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## Candidates to fill Fritzky's council seat to be interviewed last week of September

By Nick Marnell

Eleven candidates, nine of whom filed on the last possible day, applied to fill the Moraga Town Council seat vacated by the August resignation of Jeanette Fritzky. The position will be filled immediately upon the appointment of an applicant, and the term of office will expire in December 2020.

The council opted to use an application-interview-appointment process to fill the vacancy, similar to the procedure used by Lafayette in 2016 to select Ivor Samson to fill a vacant seat on its governing board. The applications, due on Sept. 12, included questions on the candidate's background and a statement of qualifications. The candidate also had to describe a vision for Moraga and key issues facing the community. The town expects to make the applications public by Sept. 25.

The 11 applicants range from a lawyer to a financial advisor to an education consultant to a Moraga planning commissioner to a former director of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District. Candidate interviews, the next step in the process, will take place on Sept. 25 and 26 at the Moraga town chambers. The interviews will be conducted by the four town council members.

"We need a half hour with each of them," suggested Council Member Kymberleigh Korpus, and the council agreed on an interview format of a five minute candidate statement followed by 25 minutes of questions and answers. The Sept. 25 meeting will begin at 6 p.m. and the meeting the following evening will start one hour later.

As an edge might be gained for a candidate who listens to preceding interviews, the council agreed that the order of the interviews would be selected at random by the town clerk and published ahead of the meeting.

The fact that some candidates would attempt to grab that edge did not faze at least two council members.

"It would not affect my opinion one way or the other as these are open and public meetings," Roger Wykle said, and Korpus agreed. "It would not negatively affect my opinion of a candidate at all if that candidate sat through all the prior interviews in an attempt to improve their performance during their own interview," she said.

A decision on the candidate could be made at the end of the Sept. 26 session, or the council could push back the decision to a succeeding council meeting, as long as the council names Fritzky's successor by Oct. 21. Should the council fail to do so, the town would be required to hold a special election at cost that could exceed \$100,000.

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