



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**14-813

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**Agenda Item Number:** 17.

**Agenda Date:** 4/10/2014

**In Control:** City Council A Session

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**DEPARTMENT:** Municipal Courts

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** John W. Bull, Presiding Judge

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** City Wide

### **SUBJECT:**

Appointment and re-appointment of Municipal Court Judges

### **SUMMARY:**

This item appoints two full-time Municipal Court Judges, one part-time Municipal Court Judge, and re-appoints seven full-time Municipal Court Judges effective May 1, 2014.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Municipal Court Judges are appointed by City Council for two-year terms. The current terms expire April 30, 2014. Municipal Court Judges must: (1) be a U.S. Citizen; (2) a Texas resident; (3) a licensed attorney in good standing; (4) have practiced law in Texas for a minimum of two years; and (5) a resident of the City of San Antonio for at least three years immediately preceding appointment.

There are currently nine full-time Municipal Court Judges. Judge Alfredo Tavera and Judge Robert Lipo are not seeking reappointment to the position of full-time Judge which creates two full-time vacancies. Judge Tavera has expressed a desire to serve as a part-time Municipal Judge for the term beginning May 1, 2014. Notices of the vacancies were advertised in the Express-News and with the San Antonio and Mexican American Bar Associations, and 32 applications were received. On March 31, 2013, the Governance Committee interviewed 6 candidates and based on their qualifications and the interviews, the Committee recommends the appointments of Lisa M. Gonzalez and Margarita S. Pol. Ms. Gonzalez was licensed in 2000 and is an associate with Davidson Troilo Ream & Garza where she represents multiple small Texas cities in the prosecution of Class C Misdemeanors. Ms. Pol was licensed in 1997 and works for the Office of the District Attorney in

Wilson County where she prosecutes Class B - felony cases.

Based on the recommendation of Presiding Municipal Court Judge John Bull and the confirmation that each of the 7 current Municipal Court Judges continue to meet the qualifications to serve, the Governance Committee also recommends the re-appointment of the 7 incumbent Municipal Court Judges and the appointment of Judge Alfredo Tavera as a part-time Municipal Court Judge.

Annual salaries for the full-time judges are established at \$101,290.00. Part-time judges are paid an hourly rate of \$43.71. Life insurance and health and retirement benefits currently extended to City employees are extended to the full-time Municipal Court Judges.

#### **ISSUE:**

Terms of office for Municipal Court Judges will expire on April 30, 2014. Consideration and recommendation for appointment of candidates to fill 2 vacancies and the re-appointment of the incumbent Municipal Court Judges is needed.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The alternative would require qualification of new applicants, thus delaying the official term of office.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Judicial salaries are part of the Court's FY 2013-2014 budget.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the appointment and re-appointment of Municipal Court Judges.