



alaska judicial council

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Press Release

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For immediate release
January 26, 2024

Judicial Nominees *Bethel, Sitka, and Juneau Superior Courts*

The Alaska Judicial Council met in Bethel on January 22-23, in Sitka on January 24 and in Juneau on January 25, 2024, to interview applicants for vacancies on the Bethel, Sitka, and Juneau Superior Courts. Following its meeting, the Alaska Judicial Council announced that **Mark Clark and William T. Montgomery** were nominated as the most qualified applicants to fill the Bethel vacancy. **Amanda L. Browning, William T. Montgomery, and Michael Thomas Schwaiger** were nominated to fill the Sitka vacancy and **Margaret McWilliams, William T. Montgomery, Christopher Orman, and Larry Raymond Woolford** were nominated to fill the Juneau vacancy. The governor has 45 days in which to make appointments from among these nominees.

The Judicial Council is required to nominate the most qualified applicants applying for a judicial vacancy. (The framers of our Constitution referred to this standard as the "best available timber.")

The Council is a citizens' commission created by the Alaska Constitution composed of three attorneys, three non-attorneys, and the Chief Justice of the Alaska Supreme Court. The Council completes an extensive investigation and evaluation of judicial applicants. The Council reviews each applicant's education, experience, bar discipline and credit records, participation in community activities, and other records. It asks members of the

Alaska Bar to evaluate the applicants, encourages the public to submit comments, and interviews the applicants.

Nominees for the Bethel Superior Court are:

Mark Clark: Mr. Clark has been an Alaska resident for 6½ years and has practiced law for 7½ years. He graduated from Northern Kentucky University, Salmon P. Chase College of Law in 2016 and is currently the Bethel District Attorney.

William T. Montgomery: Judge Montgomery has been an Alaska resident for 13 years and has practiced law for 11½ years. He graduated from William Mitchell College of Law in 2010 and is currently a district court judge in Bethel.

Nominees for the Sitka Superior Court are:

Amanda L. Browning: Judge Browning has been an Alaska resident for 12 years and has practiced law for 18½ years. She graduated from Roger Williams University Ralph R. Papitto School of Law in 2005 and is currently a district court judge in Palmer.

William T. Montgomery: Judge Montgomery has been an Alaska resident for 13 years and has practiced law for 11½ years. He graduated from William Mitchell College of Law in 2010 and is currently a district court judge in Bethel.

Michael Thomas Schwaiger: Mr. Schwaiger has been an Alaska resident for 43½ years and has practiced law for 17½ years. He graduated from Duke Law School in 2005 and is currently a supervising attorney for the Office of Public Advocacy in Anchorage.

Nominees for the Juneau Superior Court are:

Margaret McWilliams: Ms. McWilliams has been an Alaska resident for 16 years and has practiced law for 24 years. She graduated from Harvard Law School in 1999 and is currently an assistant public advocate and supervisor for the Office of Public Advocate's Juneau Civil Section.

William T. Montgomery: Judge Montgomery has been an Alaska resident for 13 years and has practiced law for 11½ years. He graduated from William Mitchell College of Law in 2010 and is currently a district court judge in Bethel.

Christopher Orman: Mr. Orman has been an Alaska resident for 12 and has practiced law for 13 years. He graduated from the University of Montana, Alexander Blewett III School of Law in 2010 and is currently an assistant attorney general in Juneau.

Larry Raymond Woolford: Mr. Woolford has been an Alaska resident for 53 years and has practiced law for 25½ years. He graduated from Seattle University School of Law in 1998 and is currently in private practice in Juneau.

Attached are records of the Council members' votes.

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**Vote Tally Sheet
Bethel Superior Court
January 23, 2024**

Candidates	Council Members						
	Babcock	Collins	DeWitt	Katcher	Parker	Simon	Maassen*
Mark Clark	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
William T. Montgomery	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Sam Turner	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	

**The Chief Justice votes only when to do so would change the result.*



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**Vote Tally Sheet
Sitka Superior Court
January 24, 2024**

Candidates	Council Members						
	Babcock	Collins	DeWitt	Katcher	Parker	Simon	Maassen*
Amanda L. Browning	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
William T. Montgomery	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Michael Thomas Schwaiger	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	

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Vote Tally Sheet Juneau Superior Court January 25, 2024

Candidates	Council Members						
	Babcock	Collins	DeWitt	Katcher	Parker	Simon	Maassen*
Roberta C. Erwin	No	No	No	No	No	No	
Margaret McWilliams	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
William T. Montgomery	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Christopher Orman	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Larry Raymond Woolford	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	

**The Chief Justice votes only when to do so would change the result.*