, 2022, then the party's nominations would be sent to the Governor, who would have 30 days to appoint a nominee.

Approved-as-to-form: N/A.

Risk Management: N/A.

Executive Recommendation: N/A.

Request: Assign motion to COW and move to the special meeting on September 29, 2022. Consider moving the motion with an amendment to add a nominee's name to the motion.

Attachments: Written responses from nominees.