

My decision to deny the previous slate of candidates for the Planning Commission at the Jan. 4th City Council Meeting - my first in office- was not done lightly.

Since mid-Dec., I knew these appointments would be on the agenda. I reached out to mayors I met at classes sponsored by the League of Oregon Cities in early December for advice and input.

Two mayors, in particular, read Manzanita's charter and the Rules of Procedure and confirmed that, although a procedure was in place, there were flaws. Plus, it had not been previously tested. Both mayors confirmed that our Charter (our constitution) superceded the Rules of Procedure, and that the mayor had the right granted through the Charter to make the appointments — unless the charter was changed through a vote of the citizens.

Next, I went to our City Manager and 2 councilors and told them I planned to ask for extended time to review all of the applicants before making the appointments. There were no secrets. Upholding the duties of Mayor to the best of my abilities - to me - meant researching the process and all the applicants rather than rubber stamping 3 names about whom I knew little. Councilman Mayerly had previously expressed the same concern.

While the council spent work sessions to improve the “select committee process,” I followed similar steps. In addition to those, I outlined the skill set of 3 of the 4 current commissioners with an eye towards balance. I met with Jenna and Karen to share their interview conversations. I used a decision matrix on all the candidates - based on the criteria, and interviewed all of those applicants who were not previously interviewed.

I met with Karen again to understand what issues the Planning Commission would be facing.

Ultimately, I selected 3 candidates whom I felt would bring the best balance to the current planning Commission and the multitude of heavy issues they are facing.

I also want to add that I was deeply saddened when the initial slate was made public on Dec. 30th. No doubt, with more experience under my belt, this horrific embarrassment could have been avoided. My sincerest apologies to those of you who were awarded the position only to have it taken away. The spirit of volunteerism is a cornerstone to our community's future and, very much appreciated.

This council worked long and hard in January to improve and finalize the "select committee" process that was approved today, with the hope that we have created a process to provide fairness, transparency and balanced input from citizens and all council members alike.

[For the 2 year appointment:](#)

Frank Squillo - Frank lives full time in the Urban Growth Boundary (which was a factor important to Jenna and Karen) - he is a retail owner in Nehalem so brings a connection to our neighboring community. Frank has previous experience on the Planning Commission in the Oak Lawn Neighborhood near Dallas, Texas. He also has 40 years of experience in radio and television so understands "messaging."

[For one of the 4 year appointments:](#)

John Collier -John is a full time resident of Manzanita - a graduate from the University of Oklahoma with a Business degree and also studies in regional planning. He retired after working 43 years as an architect (mainly on large commercial jobs). John believes all plans should be complete before they go before the Planning Commission - including land use, trees, utilities, environmental impact, livability issues, trails and traffic easements, etc.. He has previous experience on the Planning Commission in Kalthmat, Washington.

[The second 4 year appointment:](#)

Thomas Christ - Tom is a second-home owner (which was important to Jenna and Karen) who has spent 40 years as a lawyer and 30 years as a part-time judge - he is currently active in both and hopes / plans to retire to Manzanita. Tom has served on local commissions, boards, councils and committees, and is familiar with Oregon's statewide land-use planning laws. He has handled some of these cases professionally. He describes himself as a "judge who asks questions."

I would like to thank everyone for your patience and also the strong support received from citizens.