

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Richard Doyle
City Attorney

SUBJECT: Conflicts Review - Senior Citizens'
Commission Applicants

BACKGROUND

The City Attorney's Office routinely reviews applications to City Boards and Commissions. The applications generally do not provide complete information regarding potential conflicts; however, they do occasionally disclose potential conflicts of interest or incompatible offices. The purpose of this memorandum is to highlight areas of potential conflict which are disclosed by the application. In order to analyze potential conflicts, it is necessary to consider the duties of the particular commission for which the applicant is seeking appointment. This review is limited to the information provided on the applications and is not intended to be comprehensive investigation of potential conflicts involving the applicants.

COMMISSION DUTIES

The Senior Citizens' Commission is responsible for studying, reviewing, evaluating and making recommendations to the Council on matters affecting elderly people in the City.

LEGAL CONFLICTS THAT MAY PRECLUDE VOTE OR PARTICIPATION

Certain positions may preclude a commissioner from participating in a commission discussion or from voting if a matter involving the entity comes before the commission. While this list is not complete, these types of conflicts generally fall within one or more of the following situations:

- An application shows entities that are "sources of income" to a potential commissioner within the 12 months preceding the start of the commission term, as defined under the Political Reform Act,
- An application shows sources of income to a Spouse or Domestic Partner of a potential commissioner within the 12 months preceding the start of the commission term,
- An applicant or the Spouse or Domestic Partner of an applicant, is an Officer or Board Member of an entity and it is foreseeable that the entity could be involved in a matter coming before the commission.

July 22, 2020

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APPEARANCE OF BIAS

There may be facts which would not amount to a legal conflict of interest requiring a commissioner to recuse him or herself from a commission vote or discussion, however the relationship could create an appearance of bias on the part of the commissioner. City Council policy requires commissions to be free from bias in their decision making, and may require a commissioner to recuse him or herself if the facts could reasonably lead one to conclude that the applicant would be biased for or against an entity or entities.

REVIEW OF APPLICANT

Set forth below is the applicant and any apparent legal conflicts of interest and/or appearance of bias related to entities that are likely to come before the commission in some manner, as identified on the applications.

Sharon Root – Ms. Root's application indicates that she and her spouse are both retired. The application discloses neither incompatible offices nor apparent conflicts of interest.

CONCLUSION

The City Council may wish to consider the above comments in making its appointments to the Commission.

RICHARD DOYLE
City Attorney

By 
ARLENE F. SILVA
Deputy City Attorney

cc: Dave Sykes, City Manager
Toni J. Taber, CMC, City Clerk

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REVIEW OF APPLICANT

Set forth below are the applicants and any apparent legal conflicts of interest and/or appearance of bias related to entities that are likely to come before the commission in some manner, as identified on the applications.

Monica Bellizzi – Ms. Bellizzi's application indicates she is an Associate with Thrivent Financial. Ms. Bellizzi's spouse is retired. Ms. Bellizzi has served on the board of the Almaden Senior Association (2018-2020). The application discloses neither incompatible offices nor apparent conflicts of interest.

Robert Gill – Mr. Gill's application indicates that he is employed with the County of Santa Clara as an IHS Counselor. The application does not list a spouse. Mr. Gill's current application discloses neither incompatible offices nor apparent conflicts of interest.

J. Carlos Goti – Mr. Goti's application indicates that he and his spouse are retired. The application discloses neither incompatible offices nor apparent conflicts of interest

Kanta Khiatani – Ms. Khiatani's application indicates she is a retired registered nurse. Her spouse is a self-employed computer technician. The application discloses neither incompatible offices nor apparent conflicts of interest

Jerry Magana – Mr. Magana's application indicates that he is a stay-at-home parent. Mr. Magana's spouse is employed with Palo Alto University as Assistant Vice President, Admissions. His application discloses neither incompatible offices nor apparent conflicts of interest.

Richard McCoy – Mr. McCoy's application indicates that he is not employed. No spouse is listed on the application. Mr. McCoy lists he has served on the Senior Citizens' Commission in the past. The application discloses neither incompatible offices nor apparent conflicts of interest.

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June 18, 2020

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