



Legislation Text

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**File #:** 17-854, **Version:** 1

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**City Council Meeting Date:** June 6, 2017

**To:** Mayor and City Council

**From:** Ben Martig, City Administrator

Discussion of Charter Commissioner Appointment Process.

**Action Requested:**

The Northfield City Council

**Summary Report:**

Please see attached email and related documentation related to recent issues surrounding appointments of Charter Commission members as background.

I have recently had discussions on potential resolution to the issue with Mayor Pownell and subsequently met with Charter Commission Chair Ludescher and Charter Commissioner Heisler this morning (June 2, 2017) on a potential administrative solution going forward related to receiving and submitting eligible applications to the Chief Judge. The conceptual solution is to create a written process that would clarify the taking of names and submission of all eligible applications to the Chief District Judge. There would be no local *nominations* proposed to with this process to narrow the list for the judge to consider if there were more applications than appointments. Ultimately, the Chief District Judge would decide the appointments at their discretion.

A new Chief District Judge takes office July 1. The intent is to share this process with the Chief District Judge so they are aware of the process once it is codified. In the event that an application is submitted directly to the District Court Judge, the concept is that they would be aware of the prescribed process and guide the applicant through that codified procedure as adopted by the Charter Commission. However, the ultimate authority of the appointment still would lie with the Chief Judge.

As it relates to the immediate issue of appointments, applicant David Roberts has voluntarily withdrawn his application. If this aforementioned written process were agreed upon, the appointments of Colby and Schotzko would be proposed to be recognized by the Charter Commission next meeting.

This proposed solution does not formally address the issue of whether Statutes allow the Council or Charter Commission to submit nominations to the District Judge. It also does not legally restrict a direct application to the District Court Judge. However, as noted earlier, the administrative procedure should flag the issue for review should it come up. In the event the Charter Commission or City Council would like to further explore the topic of pursuing the option of processing “nominations” or “narrowing recommendations prior to

submitting to the judge” further they would do so as a separate issue from this proposed immediate solution.

**Alternative Options:**

None proposed. There is no formal action of Council being suggested or requested at this time.

**Financial Impacts:**

None.

**Tentative Timelines:**

The intent for the City Administrator, City Clerk, Charter Chair Ludescher and Charter Commissioner Heisler is to cooperatively prepare a procedure for Charter Commission review at their next meeting in June. Additionally, Commissioners Colby and Schotzko would be proposed to be recognized concurrent with this new process to be adopted and followed going forward.