



Agenda Bill AB24-088

Meeting Date: May 20, 2024

Agenda Item: IX.A

Regular Business Meeting

Workshop/Study Session

Special Business Meeting

Submitted By: Alyssa Rodrigues and John Mauro **Date Submitted: May 13, 2024**
Department: City Administration/Clerk **Contact Phone: 360-379-5048**

SUBJECT:

Process, Timeline, and Options for Filling Vacated City Council Seat, Position #2

CATEGORY:

- Consent Resolution
 Staff Report Ordinance
 Contract Approval Other:
 Public Hearing (Legislative, unless otherwise noted)
 3-Year Strategic Plan: N/A

BUDGET IMPACT:

Expenditure Amount: \$
Included in Budget? Yes No

Cost Allocation Fund: 010-080 GF - City Clerk - Council Support

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

Councilmember Aislinn Palmer, City Council Position #2, submitted her resignation to Mayor David Faber on May 6, 2024, effective May 31, 2024, as she will be living outside of Port Townsend. State law prohibits Councilmembers from holding office if they reside outside of the city they represent (RCW 29A.04.151).

Article 3 of the Port Townsend City Council Rules of Procedure pairs with the state law (RCW 42.12.070), outlining how Council vacancies are to be filled "with the most qualified person available until an election is held." This includes the City Council:

- Widely distributing and publishing notice of the vacancy, the procedure, and any application form for the vacancy.
- Drawing up an application form which contains relevant information to answer set questions posed by the Council.
- Interviewing candidates publicly at City Council meetings.
- Making a decision on appointment to fill the remainder of the term within 90 days.

In the case of Position #2, the vacancy to be filled would start from appointment, expected by the end of August 2024, through November 2025 when that seat is again up for election (RCW 29A.24), once it is filled immediately (not in January 2026) upon certification of the general election. The position must be appointed by Council within 90 days of the vacancy (in this case, August 29, 2024) or the appointment responsibility shifts to the County Commission. Should the County fail to do so within 180 days, the County (or City) may petition the Governor to appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy.

With the process and constraints clearly set out in Council rules and State code, the task ahead before this governing body is four-fold:

1. To determine the timeline of the process (i.e., in alignment with City Council business meetings and before 90 days elapse; three such options below).
2. To agree an application form including a set of questions for candidates, interview approach, and evaluation criteria (draft: Attachment A), as well as a full application (draft: Attachment B).
3. To widely distribute and publish the timeline and application form.
4. To interview candidates and make a decision on appointment.

Staff presents three options for the timeline for council consideration, including an approach for soliciting and agreeing application/interview questions and publishing the timeline and application.

Based on an evaluation of a range of factors (e.g., Council shaping application, application period, public visibility, expediency, duration of seat vacancy), staff recommends Option B. The following options and suggested dates as well as an options table with pros and cons are below.

Option A: Expedited

- May 20 Agree process timeline and milestones (select option)
 Agree application format and questions
- May 24 Application live/open, published, distributed
 Application open 5/24 – 6/24
- June Promotion
 Receive applications
- June 17 Interviews with candidates
- July 1 Interviews with candidates
 Deliberations and decision
- July 3 Communication of decision to community
- July 15 Appointed Councilmember attends first Council meeting

Option B: Balanced

- May 20 Agree process timeline and milestones (select option)
Explore general scope of questions, solicit questions by email
- June 3 Workshop candidate questions for application
- June 10 Agree application format and questions
- June 14 Application live/open, published, distributed
Application open 6/14 – 7/15
- July 29 Special Business Meeting: Interviews with candidates
- August 5 Deliberations and decision
- August 7 Communication of decision to community
- August 12 Appointed Councilmember attends first Council meeting

Option C: Just in Time/Thorough

- May 20 Agree process timeline and milestones (select option)
Explore general scope of questions, solicit questions by email
- June 3 Workshop candidate questions for application
- June 10 Agree application format and questions
- June 14 Application live/open, published, distributed
Application open 6/14 – 8/1
- August 5 Interviews with candidates
- August 12 Special Business Meeting: additional interviews with candidates
- August 19 Deliberations and decision
- August 21 Communication of decision to community
- September 3 Appointed Councilmember attends first Council meeting

Options Table

Option	Pros	Cons
A: Expedited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quickest way to seat a member • Fewer steps/ meetings means less staff and Council time and resources • Materials and questions our immediately, potentially curbing/mitigating confusion • Councilmember seated before strategic workplan workshop on 7/22 • Current member may help shape questions and process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application open time complicated to communicate • Less council opportunity for crafting/agreeing questions • Fast turn-around time from interviews to decision • Overlap of open application with interviews • Overlap of interviews and deliberations • Current member may help shape questions and process
B: Balanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time for Council shaping of questions • One interview meeting • No overlap with interviews/ application process • No overlap with interviews/ deliberations • First meeting of new member is at a workshop – more informal opportunity to engage publicly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need special meeting in July • Later seating than Option A • Questions/application drops later than Option A
C: Just in Time/ Thorough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer open application period • More time for Council shaping of questions (like Option B) • One interview meeting (like Option B) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional time for surprises • Latest seating of new member • May need special meeting (Aug 12) instead of workshop

Regardless of the chosen option/timeline, in order to help expedite the development of application/interview questions and an application, suggested questions and criteria are suggested in Attachment A. There is currently no known job description for City Council. Instead, a short overview (“About the Port Townsend City Council”) is suggested for inclusion in the application materials (Attachment B). This is something that could be raised by Council to potentially task the Culture and Society with as they continue their work in revising the Council Rules of Procedure.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Suggested application/interview approach, questions and criteria

Attachment B: Draft Application

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Move to approve Resolution 24-019 Adopting a Process and Timeline for Filling Vacated City Council Seat, Position #2

ALTERNATIVES:

- Take No Action Refer to Committee Refer to Staff Postpone Action
 Remove from Consent Agenda Waive Council Rules and approve Ordinance _____
 Other:

RESOLUTION NO. 24-019

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PORT TOWNSEND, WASHINGTON, ADOPTING A PROCESS AND TIMELINE FOR FILLING VACATED CITY COUNCIL SEAT, POSITION #2

WHEREAS, Councilmember Aislinn Palmer, City Council Position #2, submitted her resignation to Mayor David Faber on May 6, 2024, effective May 31, 2024, because she will be living outside of Port Townsend; and

WHEREAS, State law prohibits Councilmembers from holding office if they reside outside of the city they represent (RCW 29A.04.151); and

WHEREAS, Article 3 of the Port Townsend City Council Rules of Procedure and state law (RCW 42.12.070), outlines how City Council vacancies are to be filled “with the most qualified person available until an election is held.”; and

WHEREAS, The position must be appointed by City Council within 90 days of the vacancy or the appointment responsibility shifts to the County Commission; and

WHEREAS, The City desires continuity in policy-making to the benefit of the residents we serve and thus wishes to attract and vet qualified candidates through a highly transparent public process; and

WHEREAS, Options for timeline and process were presented to City Council for consideration at their regular business meeting on May 20, 2024; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Port Townsend that the City Council adopts the timeline and process outlined in Option **XX**

ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Port Townsend at a regular meeting thereof, held this 20th day of May 2024.

David J. Faber
Mayor

Attest:

Alyssa Rodrigues
City Clerk

**ATTACHMENT A:
SUGGESTED APPLICATION/INTERVIEW APPROACH, QUESTIONS AND CRITERIA**

Suggested Application Questions:

1. Why are you interested in serving as an appointed City Councilmember?
2. What is your understanding of and perspective on the City's most pressing challenges and opportunities?
3. What experience and skills do you have that you believe align with the role and our challenges/opportunities? How might you focus those skills and experience during your term?
4. Describe your leadership style. What's most important to you? How do you most effectively work with others?
5. Describe your philosophy with public engagement. What matters most and what would you bring/add to the current way the City engages the community? How might you ensure that diverse perspectives are heard and measured in decision-making?
6. What is your understanding of our form of government (Council-Manager) and your responsibilities? What's important to you in making sure the City Council, staff, and our community work most effectively together?
7. Describe what success looks like for you in this role and what it looks like for our Council and community.
8. What do you think your biggest challenge will be as an appointed City Councilmember? Describe how you intend to work through that challenge.
9. What questions do you have for us?

Suggested Interview Questions:

Note: Council may wish to not agree set interview questions, but to use general suggestions like those below and ask specific questions tailored to each applicant.

1. Why are you interested in serving as an appointed City Councilmember?
2. Tell us of a time that you successfully negotiated a compromise solution in a difficult situation. What was important and why?
3. Tells us of a time you made a significant mistake and what you did afterward. What did you learn from the experience?
4. Describe a time when you had a challenging interpersonal conflict. What happened and what did you do to resolve or work through the conflict?
5. Describe a memorable time when you gave or received constructive feedback. What is important to you in this kind of situation?
6. What is your service and leadership philosophy? Tell us of a time or experience you have had that demonstrates how you lead and serve.

7. What do you think the City's position is right now? What are our strengths? Weaknesses?
8. How do you take care of yourself, particularly during stressful or difficult times?
9. What questions do you have for us?

Suggested Interview Approach:

- Interview length: 30 minutes
- Questions developed to align and build on application questions but also aim to be flexible to be tailed to applicants as desired
- Council uses criteria to rank candidates
- Number of finalist interviews: 3-5

Suggested Criteria:

- **Strategic**
Displays big-picture understanding of current challenges and opportunities.
- **Community-minded**
Understands the critical intersections with our community we serve.
- **Collaborative**
Knows how to work together with colleagues, other agencies, and the public; is accessible; mindful of a team approach.
- **Self-aware**
Understands strengths, limitations, areas of learning; displays humility and curiosity, particularly during disagreements; proactively and consistently looks for ways to develop skills and understanding.
- **Clarity of role**
Understands the form of government, role of a City Councilmember, jurisdiction and general role of City. Compelled to consider diverse views and perspectives, representing our entire community and not just the loudest voices.
- **Communicator**
Disarming, clear, confident and effective communication style.
- **Moral fortitude**
Considers all perspectives, seeks common ground, but also makes decisions about the community's future with moral clarity and courage.
- **Negotiator**
Looks for win-win opportunities, seeks common ground, moves challenging conversations and decisions forward.

ATTACHMENT B: DRAFT APPLICATION



Application for Appointment to Port Townsend City Council

Thank you for your interest in serving our community by filling the vacancy in Port Townsend City Council, Position #2. This application packet will be forwarded to all City Councilmembers to provide them information to make their appointment decision. All materials from applicants are public records and will be available on the City website. Some applicants may be asked to interview with the City Council and this will be scheduled at a public meeting of the City Council.

Eligibility

To be eligible for appointment, applicants must:

- Reside full time in Port Townsend city limits and have been a resident for at least one year
- Be a citizen of the United States and the State of Washington
- Be 18 years of age or older

Application Timeline

The timeline for filling the City Council vacancy is as follows:

May/June - xx, 2024:	Applications open
June xx, 2024:	Application and supplemental material due to City Clerk by 4pm
June xx, 2024:	Interviews with candidates
July xx, 2024:	Deliberations and decision
July xx, 2024:	Communication of decision to community
August xx, 2024:	Appointed Councilmember sworn in/attends first Council meeting

To be considered, your application must be completed and received by the City Clerk on **xxxx** at 4pm. Applications received afterward will not be accepted. Additional written information after this date will not be accepted, unless requested by the City Council.

Application Materials

Please submit the following:

- This application (starting on page 3)
- A resume of no more than 2 pages
- Answers to supplemental questions of no more than 2 pages

Application Submittal

Please submit the above materials to: cityclerk@cityofpt.us or mail them to:

Alyssa Rodrigues, City Clerk
Councilmember Appointment
250 Madison Street, Suite 200
Port Townsend, WA 98368

Materials must be received by the deadline so please ensure extra time if you choose to use mail.

About the Port Townsend City Council

As the City's governing body, Port Townsend's seven elected part-time City Councilmembers establish City policies and laws, adopt an annual budget, approve appropriations, and contract for services. The Council hires and evaluates the City Manager, who is responsible for preparing a budget for the Council's consideration; recruiting, hiring, and supervising City staff; operating the services of City government; serving as the Council's chief adviser; collaborating with local, regional, state, and federal agencies; and carrying out the Council's policies, among other duties.

City Councilmembers serve staggered four-year terms; roughly half the Council is up for election every two years. All Councilmembers are "at-large", meaning that they are elected by and serve the City as a whole as opposed to a specific district in the City.

The City Council chooses a Mayor and Deputy Mayor from among its members at the first meeting of the new year following an election. The Mayor presides at Council meetings and represents the City at ceremonial functions and inter-governmental meetings. The Deputy Mayor presides in the Mayor's absence. They and the City Manager set the agenda for City Council meetings.

Most City Council meetings are held on 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Mondays at 6:00 p.m. Occasionally special meetings are scheduled as needed. There are no Council meetings on Mondays that are legal holidays. City Council meetings, procedures, duties, committees, relations with City administration, and more are codified in Articles 1-7 in the City Council Rules of Procedure, here: <http://weblink.cityofpt.us/WebLink/DocView.aspx?dbid=0&id=203310&page=1&cr=1>.

Councilmembers may also serve on or liaise with Council committees, regional and local committees, and agency boards. Councilmembers also attend occasional workshops and conferences, particularly those most related to crucial topics like the Open Public Meetings Act.

Serving on the Port Townsend City Council is a part-time position. The position includes a nominal monthly salary, compared regionally and determined locally by a Salary Commission, which is as follows:

- January 2024: Member \$725, Mayor \$1075
- January 2026: Member \$775, Mayor \$1125
- January 2028: Member \$800, Mayor \$1175

As determined in late 2022, a Council majority is able to form a workgroup for health coverage and apply for medical benefits through the Association of Washington Cities. However, while that benefit remains possible, a current majority of Council has not requested coverage so therefore there is none. Such a determination can be made at the first of the year for the subsequent year.

Application for Appointment to Port Townsend City Council

Applicant Information

Applicant Name _____
Last First MI

Residence Address _____

Contact Phone _____ **Email** _____

Date of Birth _____

Are you a resident of Port Townsend and have you been so for at least 1 year?
yes no

The information is true and I affirm that I will support the Constitution and Laws of the United States and the Constitution and Laws of the State of Washington.

Signature

Date

Please attach a resume not to exceed 2 pages.

Please submit answers to the supplemental questions below, not to exceed 2 pages.

Insert questions as determined (currently Attachment A)