

# Municipal Court Judge Appointments

Presentation to Public Safety Committee | November 2021

#### Purpose



- O December 31, 2021 Term expiration of current judges within Municipal Court
  - Presiding Judge
  - Associate Judges
  - Downtown Community Court Judge
  - Substitute Judges
- Update on the steps to date and consider recommended Judges seeking reappointment or candidates seeking appointment



#### Qualifications

- O Judges must:
  - O Be a U.S. Citizen
  - O Live within the city limits the two (2) years prior to application
  - O Have two (2) years' experience in the practice of law in the State of Texas
  - O Be in good standing with the state bar



#### **Process**



- ☑ Ask sitting judges for a letter of interest
  - ☑ Confirm judges continue to meet qualifications for the position
  - ☑ Judges indicate which position they prefer Associate, Substitute, Night Magistrate
- ☑ Evaluate potential vacancies
- ☑ Presiding Judge identifies members of a Judicial Review Panel to recommend to the Public Safety Committee (PSC)
- ✓ Human Resources Department (HRD) posts vacancies
- ☑ Judicial Review Panel reviews letters of interest from sitting judges and applications for vacant positions
- O Judicial Review Panel recommends judges to the PSC
- O Public Safety Committee recommends judges to the City Council
- O December 2021: City Council appoints judges to a four-year term January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2025



## Judicial Review Panel (JRP)

- JRP members were contacted and a meeting was convened by the Presiding Judge
- Memorandum on the process, status, and JRP members sent on September 9, 2021

- O 2021 JRP Members:
  - O Betty Blackwell, Criminal Law Attorney
  - O Lucio A. Del Toro, First Assistant, Travis County Attorney's Office
  - Karly Jo Dixon, Managing Attorney, Texas Fair Defense Project
  - O Leah Downey-Gallatin, Staff Attorney, Travis County Courts at Law
  - O Joshua Griggers, Sergeant Robbery Unit, APD
  - Aaron Mueller, Criminal Law Attorney
  - Margaret Chen Kercher, Criminal Law Attorney
  - Amber Vasquez, Criminal Law Attorney
  - Sidney Williams, Criminal Law Attorney
  - O Dana Weis, Solo-practice Criminal Law Attorney





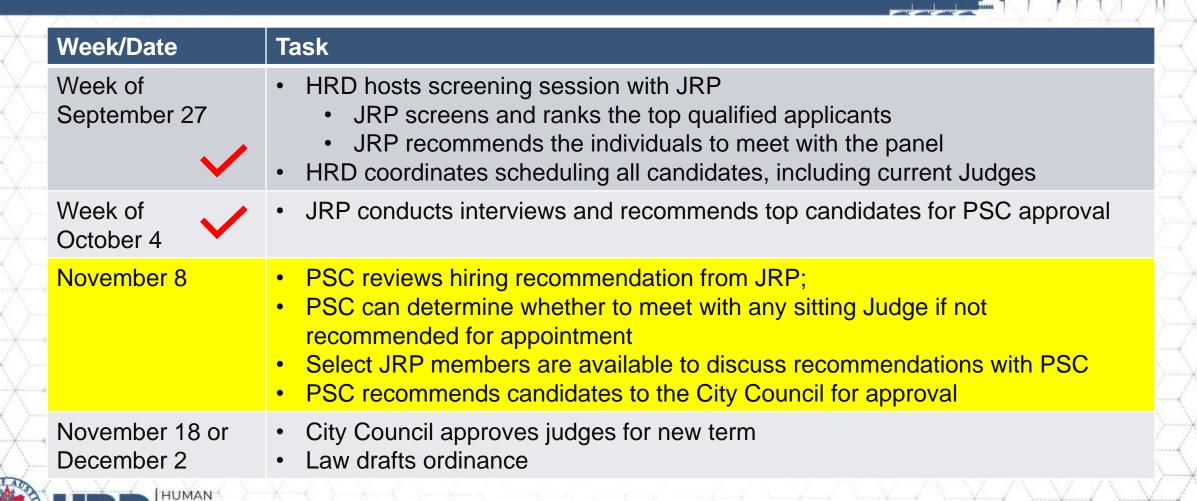
## Timeline 2021



	Week/Date	Task
-	July 19	<ul> <li>Municipal Court/HRD updates PSC on the Judicial process</li> <li>Reviews the JRP with the PSC</li> </ul>
	July 26 – August 6	<ul> <li>Municipal Court collects letters of intent from current judges, compile mid- and end- of term evaluations; creates files for each judge including evaluations and other pertinent information</li> <li>Assemble JRP</li> </ul>
	August 9 – September 7	<ul> <li>HRD begin formal advertisement</li> <li>Positions posted on niche websites, social media, and with local bar and criminal defense organizations</li> </ul>
	September 8 – 24	<ul> <li>HRD screens applications</li> <li>Meeting with JRP is scheduled to review applications and letters of intent</li> </ul>



#### **Timeline 2021 Continued**





#### **Screening & Interviews**

- O The JRP reviewed sitting judges and applicants
- JRP evaluated the candidates and have a recommendation for the PSC

#### **Today**

- O PSC will review the recommendation from the JRP
- O The PSC may accept the recommendation or conduct additional interviews





# Questions?