

### APPLICANT REVIEW PANEL

### PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

February 19-21, 2020

#### February 19, 2020

Chair: Ms. Dickison

Vice Chair: Mr. Belnap

Call to order by Ms. Dickison took place at 9:34 a.m.

Roll call was taken and all members present: Mr. Belnap, Mr. Coe and Ms. Dickison

After soliciting comment from panel members and the public, Ms. Dickison then moved to adopt the minutes from the December 19, 2019 meeting, as written. Mr. Belnap seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Dickison welcomed everyone to the Applicant Review Panel (Panel) meeting and briefly explained that the purpose of the meeting was to select 120 of the most qualified applicants, 40 individuals from each of the three pools (Democratic, Republican and Not Affiliated), to interview in-person for the Citizens Redistricting Commission beginning in early March. They would also select the schedule, format and ground rules of the interviews during this meeting. She wished to accomplish agenda items 1 through 6, and 8, this morning and then move on to agenda item seven in the afternoon when they would start to select or remove applicants from the first pool of applicants not affiliated with the Democratic or Republican parties.

Ms. Dickison stated that public comments would be taken throughout the meeting, but would be limited to two minutes due to the amount of work that needed to be accomplished. Those watching via livestream could submit comments to the applicant review panel email address on the website. She then addressed standard housekeeping issues and the need to take a break at least every 90 minutes.

Ms. Dickison provided a brief recap of the December meeting in which the applicant pool was reduced to 342 applicants, all of whom have been considered for interviews. For those who have, or will, be removed from the pool, she described the opportunities available to participate in numerous local redistricting commissions being established



throughout the state. She explained that those who are selected to move on would receive instructions and scheduling information for their interview.

Mr. Belnap suggested that as they move on to the Democratic and Republican pools, and they rotate Chair over the next two days, each panel member should facilitate the discussions regarding at least one pool. He then thanked the candidates who applied, and the California State Auditor's Office (Office) staff who supported the processing of Form 700s and the conduct of background checks. He described how he approached this most recent review and how he refrained from considering social media issues raised by background checks at this stage of the review. Mr. Coe and Ms. Dickison supported his approach.

Ms. Dickison then introduced the Office Counsel Report that was provided by Chief Counsel Stephanie Ramirez-Ridgeway in Mr. David King's absence. Ms. Ridgeway discussed the Form 700 processing, staff support of Panel inquiries regarding applicants, the background check process, and review and coordination with the applicants. She provided an overview of the interview process, including scheduling and travel arrangements. On behalf of the Office, Ms. Ridgeway thanked every single person who took the time to apply to serve on the Commission. Mr. Belnap clarified the turnaround of information from Office staff to the Panel during this meeting, and stated that although they were taking up individual pools over the next two days, no decisions would be finalized until Friday, February 21, 2020.

Ms. Dickison moved to agenda item 6 to address a list of 15 applicants who had requested to withdraw from further consideration. The list was distributed to the Panel and made available to the public. Ms. Ramirez-Ridgeway read the name of the 15 applicants into the record. Ms. Dickison offered a motion to eliminate the applicants who had requested withdrawal, which was seconded by Mr. Coe. No public comments were offered and the Panel voted unanimously on the motion to withdraw them from the pool.

Ms. Dickison then introduced Mr. Dawson who provided the Panel counsel's report. Mr. Dawson thanked Office Counsel and the entire Office staff for their support of the Panel throughout. He called attention to several public comment letters and emails that were available at the back of the room. He then described the list of reports that were to be distributed to the Panel by individual pool showing the combined results of their most recent reviews and associated demographic information. Mr. Dawson then addressed preliminary issues related to the upcoming interviews. These issues were set forth in a confidential memo he had prepared, and consisted of a choice of interview schedules, a proposed interview format, ground rules and several suggested interview questions that would be asked of each interviewee. He recommended that the Panel waive the privilege attached to the document and the Panel unanimously agreed. The memo was distributed to the Panel and made available to the public and on the website.



Ms. Dickison then moved on to agenda item 8 and addressed the interview schedule, format and ground rules. The Panel agreed to select an interview schedule that consisted of four 90 minute interviews each day to be conducted each Monday through Thursday over eight weeks. The interviews would begin at 9:00 AM each day with a 15-minute break in between and a one-hour lunch. The first day would begin at 8:30 AM to address Panel business. The interviews would include 20 minutes for panel counsel to ask a set of standard questions previously provided to the applicants, followed by 20 minutes for each Panel member to ask their own questions. The applicant would then have time for a closing statement.

The Panel then discussed the set of suggested standard questions in the memo in depth, and selected five questions that they revised with input from the public. Mr. Quincy (public), Mr. Jonathan Stein (Asian-Americans Advancing Justice) and Ms. Shellenberger (California Common Cause) provided their input. Following agreement on the language of each question, Ms. Dickison offered a motion to adopt each question individually. The Panel then proposed and adopted motions to adopt the interview schedule and format. Mr. Belnap addressed an issue he had with the ground rules regarding applicant disqualification during the interview process as it pertained to the roles of the panel and counsel, and agreement was reached.

Public comment was then received from Ms. Shellenberger of Common Cause, Ms. Goldberg, of the League of Women Voters, Mr. Stein of Asian-Americans Advancing Justice, Ms. Coto of NALEO, and Mr. Sanchez of the Coalition for Human Immigrant Rights.

Ms. Dickison then requested the reports for the list of applicants remaining in the pool of those not affiliated with either party. Mr. Dawson directed the secretary to distribute the reports to the Panel and make them available at the back of the room and on the website. Ms. Dawson recommended a recess for Panel members to review the reports and they recessed at 11:48 AM until 1:00 PM.

Ms. Dickison reconvened the meeting at 1:03 PM. She explained that the Panel would begin using the report that listed all applicants not affiliated with either major party who had received three favorable recommendations from all Panel members. They would add applicants to that list to develop a list of approximately 40 to move forward.

During the course of the last six months, the Panel Members have each had the dedicated assistance of a Staff Services Manager assigned only to them. These analysts joined them at the table in the afternoon to assist during the meeting. Mr. Belnap introduced Ms. Britani Keszler, Ms. Dickison introduced Ms. Mary Delaney, and Mr. Coe introduced Ms. Olivia Lawrence.



Mr. Coe provided a summary of how he had conducted his review and how he evaluated each candidate during the last two months. Mr. Belnap also discussed his approach. The Panel then began to take turns recommending and discussing an applicant to add to the list of individuals from the pool to invite for an interview. If they all agreed, the applicant was added to the list. If they did not, they set that name aside on a separate list. They continued throughout the afternoon, recessing briefly at 1:48 PM, until they had a list of 39 applicants from the not affiliated pool and 6 applicants whose names were set aside during the course of the day. The Panel unanimously decided to combine the lists for a tentative list of 45 and reserve their final decision until Friday, February 21, 2020, when they would decide upon and vote to move 40 applicants forward to the interview phase.

At Ms. Dickison's request, Panel counsel, Mr. Dawson read the names of the 45 applicants from the not affiliated pool into the record who would move forward to a final decision on February 21.

Ms. Dickison then requested the reports and lists for the Democratic and Republican pools that would be taken up on Thursday, February 20. Mr. Dawson agreed and those reports were distributed to the Panel and public, and added to the website. Mr. Dawson described the reports and the plan to address them on Thursday.

Ms. Dickison recessed the meeting until 9:30 AM Thursday at 3:17 PM.

### **February 20, 2020**

Chair: Mr. Belnap

Vice Chair: Mr. Coe

Mr. Belnap reconvened the Applicant Review Panel meeting at 9:30 AM on Thursday and stated that the Panel will continue from where they left off at agenda item 7. He briefly reviewed the ground rules for the meeting.

In an opening statement, Mr. Belnap discussed the selection process for citizens to serve on the Redistricting Commission as contained in the California Constitution and the State Auditor's charge to carry out that selection process without the use of formulas or specific ratios when ensuring the process is reflective of the state's diversity. He acknowledged that the Panel had received numerous public comments and letters.

Mr. Belnap then moved on to address the Republican pool of applicants, noting that there were 25 candidates who had received three favorable recommendations from the Panel, and the need to add at least 15 more in the same manner as yesterday.



Beginning with Ms. Dickison, the Panel began to take turns recommending and discussing an applicant to add to the list of individuals from the pool to invite for an interview. If they all agreed, the applicant was added to the list. If they did not, they set that name aside on a separate list. They continued throughout the morning, recessing for 20 minutes at 10:20 AM, until they had a list of 40 applicants from the Republican pool and 5 applicants whose names were set aside during the course of the day. The Panel unanimously decided to combine the lists for a tentative list of 45 and reserve their final decision until Friday, February 21, 2020, when they would decide upon and vote to move 40 applicants forward to the interview phase.

At Mr. Belnap's request, Panel counsel, Mr. Dawson read the names of the 45 applicants from the Republican pool into the record who would move forward to a final decision on February 21.

Mr. Belnap called for a recess at 11:19 AM until 1:00.

At 1:02 PM, Mr. Belnap reconvened the meeting to address the Democratic pool.

Mr. Dawson requested that he address two small items prior to moving forward. One was to correct the Applicant ID number he had read into the record for Ms. Koenig-Sanko to 6881. Secondly, he confirmed that the Office had received a request for withdrawal from Democrat, Mr. Miguel Arias, applicant number 7907. The secretary distributed the notice to the Panel and made it available in the back of the room and on the website. Mr. Belnap moved to accept the withdrawal, which was seconded by Ms. Dickison. Seeing no public comments, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Belnap then discussed the Democratic pool in which there were 14 applicants who had received three favorable recommendations from all Panel members, and a need to add at least 26 more to the list. Because of the high qualifications of those in the pool, he recommended moving quickly through their discussions on each recommendation.

Beginning with Ms. Dickison, the Panel began to take turns recommending and discussing an applicant to add to the list of individuals from the pool to invite for an interview. If they all agreed, the applicant was added to the list. If they did not, they set that name aside on a separate list. They continued throughout the afternoon, recessing for 20 minutes at 3:07 PM, until they had a list of 38 applicants from the Democratic pool and 7 applicants whose names were set aside during the course of the day. The Panel unanimously decided to combine the lists for a tentative list of 45 and reserve their final decision until Friday, February 21, 2020, when they would decide upon and vote to move 40 applicants forward to the interview phase.



At Mr. Belnap's request, Panel counsel, Mr. Dawson read the names of the 45 applicants from the Democratic pool into the record who would move forward to a final decision on February 21.

Mr. Belnap recessed the meeting until 9:30 AM Thursday at 4:05 PM.

### **February 21, 2020**

Chair: Mr. Coe

Vice Chair: Ms. Dickison

Mr. Coe reconvened the Applicant Review Panel meeting at 9:30 AM on Friday, noting a quorum was present. He briefly reviewed the ground rules for the meeting. Mr. Belnap offered his comments on the selection process and looked forward to their exercising collaborative judgement in the final decisions to be made today.

Mr. Coe then reviewed the Panel's progress over the last two days in settling on three tentative groups of 45, one for each political party subgroup. He noted that Counsel and staff had prepared new reports consisting of those subgroups and their associated demographic summaries. He requested those reports from Mr. Dawson.

Mr. Dawson described each report and asked the secretary to distribute them to the Panel and make them available in the back of the room and on the website.

Mr. Coe requested public comments at this time, and seeing none, suggested a recess for the Panel to review them. Mr. Belnap suggested numbering the applicants in each pool, and it was clarified that the list of applicants' names were in the order they were added to each pool. Mr. Coe called a recess at 9:42 AM for 30 minutes.

Mr. Coe called the meeting back to order at 10:18 AM. He recommended reviewing the overall demographics of the combined tentative pools of 135 candidates. Ms. Dickison noted the limited number of applicants from the north coast, and Mr. Belnap noted the larger number from the south coastal region.

Mr. Coe recommended taking up each pool of candidates in the order they were discussed originally, beginning with the not affiliated pool of candidates. They were in agreement with the first 39 on the list and settled on a final selection for the 40<sup>th</sup> applicant from the original list of those set aside. The Panel then addressed the Republican pool of candidates and after some discussion they agreed unanimously that the first 40 applicants on the list were those who should move forward to interview. Finally addressing the Democratic pool, the Panel was in agreement with the first 38 on



the list and settled on a final selection for the last two applicants from the original list of 7 set aside previously.

Mr. Coe then requested a recess to allow staff to compile the final lists of 40 applicants from each pool who would be invited to an interview in March. The meeting was recessed at 10:42 AM until 1:00 PM.

Mr. Coe reconvened the meeting at 1:13 PM and requested that Mr. Dawson distribute the final reports to the panel. Mr. Dawson described each report and asked the secretary to distribute them to the Panel and make them available in the back of the room and on the website.

Mr. Coe asked for public comment at this time. Ms. Coto and Mr. Quincy provided comments.

Mr. Coe then made a series of motions in which the Panel would vote to invite the 40 applicants from each pool as reflected in the reports for an interview. He accepted Mr. Dawson's offer to read the names of the 40 applicants in each pool into the record prior to the motion.

Mr. Coe moved to invite 40 applicants from the not affiliated pool for an interview, which was seconded by Ms. Dickison after requesting public comment, and seeing none. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Coe moved to invite 40 applicants from the Republican pool for an interview, which was seconded by Ms. Dickison after requesting public comment, and seeing none. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Coe moved to invite 40 applicants from the not affiliated pool for an interview, which was seconded by Mr. Belnap after requesting public comment, and seeing none. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Coe then brought forward the final motion to eliminate all other applicants, regardless of political affiliation, if they did not appear on any of the three reports, from further consideration for the Citizens Redistricting Commission. Mr. Belnap seconded the motion after requesting public comment, and seeing none, and it carried unanimously.

Each Panel member then provided a final statement to thank all applicants for participating in the selection process. Ms. Ramirez- Ridgeway provided one final comment to thank the Panel and staff, and the public for participating.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 PM.

