



MEDINA, WASHINGTON

AGENDA BILL

Monday, July 8, 2024

Subject: Park Board Appointment Confirmations

Category: City Business

Staff Contact: Aimee Kellerman, CMC, City Clerk on behalf of the Personnel Committee

Summary

Park Board Position No. 6 opened on July 1, 2024, with the term expiration of Rebecca Johnston.

Ms. Johnston joined the Parks and Recreation Board in June of 2018, filling a partial term with the early departure of another volunteer. She was reappointed in June 2020 for a four-year term. Staff deeply appreciates her hard work and dedication to enhancing the enjoyment of Medina parks for everyone.

On June 13th, the panel interviewed Michelle Lei. Michelle has a professional background in technology and small business. She is an active community volunteer who has just wrapped up her time as Co-President of the Medina Elementary School PTA and is looking for her next projects. She brings both Board leadership experience and connections to local young families from her years of volunteering at the neighborhood public school; she also mentioned her connections within Medina's Asian community. She projected positive energy and engaged interest throughout the interview, and she won the panel's admiration with her questions and her repeated enthusiastic comments that she is interested in doing whatever needs to be done. The panel unanimously recommends her appointment to Position No. 6.

Additionally, after a period of low interest – including a vacancy lasting almost a year and an absence of Youth Advisor applications – the City received strong interest from excellent and enthusiastic candidates.

On June 10th, Council confirmed Dana Brekke to Position No. 2. The other applicants for Position No. 2, Mary Nelson and Rip Johnson, were also wonderful candidates, motivated and energetic. Like Ms. Brekke, both raised families in Medina and would bring an understanding of past park events and the strength of the Medina community, both spoke about their ability to draw on those past experiences to help in rebuilding community carrying forward, and both emphasized their commitment to be active participants in Park Board.

The fresh energy this group of proposed new members could bring, in combination with the steadiness of experience and consistent dedication of returning Park Board members, could be a major benefit to the City of Medina and the sense of community here, and to Medina's Parks. The interview panel wanted to find a way to expand the Park Board to include them all.

In collaboration with City Clerk Aimee Kellerman and City Attorney Jennifer Robertson, the interview panel arrived at a recommendation to create Alternate positions on the Park Board. An Alternate can fully participate in the committee but does not always vote; an Alternate sits as a voting member only when necessary for the Park Board to achieve a quorum. Importantly, in this proposal, the number of Park Board members needed to achieve quorum does not increase, but there are more people who qualify to fill that required number of seats. Alternate positions can therefore make it easier for the Park Board to expand its activities by making it easier to reach a quorum – in addition to simply expanding the team.

Goals of the proposed change include:

- growing the Park Board team so that it can better respond to pressures the City is experiencing, such as:
 - the identified need to rebuild Medina's sense of community,
 - increased – and continually increasing -- use of Medina's Parks as the regional population grows,
 - many newer City residents who have not yet become part of the City's history of community activities; and
 - need for Park Board capacity for new Work Plan items in addition to re-thinking and resuming traditional park events like the annual Egg Hunt;
- bringing aboard enthusiastic and highly qualified volunteers at the right time; and
- empowering the Park Board and affirming its importance to the City.

The interview panel (Personnel Committee members Mac Johnston and Jessica Rossman, together with Park Board Chair Barb Moe) recommends the following:

1. Appoint Michelle Lei to Park Board Position No. 6 for the term of July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2028.
2. Appoint Mary Nelson to Alternate 1.

Alternate Position 2 will be vacant as the third applicant Rip Johnson, after careful consideration declined the offer due to other projects and commitments.

This meets and supports Council's priorities 3 and 5.

Council Priorities:

1. Financial Stability and Accountability
2. Quality Infrastructure
3. Efficient and Effective Government
4. Public Safety and Health
5. Neighborhood Character and Community Building

Attachments

Applications of Michelle Lei and Mary Nelson.

Budget/Fiscal Impact: N/A

Recommendation: Approve.

City Manager Approval: 

Proposed Council Motion: "I move to appoint Michelle Lei to Position No. 6 and Mary Nelson to Alternate No. 1 on the Medina Parks and Recreation Board for a four-year term."