

City of San Antonio



Minutes Municipal Court Advisory Committee

2023 – 2025 Council Members

Chair: Jalen McKee Rodriguez, District 2
Teri Castillo, District 5 | Melissa Cabello Havrda, District 6
Marina Alderete Gavito, District 7 | Manny Pelaez, District 8

Monday, January 29, 2024

1:00 PM

City Hall

The Municipal Court Advisory Committee convened a regular meeting in the City Hall Council Briefing Room beginning at 1:06 PM. Deputy City Clerk, Aurora Perkins took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

Members Present: Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, *Chair*
Teri Castillo, *Member*
Melissa Cabello Havrda, *Member*
Marina Alderete Gavito, *Member*
Manny Pelaez, *Member*

Members Absent: None

Approval of Minutes

1. **Approval of the minutes from the Municipal Court Advisory Committee meeting on December 05, 2023.**

Councilmember Castillo moved to Approve the minutes of the December 5, 2023 Municipal Court Advisory Committee meeting. Councilmember Cabello Havrda seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: McKee-Rodriguez, Castillo, Cabello Havrda, Alderete Gavito, Pelaez

Public Comments

None.

Briefing on the following items

2. Overview of process to appoint Municipal Court Judges. [Carla Obledo, Presiding Judge, Municipal Court]

Presiding Judge Carla Obledo provided an overview of the appointment process for Municipal Court Judges. She noted that there were 10 full-time judges and nine part-time judges who served two-year term and were appointed by the City Council.

Obledo reviewed the role of the City Council in the appointment process to include the appointment action of the Municipal Court Judges. She added that the recruitment process was not provided for in statute. She stated that the process was done through advertisement for judges to apply and she reviewed the minimum requirements for individuals to apply for consideration. Obledo added that each applicant would have a background check conducted for no criminal history and licensing requirements.

Obledo reviewed the role of the Municipal Court Advisory Committee to include consideration of applicants who meet minimum qualifications, conduct interviews and deliberations with recommendations to the full City Council for consideration.

DISCUSSION

Chair McKee-Rodriguez asked for clarification on the required 16 hours of judicial training required of each appointed judge. Obledo stated that the training was required by the State of Texas. Chair McKee-Rodriguez asked for more information on the training received. Obledo stated that training was conducted at Legislative Conferences and other educational sessions for specific topics.

Chair McKee-Rodriguez requested the schedule of when judges were in session. Chair McKee-Rodriguez asked how the Committee and staff could increase marketing and advertising for open judge positions. City Attorney Andy Segovia stated that staff could provide recommendations.

Chair McKee-Rodriguez asked if judges were evaluated on performance. Obledo confirmed that all judges were evaluated on an annual basis with emphasis on timeliness of cases and providing justice.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked if the evaluations were available for review. Obledo confirmed that City Council was provided evaluations for review.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked if judges had term limits and what was the average time served. Obledo stated that there were no term limits and that the average time served of current judges was 10 years.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked for clarification on how judges were evaluated. Obledo stated that it varied by judge due to their docket specialty but that evaluations were done based on

their docket and ratings. Obledo stated that it stressed that cases be seen in a timely manner for justice consideration. Councilmember Alderete Gavito stressed the importance of timely justice and to make sure that cases were prosecuted properly. City Attorney Segovia stressed that cases needed to be judged on the facts of the case and not just for prosecution.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda asked if there was an exhausted list for limitations of consideration to appoint a judge. City Attorney Segovia stated that there was not a list but consideration was on a case by case basis. Councilmember Cabello Havrda expressed interest in developing a list for certain crimes.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda asked for clarification on the City Charter requirements for residency to serve as a judge and differing from State law requirements. City Attorney Segovia stated that the current Charter Review Committee could address Charter language from specific Charter reference to be specific to State law requirements to residency.

Councilmember Castillo asked how many hours part-time judges worked and how wages compared related to compensation. Obledo stated that data would need to be evaluated to see how City of San Antonio wages for judges compared to other cities. Councilmember Castillo stated that it was important to make sure that wages were comparable to other cities and requested a comparison to be performed.

Councilmember Castillo asked if there were avenues for recruitment which were more successful than others. Obledo stated that currently there was not a way to confirm where applicants gained information on recruitment. City Attorney Segovia stated that staff would match advertising conducted for City Attorney positions.

Chair McKee-Rodriguez asked the Committee if there were recommendations for advertising of judge positions. City Attorney Segovia stated that staff would work to develop better timeline on advertising and notify law associations of upcoming application process. Obledo clarified that there were currently no full-time positions

This Item was for briefing purposes only.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Approved

Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, Chair

Respectfully Submitted

Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk