



Snohomish County Council

Committee: LJHS
ECAF: 22-1089
Proposal: Mot. 22-446

Analyst: Heidi Beazizo
Date: October 20, 2022

Consideration

The Executive's Office requests Council consider approving proposed Motion 22-446 which would appoint the Snohomish County Public Advocate pursuant to Snohomish Count Code [2.11.040](#).

Background

The Office of Ombudsman was created in 2014 by Amended Ordinance 14-077¹, adding Chapter 2.11 to Snohomish County Code; SCC 2.11 was amended by Ordinance 17-024² on May 17, 2017, established an Office of Public Advocate and eliminating the Office of Ombudsman.

Jill McKinnie was appointed by the County Council on March 30, 2015³ to serve as the Ombudsman and is currently the Snohomish County Public Advocate.

The Office of Public Advocate functions independently; subject to administrative direction by the Council Chair or Council Chief of Staff. The office receives, investigates and makes recommendations to the Council and appropriate county agencies on complaints concerning the operation of county government and responds to inquiries from the public concerning the operation of county government.

On September 22, 2022, the Council Chief of Staff was notified that the current Public Advocate, Jill McKinnie, plans to retire with an effective date of November 15, 2022.

If the position of public advocate becomes vacant, the process for appointment is outlined in [2.11.040](#) as:

- 1) Within 30 days of the vacancy, the County Executive shall nominate two individuals who meet the qualifications as set forth in [SCC 2.11.060](#):
 - a. Shall hold no other elective or appointive office or position in County Government;
 - b. Shall be a person of recognized judgement, objectivity and integrity who is well-equipped to analyze problems of law, administration and public policy; and
 - c. Holds a degree from an accredited college or its equivalent in service to government.
- 2) The County Council shall either appoint an individual from the County Executive's nominees or an individual of the Council's own choosing if the nominations are not received within 30-days of the vacancy occurring or the nominees fail to meet the qualifications of 2.11.060.

¹ [GquWnLawsyjiPwJ2Xe4YhcPw \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

² [GHopa8MCKvzdQdjQnS2wNP6o \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

³ [Administrative Session - Mar 30th, 2015 \(granicus.com\)](#)

Once appointed, The Public Advocate shall serve a term that expires one year following the date of the original appointment and thereafter, expire two years following the date of each reappointment by the Council.

On October 13, 2022, the Council received ECAF 2022-1089 requesting consideration of two nominees for appointment to the Public Advocate vacancy: Gricelda Montes and Holly Shelton.

Interviews of the nominees are currently scheduled for November 2, 2022 at 10:30 AM.

Current Proposal

Scope: Motion 22-446 requests the appointment of a new Public Advocate from the nominees proposed by the County Executive.

Duration: The term of the Public Advocate will expire one-year following the date of appointment.

Fiscal Implications: N/A

2022 Budget: The FTE for the Public Advocate is included in the 2022 Budget

Future Budget Impacts: YES.

Handling: Urgent

Approved-as-to-form: N/A

Risk Management: FYI provided

Executive Recommendation: The candidates are nominated by the Executive

Analysis: The nominees

Request:

- Place on the COW agenda for consideration at Admin Session on October 25th.
- Move the Motion to November 2nd Interviews at 10:30 AM.
- Following the interviews, consider appointing a nominee to the position of Public Advocate.