City Seeking Applicants for Municipal Court Judge

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITY ACCEPTING APPLICANTS FOR MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE

GREAT FALLS, Montana – This week the City Commission announced they will be seeking applicants for municipal court judge. The position is being vacated by Judge Nancy Luth, who will be retiring at the end of January 2014. Interest forms and resumes are due to the City Clerk's Office by 5 p.m. on Friday, January 3, and are available online at www.greatfallsmt.net or in the City Clerk and City Manager's Offices. The City Commission will be interviewing the top candidates individually at an open meeting and anticipate having an appointment made by the end of January.

To be eligible to apply applicants must meet the following requirements as outlined in Montana State Law:

- Be a U.S. citizen who has resided in Montana two years immediately before taking office (Montana Constitution Article VII Section 9);
- Be a resident of Cascade County for one year preceding appointment (MCA §3-6-202 & §3-10-204);
- Be admitted (and in good standing) to the practice of law in Montana for at least three years prior to the date of appointment (MCA §3-6-202).

The selected applicant will be required to attend and complete a course in the training and certification of judges or receive a temporary certificate before taking office.

The municipal court judge is responsible for the management of the municipal court, maintaining a central docket of the court's cases as well as setting cases for trial. The municipal court judge also supervises the court's personnel (staff of seven) and is responsible for all administrative issues related to court. The judge also oversees the court's budget.

The City of Great Falls Municipal Court is the third busiest in the state and averages a heavy caseload of 16,000 violations a year. The municipal court is limited to hearing misdemeanor state law violations, city ordinance violations (which have occurred within the city limits) and landlord tenant cases. The municipal court judge makes rulings on admissibility of evidence and testimony, renders judgments and assesses sentences as well as performs legal research. The judge also presides over bench trials and jury trials from jury selection to conclusion, instructs jurors and is responsible for applying local rules and procedures as necessary to ensure the proper operation of the Municipal Court. The judge is committed to administering justice in a fair, efficient, and timely manner, as well as safeguarding the legal rights and liberties of citizens and ensuring the protection of public interest.

The salary of the municipal court judge is set by City resolution and depending on experience and qualifications can range from the low $80,000s to mid $90,000s. The Judge is treated as an employee of the City of Great Falls and receives a competitive benefits package, which includes health, vision, dental and life insurance and participation in Montana's Public Employee Retirement System (PERS).

The appointed applicant will serve until the next municipal general election, which will take place November 2015. The term of appointment would be approximately two years. The appointee could then choose to run for a full four-year term. The Official City Code (2.14.030) does require that at the time of election, the municipal court judge be a resident and voter in the City of Great Falls.

For more information contact City Clerk, Lisa Kunz at 455-8451.

(End)

Supporting Documents

Citizen Interest Form - Municipal Court Judge (PDF fillable form) (140 KB) (PDF)
Citizen Interest Form - Municipal Court Judge (Word Document) (146 KB) (MSWORD)
Benefit Sheet (83 KB) (PDF)
Press Release - City Seeking Applicants for Municipal Court Judge (236 KB) (PDF)

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