

## M E M O R A N D U M

**To:** Town Commission  
**From:** Howard Tipton, Town Manager  
**Report date:** January 12, 2024  
**Meeting date:** January 22, 2024  
**Subject:** Appointment to Fill Vacancy for the Town Commission District 5 Seat

### **Recommended Action**

Appoint individual to fill vacancy for the Town Commission District 5 Seat until the next General Election in March 2025.

### **Background**

Due to the resignation of Commissioner Deborah Murphy effective December 24, 2023, a vacancy exists on the Town Commission for the District 5 seat. A copy of the resignation notice is attached for the record.

The Town Charter, Article II, Section 8(a), Vacancies, provides for the method to fill a vacancy, as follows:

Vacancies in the town commission shall be filled by the town commission, with any person so appointed to be a qualified elector from the district of the vacated commissioner, to serve until the next general municipal election. At the next general municipal election, the vacancy shall be filled by election; the person elected in such election to serve the remaining unexpired term of the town commissioner whose vacant office is being filled. If a vacancy is not filled by the town commission within thirty (30) days after the vacancy occurs, a special election shall be held, as authorized by the Supervisor of Elections, after such a vacancy occurs; and the person so elected shall serve the remaining unexpired term.

Following Commission direction at the December 4, 2023, Regular Meeting, advertisements were placed in the Longboat Key News and Longboat Key Observer, as well as posted on the Town's website advising the public of the vacancy.

The Town Clerk's office received seven letters of interest (attached) for the position. Subsequently, the Town Clerk's office received correspondence on January 13, 2024, from Dr. Kopelman, and on January 16, 2024, from Mr. van der Walde advising they were withdrawing their letters of interest as they have been removed from the following list of applicants:

- Ms. Patti Mae Bosco
- Mr. James Haft
- Ms. Sarah Karon
- Mr. Christopher Laurent
- Dr. James Whitman.

The Commission may make nominations and vote to fill the vacancy at the January 22, 2024, Special Meeting or, if an appointment is not made, schedule a Special Election as

provided for in the Town Charter. However, if scheduling a Special Election, the Supervisor of Elections offices have indicated it would be scheduled on August 20, 2024.

To proceed with the appointment at the January 22, 2024, Special Meeting, the Mayor will open the floor for nominations. Each Commissioner is eligible to make a nomination but is not obligated to do so. Only those individuals nominated will be considered during the voting process.

Pursuant to Resolution 04-17, a minimum of four votes is required for an applicant to be selected for the District 5 seat. A roll call of Commissioners will be taken until one applicant receives four votes and is appointed. The roll call will proceed in the order of the nominations submitted.

Upon appointment of an individual, the Clerk is prepared to swear in the new Commissioner and they will then be able to participate in the Regular Workshop scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on January 22, 2024.

Please contact me if you have any questions on the process or Charter requirements.

**Staff Recommendation**

Appoint individual to fill vacancy for the Town Commission District 5 Seat until the next General Election in March 2025.

**Attachments** (Available in the Town Clerk's Office)

- A. Resignation Letter from Commissioner Deborah Murphy
- B. Candidate Applications/Correspondence To-From Applicants

**End of Agenda Item**