

DATE: September 3, 2015  
TO: All Columbus City Councilmembers  
FROM: Council President Andrew J. Ginther  
CC: Mayor Michael B. Coleman  
City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr.  
City Auditor Hugh J. Dorrian

**SUBJECT: COUNCIL VACANCY: APPOINTMENT PROCESS AND TIMELINE**

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The purpose of this memorandum is to outline the process for appointing a new member to Columbus City Council upon the departure of President Pro Tem Michelle M. Mills. Councilmember Mills has notified me that she will formally resign from City Council effective Friday, Sept. 4, 2015.

Per [Sec. 5 of the Charter of the City of Columbus](#), if a city councilmember resigns from office, a successor shall be appointed by council to serve until the first day of January following the next regular municipal election. As such, Council must appoint a member to fulfill the unexpired term ending Jan. 1, 2016.

In light of the many pressing matters before Council, filling the impending vacancy shall be a high priority so that Council may continue to effectively and efficiently dispatch the duties and responsibilities with which it is charged. Thus, it is necessary to establish a process and timeline to fill the vacancy that minimizes the time the council seat remains vacant. The relatively few meetings of Council that remain this year further underscores the need to be deliberate in our process and to select a successor in as expedited a fashion as practical.

As this appointment is to fill an unexpired term with a definite end date, and because no candidate for Council on the November ballot is anticipated to apply for the appointment, Council will have the opportunity to appoint a person who has demonstrated leadership experience, is engaged in the community and has knowledge of the governing process in Columbus, but whose service will not be compounded by the demands of seeking election. This approach will allow Council to choose an individual whose desire is to serve for a finite term without regard for any future appointment to Council. Finally, given the short term of office, prior elected experience is strongly preferred.

In an effort to help facilitate the appointment process and in accordance with the public meeting requirements of the Columbus City Charter and Ohio Revised Code, I am proposing the following procedures and timeline, which are largely consistent with past practice. It is an objective, practical and expedited approach which will ensure minimal disruption to the daily operation of the City and permit emergency action to be taken if warranted by exigent circumstances.



**ANDREW J. GINTHER, PRESIDENT | MICHELLE M. MILLS, PRESIDENT PRO TEM**  
**SHANNON G. HARDIN | ZACH M. KLEIN | JAIZA N. PAGE | EILEEN Y. PALEY | PRISCILLA R. TYSON**

**CITY CLERK | ANDREA BLEVINS, CMC**

It has been the longstanding policy of City Council that departing members refrain from any involvement or influence in the process to choose their replacements. Therefore, presuming a majority of the remaining six members of Council agree with the prescribed process, the City Clerk will work with Council staff to immediately publicize and implement the following:

### **TIMELINE and PROCEDURES**

#### **Thursday, Sept. 3 – Friday, Sept. 11, 12:00 noon**

- Applicants must submit eight (8) copies of a **résumé and cover letter** outlining their qualifications and desire to serve the remainder of the unexpired term ending Jan. 1, 2016. Application materials must be accepted and time-stamped by the office of the Columbus City Clerk located in City Hall, Room 231, 90 W. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43215 by **Friday, Sept. 11, 12:00 noon**.
- Emails and facsimiles will not be accepted. No exceptions will be made.
- All information submitted by the applicants is considered public record and shall be made available upon request, and posted to the City Council website.

#### **Thursday, Sept. 3 – Friday, Sept. 11, 12:00 noon**

- Concurrent with the application process, councilmembers may, at their discretion, schedule individual interviews with applicants for the Council vacancy.
- In order to provide ample time to schedule these individual meetings, the City Clerk will provide copies of the application materials to members of Council upon submission, daily, beginning Thursday, Sept. 3 and continuing through the application deadline.

#### **Monday, Sept. 14, 12:00 noon**

- After reviewing all application materials and conducting individual interviews at their discretion, each member of Council shall submit to the City Clerk the name of **one (1) applicant** who shall receive further consideration. The City Clerk shall compile a list of all applicant names submitted who henceforth shall be considered finalists for the vacancy. The Clerk shall then share the names of finalists with all members of Council, and immediately notify the finalists.
- The names of the finalists, and any associated documentation, shall be made available to the public in original form upon request and posted to the City Council website.

#### **Tuesday, Sept. 15, 4 p.m.\***

- A public meeting shall be held (with all required notices to be published in advance in the City Bulletin) in order to enter into executive session for the sole purpose of considering the applications of finalist under consideration for appointment to Columbus City Council. Per [121.22 \(G\) of the Ohio Revised Code](#), a “majority of a quorum” of members of Council must decide “by a roll call vote” to hold an executive session.

- Minutes shall be maintained by the City Clerk and no decisions or straw votes shall be permitted during executive session.
- Once discussion has concluded, councilmembers shall adjourn the executive session and resume the public meeting, which will subsequently be adjourned.
- Media and the public are free to attend the public portions of this meeting.

**Monday, Sept. 21, 4 p.m.\***

- A public meeting shall be held (with all required notices to be published in advance in the City Bulletin) in order to enter into executive session for the sole purpose of considering the appointment of a new member of Columbus City Council. Per [121.22 \(G\) of the Ohio Revised Code](#), a “majority of a quorum” of members of Council must decide “by a roll call vote” to hold an executive session.
- Minutes shall be maintained by the City Clerk and no decisions or straw votes shall be permitted during executive session.

**Monday, Sept. 21, 5 p.m.\***

- Councilmembers will adjourn the executive session and resume the public meeting. The public meeting will subsequently adjourn. Councilmembers will then reconvene for the regularly scheduled meeting of Columbus City Council in Council Chambers.
- The councilmembers shall then have the opportunity during open council session to nominate one (1) finalist to fill the vacancy and vote to appoint a new member to fulfill the unexpired term ending Jan. 1, 2016.
- If a majority of councilmembers vote to appoint a nominee, he or she shall then be eligible to be sworn in under oath and take office pursuant to [Sections 5](#) and [202-1](#) of the City Charter.

The process as prescribed will allow for the selection and appointment of a new member of Council who may be sworn in, seated, and prepared to vote in advance of the September 28 meeting of Council.

\*All dates and times are subject to change with required public notice. Revisions to the process as outlined may be made as circumstances not contemplated necessitate.