

# Judicial Committee Meeting Transcript – 04/30/2020

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[3:33:57 PM]

>> Flannigan: I call this meeting of the city council judicial meeting to order. I am councilmember Flannigan, chair of the committee, with vice-chair Casar and members mayor pro tem Garza and councilmember harper-madison. We only have one item on our agenda, and without objection we'll move into executive session. The committee will now go into closed session to take up two items pursuant to section 551071 of the Texas government code, committee will discuss legal issues regarding appointments to the city of Austin municipal court and item 003, judicial appointments to the city of Austin municipal court. Without objection the committee will now go into executive session. See y'all there in a second.

[Executive session].

[4:56:38 PM]

[Music]

[5:01:18 PM]

>> Flannigan: Okay. We are now out of closed session. In closed session we discussed legal matters related to items jc002 and jc003. Colleagues, we are posted to make a recommendation and I will entertain a motion.

>> Harper-madison: Can you hear me okay?

>> Flannigan: Yes, we can.

>> Harper-madison: I'd like to move that we recommend both judges we interviewed today and additionally I would like to move that we also recommend judge Tanesha Jeffreys. >>

>> Flannigan: So for clarity, I want to clarify and we'll ask for a second, we would be asking judge key take over for the term that gingers resigned from, but recommend that azegerra and

[5:02:21 PM]

Jeffreys be assigned to the positions in light of the staffing changes at the municipal court because of the coronavirus.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you for the clarity, yes.

>> Flannigan: Do I have a second? Mayor pro tem seconds. Any discussion? Councilmember Casar.

>> Casar: I want to thank everybody that applied and also on the panel that helped with the interviews. I think we're in this really critical moment where we want everybody to be able to be processed quickly that needs a magistrate and the staffing challenges are real and so I think people being able to step up into this job is really important. I think it's important to note also that these terms will be ending relatively soon, chair, am I right that it's December of next year?

>> Flannigan: It is the end of next year, that's right.

>> Casar: So we are adding more of these part-time judges because of this immediate crisis, but I

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would anticipate next year or as we get to the next of the terms, there will have to be scrutiny about the right number of judges for us to have and we'll look at the entire slate at that point. So this is a temporary thing I think for us to have this number of judges potentially, but it's really important for right now. I'd like to thank everybody that applied and the folks that we're recommending so that we can have adequate staffing at the jail.

>> Flannigan: Further discussion?

>> Garza: I'll just add that I think -- I want to thank everyone who applied and the panel. I really appreciate the panel's work in helping us make these decisions, and, you know, I think one of the great things about all of these applicants that we were considering is that they have previous magistration experience and that's really important so they could just get in there and start working as we're facing significant challenges in a variety of ways. So thank you to the applicants, thank you to the panel.

[5:04:23 PM]

>> Flannigan: Thank you, mayor pro tem. If there's not any further discussion, we have a motion and a second. All in favor please raise your hand? Thank you. That is a unanimous vote in support of the recommendation moved by councilmember harper-madison. Those are all the items we are posted to discuss today. Thank you to my colleagues and to all of the participants and applicants in this process, and I'm glad to see that even in the midst of a coronavirus pandemic we can continue to keep the necessary machinery of government moving forward. Thank you, everybody. At 5:04 P.M. --

>> Casar: Before you close out, I think it is important -- I saw a national sort of database of where some of the most significant outbreaks are happening across the country. And just a huge percentage of those were in jails. And so not only are we keeping the functions of government going, but I think that you bringing us here together is an important step to keep getting people in the system

[5:05:24 PM]

hopefully out if it's at all possible, and that's an important part of the response. So thank you for getting us together, chair Flannigan.

>> Flannigan: And we will have our regular judicial committee meeting in may. What we will be able to posted about a number of other topics, but for today we are adjourned at 5:05 P.M. Thank you, everybody.