

August 31, 2022

To the Yakima City Counsel,

Please consider this letter and resume in support of my appointment to the Yakima Municipal Court bench. I bring to this position 12 years of practice as a criminal defense attorney (including 5 in the Yakima Municipal Court), and 7 years of Judge Pro-Tem experience in the City of Yakima, City of Selah and Yakima County District Court.

As a court appointed attorney, I have learned how to manage large caseloads and a full calendar. I also work closely with members of our community who are actively navigating our legal system. I have gained valuable tools and techniques to effectively communicate with people who are dealing with substance abuse, mental health issues, underlying trauma, or are just anxious and afraid of the process. These skills are what makes me an excellent judge because I am able to both listen to the individuals appearing in front of me, and also accurately, and in a way that is easily understood, convey the law and my decision on the matters at issue.

As a Judge Pro-Tem, I have gained valuable judicial experience presiding over both criminal and civil court hearings including arraignments, pre-trial status dockets, trial confirmation hearings, mitigation and contested infraction hearings. Before each docket I take great care in reviewing court files to vet each case for potential conflicts of interest, determine the status of each case, and make sure that I am prepared to hold a meaningful hearing. If necessary, I consult RCWs or local codes to assess and verify all applicable laws. In addition, I have presided over three separate criminal trials. During my time as a Judge Pro-Tem in Yakima Municipal Court I have become well versed in the use of all of the computer programs used during the court dockets, including O Courts, JABS, and Laser Fiche. I am also familiar with general court procedures for calendaring cases for motions and other hearings.

By joining service-based organizations in this community I have used my time to not only assess the needs, but to learn the different backgrounds of the people that live in Yakima. Some of the organizations I belong to are very broad and serve the greater community as a whole and through those programs I've helped with food drives, organized large volunteer efforts and a (e.g., Young Women's Leadership Summit aimed at giving young middle school girls leadership skills to serve them in high school and beyond). I also work with organizations targeting specific groups in the community to increase access to justice, such as Yakima County Volunteer Attorney Services where I currently serve as President of the Board of Directors.

All of the above has given me a deep appreciation for our community. I have dedicated my career to serving the citizens of Yakima, and it would be a great honor to continue to serve in the capacity of a Municipal Court Judge. I look forward to discussing my qualifications with you further. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warm Regards,

/s/ Aryn M. Masters