

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Yakima City Council

From: Bob Harrison, City Manager

Date: August 31, 2022

RE: Municipal Court staffing

The Yakima Municipal Court will be undergoing significant personnel changes in 2023. Both Judge Kelly Olwell and Judge Susan Woodard will be retiring from the bench. Judge Woodard will be retiring on January 18, 2023. Judge Olwell will be retiring later that year. In addition, Court Services Manager Linda Hagert will be retiring on January 31, 2023. The Judges have appointed current Records Administrator Jodi Stephens to fill the Court Services Manager position. She will begin October 1, 2022 and train for 3 months with the current manager.

Under Section 1.60.040 of the Yakima Municipal Code, the City Manager recommends a judicial appointment to the City Council who is responsible for ratification to the position of judge. The appointment is valid until the next Municipal election in November 2023.

Consistent with Yakima Municipal Code, I hereby recommend appointment of Aryn Masters to the position of Judge effective January 18, 2023. Ms. Masters has served as the Judge Pro-Tem in the Yakima City Court since 2016 filling in for Judge Olwell and Judge Woodward as needed. She has also served as a Judge Pro-Tem with the City of Selah Municipal Court and the Yakima County District Court. Ms. Masters is also a full-time Attorney, providing counsel for indigent defendants for Yakima County Superior Court.

Ms. Masters graduated from Gonzaga University School of Law with a Juris Doctor degree and also has a Bachelor's degree from the University of Oregon.

Given the loss of so much institutional memory, Ms. Masters will provide strong continuity for maintaining the Municipal Court into 2023. With the future retirement of Ms. Olwell, we will do a search for an appointment for that position. As mentioned both candidates, plus anyone else who decides to run, would be on the ballot in November 2023.