



City of Huntington Beach

File #: 21-544

MEETING DATE: 7/19/2021

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBMITTED TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

SUBMITTED BY: Oliver Chi, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Travis K. Hopkins, Assistant City Manager

Subject:

Filling an unscheduled vacancy on the City Council

Statement of Issue:

On June 1, 2021, Mayor Pro Tem Jacob "Tito" Ortiz abandoned and resigned his City Council seat. Pursuant to Section 312 of the Huntington Beach Charter, unscheduled vacancies on the City Council are to be filled by an appointment of the City Council within 60 days. Further, the Charter stipulates that if the City Council fails to fill the vacancy within that specified timeframe, a special election must then be held to fill the vacated role.

Financial Impact:

There is no fiscal impact associated with appointing a candidate to fill the current vacant City Council seat. However, if the City Council fails to reach consensus on an individual to appoint to the abandoned City Council seat, the subsequent Special Election will cost an estimated \$885K - \$1M.

Recommended Action:

Select a candidate for appointment to the vacated City Council seat.

Alternative Action(s):

Provide direction to hold a Special Election to fill the vacant City Council seat.

Analysis:

A Special Meeting of the City Council was held on June 10, 2021 to consider the vacancy, at which time the City Council directed that an appointment process be coordinated to include an application period, introductory interviews with eligible applicants, and a final deliberation to identify an individual to fill the vacant City Council seat.

Pursuant to that direction, applications were accepted from June 11, 2021, through June 18, 2021. Subsequently, a Special City Council Meeting was held on July 9 - 10, 2021, for the introductory candidate interviews. During the overall assessment process, applications received were as follows:

- 190 applications were received prior to the close of the application process on June 18, 2021.
- 131 applicants accepted an interview time slot with the City Council on either July 9 - 10, 2021.
- A total of 105 applicants participated in the introductory interviews that were held July 9 - 10, 2021.

On July 10, as part of the Special City Council meeting, the appointment process was further defined to include the following parameters:

- A Special City Council meeting would be held on July 19, 2021, at which time the City Council would deliberate and attempt to identify an applicant to fill the vacant City Council seat.
- To facilitate the assessment process, each City Council member will be able to initially nominate up to 3 candidates for consideration of appointment to the vacated role.
- Once the finalist candidates are identified by the City Council, a process consisting of selection rounds will be engaged in an attempt to identify an individual for appointment to the vacant seat.
 - During each assessment round, Council Members would identify their top candidate for filling the vacancy.
 - After each round, the candidate that receives the least amount of support would be removed for consideration during the future rounds.
 - The assessment process would be continued until one candidate receives support of at least 4 Council Members.
 - Ultimately, if no candidate received support from a majority of the City Council by the July 30, 2021 deadline, then a special election would then be required.

Environmental Status:

Not Applicable

Strategic Plan Goal:

Non Applicable - Administrative Item

Attachment(s):

1. July 10th Special Council Meeting "Filling Our Current City Council Vacancy" Presentation