



## CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

### City Council Agenda Communication

**Meeting Date:** July 21, 2025

**Prepared By:** Mayor Lilija Stevens

**Agenda Item:** Appointments to Historic Preservation Commission, Board of Police Commissioners, and Economic Development Commission

**Explanation:** In order to facilitate public involvement in the City's business and revive several boards and commissions established with purpose but sometimes not maintained, the City established a portal for applications, which was announced both at City Council meetings and publicized on the City's social media and website, and the Mayor's page of the City website. That process continues and we continue to accept applications. As the work of these boards and commissions is important, it is time to make appointments, and we will continue that process in the future to facilitate public involvement and assist the City staff and elected officials.

The Historic Preservation Commission consists of seven positions but has only three members whose terms are current. Three other members' terms were allowed to expire and another position was simply vacant. To continue the work of this commission, I appoint Christian Lane to a standard three-year term. Mr. Lane is an employee of the Public Works Department and a Washington resident whose application to the Commission showed his interest in the history of the City, the development of his knowledge base in that area, and his desire to see that history preserved. His work record with the City is consistent with that required for successful volunteer commissions such as Historic Preservation.

The Board of Police Commissioners is charged with the duty to appoint, discipline, and remove all sworn officers of the Police Department in accordance with State statute and City ordinance. The Commissioners perform important ongoing work including screening and evaluating police applicants, work that needs to continue immediately to maintain our quality Police Department. Three Police Commissioners continued to serve for years beyond the expiration of their appointed terms and chose not to reapply. Several qualified residents did apply for this important work. Police Department staff and I collaborated in reviewing of submitted applications. I appoint Washington residents Paula Balistreri, Gerald Storer, and Michael Vaughn to three-year terms. With these appointments, the Board of Police Commissioners will be filled.

Paula Balistreri had a career in nursing and transitioned to human resources before retiring as a human resources director responsible for nearly 600

employees. She has expressed 100% commitment to the work required for the Board and brings a new perspective with her HR experience.

Gerald Storer served nearly 32 years with the Vernon Hills, Illinois, Police Department, including as an investigator, Sergeant, Commander, Deputy Chief, and Interim Chief of Police. His experience at Vernon Hills includes development of department rules and regulations and participation in the processes of both hiring and termination of employment.

Michael Vaughn served as the Fire Chief in both the East Peoria and Washington Fire Departments. He augments nearly two decades of Fire Department line and executive experience with more than five years as the City of Peoria Fire Department's Emergency Management Coordinator. His public safety experience is an asset furthering the City's need for this Board to commence immediate work.

The Economic Development Commission is a seven-member commission of the City with dozens of duties described in ordinance. Its members must reside within the city, work within the city, or have a place of business within the city and are appointed for their qualifications for their duty to the Commission. It is vital to revive the EDC to support the economic development of the City. I appoint Alderperson Bobby Martin to the Commission for a standard five-year term. His business experience is well known both inside and outside the City, making his appointment appropriate as the Commission works to serve the City by promoting the economic interests of the City and the area encompassed by Peoria County, Tazewell County, and Woodford County. Alderperson Martin will serve as a liaison between the EDC and the City Council, and he and I will collaborate to ensure the EDC is staffed to fulfill its purpose and can meaningfully assist the work of the City's Planning and Development Department.

**Fiscal Impact:** These Board and Commission positions are volunteer service positions which do not have expenses directly associated with particular appointments other than potential expenses of the Boards or Commissions themselves. I greatly appreciate the willingness of our residents to serve the City of Washington.

**Action Requested:** Ratification of the appointments by the full City Council.