



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 6564
December 3, 2024
Regular Business

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6564: Board & Commission Appointments – Planning Commission (Resolution No. 1663)	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Appoint members to the Planning Commission.	

DEPARTMENT:	City Council
STAFF:	Salim Nice, Mayor Andrea Larson, City Clerk
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 Planning Commission Vacancies List of Planning Commission Applicants City Council Rules of Procedure, Section 8 Resolution No. 1663
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to appointment five members to the Planning Commission.

BACKGROUND

On May 7, 2024 City Council adopted Ordinance No. 24C-06 ([AB 6460](#)) reconstituting the Planning Commission effective January 1, 2025. Pursuant to Mercer Island City Code (MICC) 3.46.030, the Planning Commission membership will consist of two resident Lay Persons, one resident Paid Practitioner, and two non-resident Paid Practitioners.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The Planning Commission recruitment for five positions (see Exhibit 1) was advertised across several platforms, including a website news release, City Manager Reports, the MI Weekly newsletter, social media, and City Council and boards and commission meetings.

All board and commission members were encouraged to reach out to community members that might be willing to volunteer to apply for a position.

In response to outreach efforts, 28 applications (see Exhibit 2) were received by the November 19, 2024 in the following categories:

- 18 resident lay person applications
- 7 resident paid practitioner applications
- 3 non-resident paid practitioner applications were received.

Applicants self-selected the category for which they were applying.

The application materials were forwarded to the City Council for review on November 20, 2024.

APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Planning Commission Composition

Under [MICC 3.46.030](#), the Planning Commission should be comprised of the following:

- Two Paid Practitioner Non-Resident
- Two Lay Person Residents
- One Paid Practitioner Resident

The Paid Practitioner Non-Resident and the Paid Practitioner Resident will have experience in land use planning in the state of Washington and demonstrated experience in public service, working with the Growth Management Act, Shoreline Management Act, and State Environmental Policy Act.

Planning Commission Appointment Process

The board and commission appointment process, as detailed in Section 8.12 of the City Council Rules of Procedure (see Exhibit 3), provides that all appointments are made by a vote of the City Council during a regularly scheduled meeting. Each Councilmember will complete a written ballot, casting a vote for the identified open seat on a board or commission. If there is more than one open seat on a board or commission, then each position will be voted on separately. Ballots will be submitted to the City Clerk via email to comply with the Rules of Procedure and [RCW 42.30.060\(2\)](#). The City Clerk will read aloud the votes by each Councilmember.

The City Council Rules of Procedure are silent on the order in which applicants will be appointed. Staff recommends voting by category in the following order:

- One Paid Practitioner Resident
- Two Paid Practitioner Non-Resident
- Two Lay Person Residents

If no qualified paid practitioner seeks or is available for appointment, any vacancy may be filled by a resident lay person. Additionally, the City Council should give preference to appointing a Paid Practitioner Resident applicant for any open Planning Commission positions. Staff will include applicants for the Paid Practitioner Resident category in the ballot for both the Paid Practitioner Non-Resident and Lay Person Residents categories.

The applicant(s) that receive the most votes, provided they have received a minimum of four votes, will be appointed to the open seats on the Planning Commission.

Initial Appointment Terms

[Pursuant to MICC 3.46.030\(B\)\(2\)](#) the initial terms shall be staggered and set as follows:

- Positions 1 and 2 expire May 31, 2029
- Positions 3 and 4 expire May 31, 2028
- Position 5 expires May 31, 2027

The Mercer Island City Code does not provide direction on assignment of initial position terms related to the category of applicant. Staff recommends that the City Council first vote on the appointments to the Planning Commission, per the process outlined in Section 8.12 of the City Council Rules of Procedure (see Exhibit 2).

Caucus Option

Upon completion of the selection of the five individuals to serve on the Planning Commission, the City Council will recess so that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor may caucus with staff to prepare a recommendation on assignment of position terms. This is to ensure that there is a balanced distribution of position categories and term lengths. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will present their recommendation to the full City Council for review and approval.

If the majority of City Council do not agree with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's recommendation, City Council could proceed with the below alternative.

Alternative to Caucus Option

Upon completion of the selection of five individuals, the names will be put into a hat and for a random drawing to determine the term assignments. This approach aims to streamline operations and ensure a fair distribution of responsibilities among members. The names will be drawn individually to set Positions Nos. 1 – 5. The City Clerk will read the names and assigned position as the names are drawn.

Final Resolution

The names of the applicants selected, along with the position numbers, will be added to a resolution (see Exhibit 4), with final approval required by a vote of the City Council.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Conduct process to select Planning Commission members.
2. Approve Resolution No. 1663, appointing those voted on to fill the vacancies on the Planning Commission.