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POLICY AND PROCEDURE

CITY OF VANCOUVER WASHINGTON	INDEX Administrative/Council/City Manager			
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Filling City Council Vacancies	**Supersedes** 12/13/21	**Prepared by:** Signed by: 02BF78E9C0DB4DB...	**Approved by:** DocuSigned by: Anne McEnerny-Ogle 6C89D9089EC5424...	

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to City Council when a Vancouver Councilmember position becomes vacant before the expiration of the official's elected term of office. Pursuant to state law, a vacancy shall be filled only to serve the remainder of the unexpired term until the next regular election.

2.0 Organizations Affected

City Council/City Manager

3.0 References

Vancouver City Charter – Sections 2.01 Number Terms; 2.02 Qualifications; 2.06 Vacancies Defined; 2.08 Vacancies in Council

RCW 29A.60.270 Beginning of terms; RCW 29A.60.280 Term of office; RCW 42.30.110(h) – Executive Session Allowed to Consider Qualifications of a Candidate for Appointment of Elective Office; RCW 42.30.060 – Prohibitions on Secret Ballots; Chapter 42.12 – Vacant Position

City Council Resolution M-3274, January 3, 2000
City Council Resolution, M-3730, January 3, 2011
City Council Resolution M-3980, September 24, 2018
City Council Resolution M-4157, December 13, 2021
City Council Resolution M-4398, October 26, 2026

4.0 Notification Process

A Council position shall be officially declared vacant upon the occurrence of any of the causes of vacancy set forth in City of Vancouver Charter, Section 2.06, including resignation, recall, forfeiture, written intent to resign, or death of a Councilmember. The Councilmember who is vacating their position cannot participate in the appointment process.

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Two or fewer vacancies in the City Council shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining members of the City Council. Where three or more city council positions are vacant, the remaining members of city council shall appoint a qualified person to fill one of the vacant positions. Then, the remaining members of city council, which includes the newly appointed councilmember, shall appoint another qualified person to fill the other vacant city council position, and so on until each of the vacant positions is filled with each of the new appointees participating in each appointment that is made after his or her appointment.

Such appointee(s) shall hold office only until the next regular general election, at which time the appointee(s) may run to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

City Council shall direct staff to begin the Councilmember appointment process and establish an interview and appointment schedule so that the position is filled at the earliest opportunity. In the case of a councilmember submitting an intent to resign, the application process may commence prior to the effective date of the resignation. The overall length of the process timeline should allow for the expedient conclusion of the appointment process, but also sufficient time for Council evaluation of candidates. The City Manager's Office will propose an appointment schedule to the Council prior to advertisement of the vacancy.

The City Manager's Office shall prepare and submit a display advertisement to *The Columbian, Oregonian and Daily Insider,* posted on the City's website and social media site, distributed via the City's internal and external newsletter services *(Currents, Emma, Office of Neighborhoods, etc.),* and distributed to all current members of Vancouver advisory boards, commissions, committees, and task forces (per Council policy 100-06) via email to the staff of those bodies with copies to other local media outlets, which announces the vacancy consistent with the requirements necessary to hold public office: that the applicant be a qualified elector[1] and hold no other public office; and have no employment under the city government.

This display advertisement shall be published once each week for two consecutive weeks. This display advertisement shall contain other information, including, but not limited to:, time to be served in the vacant position; election information, including qualifications of an elected official; salary information; Councilmember powers and duties; complete list of materials required to apply for appointment; the deadline date and time for submitting applications; interview and appointment schedules; and such other information that the City Council deems appropriate.

5.0 Application Process

5.1 The Application

[1] To be a "qualified elector" a person must be at least 18; a citizen of the United States; have lived in the city for at least 30 days prior to the election at which they offer to vote; have not been convicted of a felony unless their civil rights have been restored. Washington State Constitution Article VI, Section1.

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The City Manager's Office shall prepare an application form which requests appropriate information for City Council consideration of the applicants. The application form will request the following information from the applicant:

- Pertinent contact information
- Confirmation the applicant is a qualified elector
- Answers to the following:

Is there anything in your background that would attract heightened public scrutiny if undisclosed and later discovered?

1. Please give a brief summary of your background and experience, including education, work history and civic engagement activities.
2. Why are you seeking appointment to the City Council? What do you feel your qualifications are for the position?

Applications will be available at City of Vancouver offices, on the City's website and such other locations that the City Council deems appropriate.

5.2 Supplemental Materials

In addition to the application form, the applicants will also be required to provide a completed Washington State PDC form F-1 and a current resume. The F-1 form must be provided directly to the City Manager's Office. It should not be submitted on the Washington PDC website.

In addition to the required supplemental materials, candidates may also submit additional supportive information, such as a list of endorsements, up to three (3) letters of reference, and other pertinent materials. Endorsements and letters of reference should include contact information for the person(s) supporting the candidate.

5.3 Conclusion of Application Period

The application period shall be open for at least two weeks and no more than 30 days following the announcement of the vacancy and details of the appointment process. The length of the application period will be included in the proposed appointment schedule, as set forth in section 4.0.

Applications received by the deadline date and time will be copied and circulated by the City Manager's Office to the Mayor and City Council within one (1) business day following the deadline. Candidates who submit completed application packets by the deadline will be required to also submit information necessary for the City to conduct a criminal background check, the results of which will be provided to the City Council.

All completed candidate application packets will be posted on the City's website following the application deadline and delivery of the packets to the City Council. Applicant materials will be redacted for non-disclosable information prior to being made public.

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6.0 Council Evaluation of Candidates

City Councilmembers, individually, will conduct an initial review of all completed applications. Council will meet in executive session at the next Council meeting to discuss applicant qualifications. It is permissible to meet in executive session to "evaluate the qualifications of a candidate for appointment to elective office."[2] The City Manager's Office will provide Council with the results of the candidate criminal background checks during this executive session.

In the event the City receives more than 10 completed applications, each City Councilmember will submit to the Council Assistant an unranked list of names of the candidates the Councilmember wishes to move forward in the process. Each Councilmember's list should contain no more than 15 names. The Council Assistant shall aggregate all Councilmember lists into one unranked master list of the 10-15 candidates most commonly selected among the individual lists provided. The list shall be arranged in alphabetical order and shall only include the names of the candidates. This aggregated list shall be provided to the Council during the executive session held prior to the interview meeting.

Immediately following executive session, Council shall meet in public session to select which candidates to invite to participate in an interview at the next City Council meeting. The decision as to which applicants to interview will be based on the information contained in the application forms and Council's evaluation of the qualifications of the candidates. The decision as to which candidates will be interviewed will be at the sole discretion of the City Council.

The City Manager's Office shall notify applicants selected for interview of the location, date and time and format (per Section 7.0) of City Council interviews. In the event Council does not select all applicants to move forward to the interview, staff in the City Manager's Office will notify those candidates not selected of their status. Information about the interview meeting and those applicants selected for an interview will be announced to the public via a news release and posted on the City's website after all applicants have been contacted.

Prior to the date and time of the interview meeting, each Councilmember shall submit one interview question and one back-up question to the Mayor and Council Assistant. If two or more Councilmembers submit the same primary question, the Mayor shall choose whose to accept, and the back-up question(s) from the other Councilmember(s) will be used. The final list of questions will be provided to all of Council prior to the interview meeting. Each Councilmember will ask their question during the interviews.

7.0 Interview Meeting

An interview meeting shall be scheduled for a regularly scheduled Council meeting. The meeting will be open to the public and broadcast and live streamed by CVTV.

At the opening of the interview meeting, the Mayor shall provide an overview of the format

[2] RCW 42.30.110(1)(h)

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and ground rules for the meeting. The applicant's order of appearance also shall be determined at this time by a random lot drawing performed by the Council Assistant.

In order to ensure each candidate has a fair and equal opportunity to speak with Council, all candidates shall be sequestered at City Hall for the duration of all candidate interviews. Access to electronic devices shall be prohibited during sequestration. Candidates will be ushered to and from the City Council Chambers by a member of City staff in order to participate in their interview at the pre-determined time. Candidates will be released from sequestration upon conclusion of the final interview and may observe the remainder of the public portion of the Council meeting.

Each candidate interview shall be no more than 30 minutes in length. The Council may reduce the 30-minute interview time if the number of applicants exceeds six candidates. Each interview shall follow the following format:

- The applicant shall present their credentials to the City Council (up to 10 minutes).
- The City Council shall ask the predetermined set of questions, one question per Councilmember, which must be responded to by the applicant. Each applicant will be asked and will answer the same set of questions and will have two (2) minutes to answer each question (up to 14 minutes)
- An informal question-and-answer period during which Councilmembers may ask and receive answers to miscellaneous or follow-up questions (remainder of time).

8.0 Voting

Upon completion of the interviews, Councilmembers may convene into Executive Session to further evaluate the qualifications of the candidates; however, all interviews, nominations and votes taken by the Council shall be in open public session.

Balloting will continue until a nominee receives a majority of votes.

At any time during the balloting process, the City Council may postpone balloting until a date certain or regular meeting if a majority vote has not been received.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent the City Council from reconvening into Executive Session to further discuss the candidate qualifications.

The Mayor shall declare the nominee receiving the majority vote as the new Councilmember and he or she shall be sworn into office at the earliest opportunity, or no later than the next regularly scheduled City Council Meeting.