



JUDICIAL ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

December 16, 2020

The Judicial Advisory Board of the City of Mesa met via a virtual format streamed into the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on December 16, 2020 at 7:48 a.m.

BOARD PRESENT

Gordon Sheffield, Chairman*
Charles Wirken, Vice Chairman*
Kent Cattani*
Carolyn Finley*
Kevin Humphrey*
Daniel Kiley*
Wade Swanson*

BOARD ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Nicole Fazzio
Agnes Goodwine
Sarah Staudinger

(*Boardmembers participated in the meeting through the use of video conference equipment.)

Chairman Sheffield excused Boardmember Kiley from the beginning of the meeting; he arrived at 7:56 a.m.

1. Meeting called to order.

Chairman Sheffield called the meeting to order at 7:48 a.m. and conducted a roll call.

2. Approve minutes from the November 18, 2020 Board meeting.

It was moved by Boardmember Swanson, seconded by Boardmember Finley, that the November 18, 2020 Board meeting minutes be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Sheffield-Wirken-Cattani-Finley-Humphrey-Swanson

NAYS – None

ABSENT – Kiley

Chairman Sheffield declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

3. Items from citizens present.

Julie Mata, a Maricopa County Superior Court Judge, spoke in support of Stephanie Olohan. She stated the Mesa Municipal Court needs judges who have a proven track record of knowledge, determination, and resiliency. She identified Ms. Olohan's strengths including being a current pro tem in Mesa and Tempe, as well as the Presiding Judge in Cave Creek. She commented that Ms. Olohan understands how to apply the law and how to deal with administrative issues that arise. She indicated Ms. Olohan's background consists of being a foster mom, adoptive mom, prosecutor, and administrative law judge.

John Phebus, attorney, provided comments in support of Umayok Novell. He explained that he has tried multiple cases against Ms. Novell and has observed her handle complex dockets with a calm judicial demeanor, always treating everyone with the utmost respect. He reviewed his interactions with Ms. Novell as a prosecutor and while working on the Criminal Justice Committee of the State Bar. He mentioned Ms. Novell has a well-rounded background and he would highly recommend her for the Mesa Magistrate position.

Julia Martin, City of Tempe Victim Advocate, voiced her support for Danielle Harris. She commented as a victim advocate, she works with traumatized individuals, many of whom appear before Judge Harris in the courtroom. She explained the patience, compassion, and fairness that Judge Harris conveys to all individuals in her courtroom which speaks to her competency and ability to manage the courtroom. She added Judge Harris would be great fit for the Mesa Magistrate position.

Dr. Eula Saxon Dean, retired attorney and educator, spoke in support of Danielle Harris. She said she is proud to have been given the opportunity to be a mentor to Judge Harris. She highlighted Judge Harris's outstanding leadership in the community as a young professional of color. She encouraged the boardmembers to give Judge Harris strong consideration as her qualities of service are demonstrated through her strong spirit of integrity, dependable work ethic, seasoned legal background, community service, and by being a role model to young women of color all wrapped in a caring heart to support and encourage the leadership in others that will make the Mesa community a better place to live and serve.

Samantha Herd, City of Tempe court-appointed attorney, expressed her support for Danielle Harris. She indicated she has practiced in front of Judge Harris almost weekly for the past five years in the busy Tempe Court. She advised the boardmembers that Judge Harris is knowledgeable, efficient, and effectively manages her docket. She mentioned Judge Harris has an amazing demeanor where she is authoritative, yet calm. She pointed out from the standpoint of a defense attorney, her clients leave the courtroom feeling as if they were treated with respect and were heard. She remarked Judge Harris is the perfect candidate for the Mesa City Magistrate position.

Beth Barnes, Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor and Assistant City of Phoenix Prosecutor, conveyed her support for Umayok Novell. She mentioned she met Ms. Novell in 1999 while working as a City of Phoenix Prosecutor. She noted Ms. Novell's resume demonstrates her incredible achievements, including managing the high-profile training and technology unit, for which she has won various City of Phoenix Excellence awards. She explained when Ms. Novell trains new attorneys and interns, she leads by example, showing the importance of ethics and justice, while always being caring and compassionate. She explained Ms. Novell is the right candidate for Magistrate because of her motivation to be a full-time judge in Mesa, her desire to make a difference in people's lives, her continuous efforts to improve the justice system, her

unique set of skills and qualities, and her technology background which sets her apart to effectively manage the courtroom.

The following citizens submitted comments to be read in support of Laurel Workman:

- Dana Plitt
- Mary O'Neill

The speakers offered a series of comments regarding Ms. Workman's character including, but not limited to, the following:

- Intelligent, trustworthy, honest, dependable, and hard working
- Incredibly determined
- Compassionate and devoted
- Willingness to serve
- Has top-notch integrity, ethics, professionalism, and decision-making skills

The following citizens submitted comments to be read in support of Danielle Harris:

- Rachel Mitchell
- Jack Richards
- Jason Holmberg
- Pamela Neal

The speakers offered a series of comments regarding Ms. Harris's character including, but not limited to, the following:

- Well regarded by co-workers and opposing counsel
- Excellent work ethics, professionalism, and demeanor
- Respectful, knowledgeable, and fair
- Commitment to justice
- Caring, kind, and a heart for youth
- Community involvement

4. Convene an Executive Session.

It was moved by Vice Chairman Wirken, seconded by Boardmember Swanson, that the Board enter into an Executive Session at 8:17 a.m.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Sheffield-Wirken-Cattani-Finley-Humphrey-Kiley-Swanson

NAYS – None

Carried unanimously.

- a. Discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment, promotion or resignation of a public officer, appointee, or employee of the City. [A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(1)]

1. Review and discuss application and background materials of the candidates for the position of City Magistrate.

(At 8:48 a.m. the Executive Session adjourned, and the Board reconvened their regular meeting.)

(Chairman Sheffield declared a recess at 8:48. The meeting reconvened at 9:02 a.m.)

(Boardmember Finley was unavailable from 8:37 a.m. to 9:17 a.m. due to technical issues.)

5. Public interview of candidates for the position of City Magistrate.

The members of the Judicial Advisory Board posed selected interview questions to the following candidates: Danielle Harris, Umayok Novell, and Stephanie Olohan

(Chairman Sheffield declared a recess at 10:52 a.m. The interviews reconvened at 11:16 a.m.)

The members of the Judicial Advisory Board posed selected interview questions to the following candidates: Catherine Gaudreau, Stephen Umpleby, Laurel Workman, and Lorie Patrick.

(Chairman Sheffield declared a recess at 1:11 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 1:48 p.m. and the Boardmembers went into executive session.)

6. Recess interviews and reconvene an Executive Session.

It was moved by Boardmember Swanson, seconded by Boardmember Humphrey, that the Board enter into an Executive Session at 1:48 p.m.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Sheffield-Wirken-Cattani-Finley-Humphrey-Kiley-Swanson

NAYS – None

Carried unanimously.

- a. Discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment, promotion or resignation of a public officer, appointee, or employee of the City. [A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(1)]

1. Appointment of City Magistrate

(At 2:23 p.m. the Executive Session adjourned, and the Board reconvened their regular meeting.)

7. Discuss and take action on a recommendation to the City Council, identifying the recommended candidates for the vacant position of City Magistrate.

It was moved by Boardmember Swanson, seconded by Boardmember Cattani, that Stephanie Olohan, Stephen Umpleby, and Laurel Workman be recommended to the City Council as candidates for the vacant position of City Magistrate created by Judge Tatz's appointment as Presiding City Magistrate.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Sheffield-Wirken-Cattani-Finley-Humphrey-Kiley-Swanson
NAYS – None

Carried unanimously.

It was moved by Vice Chairman Wirken, seconded by Boardmember Kiley, that Stephanie Olohan, Lorie Patrick, and Stephen Umpleby be recommended to the City Council as candidates for the vacant position of City Magistrate created by Judge Fujii's retirement.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Sheffield-Wirken-Cattani-Finley-Humphrey-Kiley-Swanson
NAYS – None

Carried unanimously.

8. Discuss, consider, and approve granting Chairperson Sheffield the authority to draft a letter to the City Council regarding the recommendation of candidates.

It was moved by Boardmember Swanson, seconded by Boardmember Humphrey, that the Board approve Chairperson Sheffield's authority to draft a recommendation letter to the City Council for the recommended candidates.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Sheffield-Wirken-Cattani-Finley-Humphrey-Kiley-Swanson
NAYS – None

Carried unanimously.

9. Scheduling of meetings and general information:

Next meeting:

Wednesday, February 3, 2021, 7:45 a.m.
Lower Level Council Chambers
57 E. First Street

10. Adjourn.

Without objection, the Judicial Advisory Board adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Judicial Advisory Board meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 16th day of December 2020. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DEE ANN MICKELSEN, CITY CLERK