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TIME 3:40 PM

OCT 04 1993

SHERI NEWMAN
CLERK SUPERIOR COURT
BY: _____ DEPUTY

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA

IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF LA PAZ



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IN THE MATTER OF:)
SELECTION OF SPECIAL JUDICIAL)
OFFICERS IN THE LA PAZ COUNTY)
COURT SYSTEM)

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
No. 93-05

Pursuant to Arizona Supreme Court Administrative Order 93-30 which provides that the presiding judge of the superior court in each county shall exercise administrative supervision over all the courts in their county and Arizona Supreme Court Administrative Order 93-17 which requires the establishment and implementation of written selection procedures for special judicial officers,

IT IS ORDERED that the attached La Paz County Court System plan is adopted effective this date.

DATED this 4 day of Oct, 1993, at the La Paz County Superior Court in Parker, Arizona.

MICHAEL IRWIN
Judge of the Superior Court

**LA PAZ COUNTY COURT SYSTEM PLAN
FOR THE RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT
OF SPECIAL JUDICIAL OFFICERS**

PURPOSE

The following plan for the recruitment, selection and appointment of special judicial officers is adopted to comply with Arizona Supreme Court Administrative Order Number 93-17, maintain integrity of the La Paz County Court System, ensure an open and fair process for the appointment of persons to the La Paz County bench and encourage persons with diverse backgrounds and experience to seek La Paz County special judicial officer positions.

This plan applies to judges pro tem, court commissioners, small claims and family law hearing officers, and juvenile court referees appointed by a judge or magistrate of this county or whose appointment is recommended by a judge or magistrate of this county.

This plan does not apply to juvenile traffic hearing officers whose positions are filled by a justices of the peace or the city magistrate.

This plan does not apply to judges pro-tem of the magistrate courts whose selection is made by town councils.

Public Announcements

The presiding superior court judge or designee shall prepare position announcements and post such notices for a minimum of 14 days in all La Paz County court facilities and at the Board of Supervisors Office. The notice shall be published two times with the first being at least 14 days prior to closing of the application period in a newspaper of general circulation in the county. The notice shall also be distributed to each law office including county government and Colorado River Indian Tribes legal offices.

Position announcements shall include the position title, terms of compensation, a description of duties, qualifications, application procedures, the deadline for receipt of applications and an equal opportunity statement.

Application

Applications shall be on forms prepared by the presiding superior court judge. Application forms shall be obtained from, and upon completion, returned to the La Paz County Superior Court.

Issuance or acceptance of an application does not create an obligation to hire the applicant or constitute the assurance that an applicant meets minimum qualifications or that the applicant will be granted an interview.

Upon the closing date of the position, the presiding judge shall forward all applications received to the Chairperson of the La Paz County Committee on Special Judicial Officer Appointments for review and evaluation.

Screening Committee

The Presiding Judge of the La Paz County Superior Court shall appoint a committee of five persons to screen applicants for special judicial officer appointments. The Committee shall establish screening criteria, consider applications and evaluate possible appointees. The Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to the presiding judge in matters related to special judicial officers. The Committee shall be composed of the following:

1. La Paz County Manager or member of the Board of Supervisors
2. Member of the Bar
3. Superior Court Judge from an adjoining county
4. La Paz County Limited Jurisdiction Court Judge
5. Public Member
6. Chief Probation Officer

Committee members will be appointed each time the appointment of a special judicial officer is required. The committee's term will expire when the position for which they are making recommendations has been filled.

A member of the committee appointed by the presiding superior court judge shall serve as Committee chairperson to preside over and coordinate activities of the Committee.

Evaluation and Recommendation of Applicants

Evaluations, interviews and testing of applicants shall be job-related and designed to determine whether applicants are suited for the position. The evaluations, interviews and testing shall be conducted fairly and impartially to ensure the integrity of the appointment process. Committee members who are related to an applicant or who have such relationship with a candidate that their ability to be fair and impartial might be questioned shall advise the chairperson of the conflict and resign from the Committee. The vacancy will be filled by the presiding superior court judge.

The Committee shall establish criteria to evaluate applicants. All applications shall be screened to determine whether they meet the minimum qualifications for the position and ranked according to their skills and qualifications, background and training. The Committee may interview the highest ranked applicants for the purpose of determining the best applicants for the position. The Committee may request testing or develop other mechanisms to evaluate applicants.

All applications and records pertaining to the evaluation process shall be maintained by the chairperson and upon filling of the position shall be forwarded to the presiding judge to be maintained as required by law.

On completion of the interview, by majority vote, the Committee shall select the three most qualified applicants and forward their applications to the presiding superior court judge. The Committee may also provide a ranking of the three most qualified applicants.

The Committee may refuse to examine applicants, or after examination, may disqualify applicants from being recommended to the presiding superior court judge if it is determined that applicants: (1) do not meet the minimum qualifications established for the position, (2) have made a false statement of material fact in the application or any supporting documentation, (3) have used or attempted to use political pressure, threats or bribery to secure appointment to a position, (4) have not complied with all application policies and procedures, (5) are under indictment for or have been convicted of a crime which would affect an applicant's suitability for employment, (6) have a record of unsatisfactory performance during previous employment, (7) have previously not complied with or cannot comply with the Arizona Code of Judicial Conduct, and (8) do not meet other requirements as specified by the Presiding Judge of the La Paz County Superior Court, the Committee or provisions in this plan.

Upon receipt of names of the three most qualified applicants and supporting documentation, the Presiding Judge of the La Paz County Superior Court shall review those applications. The presiding judge may confer with the Committee chairperson regarding any applicant, the screening process or the Committee's recommendations. The presiding judge may conduct interviews with one or more of the recommended applicants. The presiding judge may check references and investigate a candidate's education, experience or other information in the application to determine the suitability of any applicant recommended by the screening committee.

Appointment

The presiding superior court judge shall make appointments to special judicial officer positions based upon demonstrated ability and required levels of education, knowledge, skills, training and experience.

The presiding judge may appoint one of the Committee's recommended candidates or may appoint none of the recommended candidates and repeat the appointment procedure.

Appointment shall be made by administrative order and submitted to the La Paz County Board of Supervisors for approval when required by law.

Upon approval by the Board of Supervisors, the the original order shall be filed with the Clerk of the Superior Court and copies forwarded to the Arizona Supreme Court, the La Paz County judges, the La Paz County Committee on Special Judicial Officer Appointments, and other persons deemed appropriate by the Presiding Judge of the La Paz County Superior Court.

All special judicial officer appointments shall be subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary period of six months. The probationary period shall be considered an integral part of the appointment process and shall be used to screen out any appointee whose performance, conduct or work is unsatisfactory.

Waiver

If the Presiding Judge of the La Paz County Superior Court determines that a judicial branch emergency exists or the ends of justice require, the plan or any provision thereof may be waived.