

CHEHALIS CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
CITY HALL
350 N MARKET BLVD | CHEHALIS, WA 98532

Mayor
Anthony E. Ketchum, Sr., District 3

Vacant, District 1
Daryl J. Lund, Mayor Pro Tem, District 2
Jody Kyes, District 4

Kate McDougall, Position at Large No. 1
Kevin Carns, Position at Large No. 2
Robert J. Spahr, Position at Large No. 3

Special Meeting of Thursday, January 18, 2024

5:00 p.m.

To access this meeting via Zoom:

Meeting ID: 834 4212 6653

Pass Code: 674890

1. Call to Order. (Mayor)
2. Pledge of Allegiance. (Mayor)
3. Approval of Agenda. (Mayor)

ITEM

ADMINISTRATION
RECOMMENDATION

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SPECIAL BUSINESS

4. Interview Candidates for Vacant District 1 City Council Position. (Mayor)

INTERVIEW
CANDIDATES

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

5. Pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(h) – Evaluate Qualifications of a Candidate for Appointment to Elective Office.

ITEM

ADMINISTRATION
RECOMMENDATION

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SPECIAL BUSINESS - CONTINUED

6. Appoint a Candidate to Fill Vacant District 1 City Council Position. (Mayor)

APPOINT
CANDIDATE

THE CITY COUNCIL WILL NOT ADD TO AND TAKE ACTION ON OTHER ITEMS NOT LISTED ON THIS AGENDA.

NEXT REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 2024- 5:00 P.M.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2024- 5:00 P.M.

**CHEHALIS CITY COUNCIL MEETING
AGENDA REPORT**

TO: The Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Jill Anderson, City Manager

BY: Kassi Mackie, City Clerk

MEETING OF: January 18, 2024

SUBJECT: Council Member Vacancy Process - Candidate Interviews

INTRODUCTION

The District 1 City Council seat is currently vacant due to the resignation of Jerry Lord, who resigned his seat, effective Nov 6, 2023, due to a move to another city. That term ended on December 31, 2023. Mr. Lord also resigned for the subsequent four (4) year term from 2024 to 2027 that he was re-elected to on November 7, 2023. The new term started on January 1, 2024.

At the direction of the City Council, interested individuals were invited to apply for vacant City Council Seat. This meeting has been scheduled to provide the City Council with the opportunity to interview John Six, the only qualified applicant.

BACKGROUND

The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) provides that a vacant City Council seat can be filled by action of the remaining members of the governing body and that the person appointed to fill a vacancy shall hold office for the remainder of the unexpired term. Eligibility to hold a City Council position is addressed in Chehalis Municipal Code 2.08.050, which was recently updated. The Code requires that an individual be a registered voter at the time of application and a resident of Chehalis for at least one year. There is an additional requirement associated with District positions, requiring that the applicant be a resident of the District, which in this case is District #1.

The position was advertised and publicized in The Chronicle and its virtual outlets, starting in November 2023 through the application deadline. In addition to general media coverage associated with the City's media releases, the City purchased an advertisement to go in The Chronicle in early January. Announcements were also made at City Council meetings and other meetings of local organizations including the Chamber of Commerce, the Industrial Commission, and Experience Chehalis. The information was also distributed to those subscribing to the various social media outlets of the Chamber of Commerce and Experience Chehalis. There were three applicants prior to the posted deadline of 2:00 pm on Thursday, January 11, 2024; however, two of the three did not live in District 1. Therefore, the only qualified candidate that applied is John Six.

INTERVIEW FORMAT

The proposed plan for the interview process is:

- Introduction of the candidate
- Conduct interviews

- Each member of the City Council will ask each candidate a question
- City Councilors can choose to share their perspective on the candidate at this time or later in the deliberations.
- City Council can convene into executive session to discuss qualifications of the applicant.
- Open Session will be reconvened after an executive session.
- Nominations from members of the City Council can be made in open session. If more than one candidate is nominated, a vote will be conducted in the order of which candidates were nominated. Votes on nominated candidates are expected to continue until an individual receives a majority vote (4).

It is expected that the person selected by the City Council to serve on the City Council will be sworn into office at the next regular meeting of the City Council, which is January 22, 2024. The term will end upon certification of the results of the next general election at which the voters elect members of the City Council, which is November 4, 2025.

STATE LAWS AND GENERAL GUIDANCE

Consistent with state law, all interviews, nominations, and votes shall be conducted by the City Council in open session. During the process of evaluating the qualifications of the candidates in executive session, MRSC (Municipal Research & Services Center) cautions that a City Council must take care not to take any kind of preliminary votes (even if it is a non-binding straw vote) or narrow the field of candidates.

The City Council has 90 days from the date of the vacancy to make the appointment of a new councilmember, which would be Sunday, February 4, 2024, from the original resignation; however, that term ended on December 31, 2023. Therefore, the current vacancy started on January 1, 2024, which would make Sunday, March 31, 2024, the legal deadline for filling the vacant seat.

There is wide latitude available to the City Council in the appointment process. However, if the appointment does not occur within 90 days of the vacancy, the City Council loses its authority to fill the seat. If that occurs, the County legislative authority, the Lewis County Board of County Commissioners, has the authority to make the appointment within 180 days of the vacancy's occurrence. If the County Board of Commissioners does not make the appointment within that period, the governor may be petitioned by the City Council or the County Board of Commissioners to do so.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact related to the filling of this City Council member vacancy.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council interview the applicant.

SUGGESTED MOTION

There is no suggested motion. Nominations will be made by City Council member and can be voted upon as outlined above.