



Legislation Text

File #: 24-109, **Version:** 1

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SUBJECT: Appointments to the Citizens' Stipend Setting Commission with 6 Members to be Appointed by District and 1 Member to be Appointed At-Large

REPORT IN BRIEF

Considers the appointment of individuals to the Citizens' Stipend Setting Commission.

RECOMMENDATION

City Council - Adopt a motion accepting nominations and appointing one individual to each of the six City Council Districts and one individual to be appointed at-large to the Citizens' Stipend Setting Commission.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve and appoint individuals as recommended by staff; or,
2. Continue to a future meeting and direct staff to continue recruitment of applicants; or,
3. Deny the item.

AUTHORITY

City of Merced Charter, Section 402.

DISCUSSION

At the March 2020 Primary Election, citizens voted in favor of establishing a Citizens' Stipend Advisory Commission. The Citizen's Stipend Advisory Commission consist of seven (7) members to be appointed by the City Council from the qualified electors of the City. Six (6) members will be appointed by district and one (1) member will be appointed at large.

The Commission shall hold two (2) public hearings between March 1st and June 30th of every even-numbered year and shall recommend, by majority vote and in writing, to the Council the amount of the monthly stipend which it deems appropriate for the members of the Council for the two (2) year period beginning January 1st of the next year. The amount recommended for each council member shall be the same.

The Clerk's office began a recruitment campaign that consisted of a social media push over several weeks coordinated with the Public Information Officer to alert citizens of the vacancies, a series of emails for the board sent to over 5,000 recipients notifying the of the recruitment, and a public notice published on Merced County Times.

Seventeen applications have been submitted to the City Clerk's Office at the time of agenda

production and are attached.

District 1 - The Clerk's office received zero (0) applications.

District 2 - The Clerk's office received an eligible application from Anthony Aldana.

District 3 - The Clerk's office received eligible applications from Chelita Reed and Maria Diaz.

District 4 - The Clerk's office received eligible applications from Belinda Burnett and Cheryl Hirsch.

District 5 - The Clerk's office received eligible applications from Dorothea White, Edmundo Zaragoza, and Florence Lambert.

District 6 - The Clerk's office received eligible applications from Angel Santellano, David Duong, James Sanders, Jennifer McQueen, Richard (Rick) Wendling, Samantha Thompson, and Weston Boeding.

At Large - All applications above are eligible for the At-large position.

The Clerk's office also received two (2) additional applications from Leo Niehorster-Cook (District 5) and Xerxes Zangeneh (District 6). The Clerk's office uses the Merced County Registrar of Voters (ROV) to ensure the applicants are residents at the address provided on the application and to ensure the applicant resides in the district for the Commission. After contacting the ROV, they informed the Clerk's Office that the applicants are not registered voters at the address provided on the application. The Clerk's office reached out to the applicants twice to have them correct that with the ROV and have not heard back from them. As of February 14, 2024, the Clerk's office checked with the ROV one last time before the agenda was finalized and the applicants were not verified.

The matter of appointment is now before the Council.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

Staffing will be the primary impact with members from the City Manager, City Attorney, and City Clerk's Office assisting the committee.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Applications