



# WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

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## STAFF REPORT

**BOARD MEETING DATE:** January 16, 2024

**DATE:** January 2, 2024

**TO:** Board of County Commissioners

**FROM:** Eric P. Brown, County Manager

**SUBJECT:** Recommendation to accept the resignation of Jamie Rodriguez, Registrar of Voters, effective March 15, 2024; to accept the County Manager's recommendation to appoint Deputy Registrar of Voters, Cari-Ann Burgess, to temporarily perform the duties of the Registrar of Voters pursuant to NRS 245.180 in the absence of Ms. Rodriguez, effective January 16, 2024; to accept the County Manager's recommendation to appoint Deputy Registrar of Voters, Cari-Ann Burgess, to the position of Interim Registrar of Voters effective March 16, 2024; and, if approved, to direct the Washoe County Clerk within 10 days of March 15, 2024, to certify the vacancy and new appointment of an Interim Registrar of Voters to the Secretary of State's Office. This appointment is pursuant to NRS 244.164 and/or 245.180 and, if approved, will remain effective until either resignation by the appointee or an appointment by the Board of a Registrar on a non-interim basis. While temporarily carrying out the duties of the Registrar of Voters until March 16, 2024, and while serving in an interim capacity, the appointee shall be vested with the same authority to carry out the powers and duties of a Registrar appointed on a non-interim basis. (All Commission Districts.)

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### SUMMARY

The County Manager is recommending that the Board of County Commissioners accept the resignation of Washoe County Registrar of Voters, Jamie Rodriguez. The County Manager is recommending that the Board appoint Deputy Registrar of Voters, Cari-Ann Burgess, to temporarily perform the duties of the Registrar of Voters pursuant to NRS 245.180 in the absence of Ms. Rodriguez, effective January 16, 2024, and to accept the County Manager's recommendation to appoint Deputy Registrar of Voters, Cari-Ann Burgess, to the position of Interim Registrar of Voters, effective March 16, 2024. Jamie Rodriguez's effective date of resignation contemplates use of her vacation and other leave balances until March 15, 2024.

### PREVIOUS ACTION

On December 13, 2022, the Board of County Commissioners appointed Jamie Rodriguez to the permanent position of Registrar of Voters.

**AGENDA ITEM #** \_\_\_\_\_

On July 12, 2022, the Board of County Commissioners appointed Jamie Rodriguez, to the position of Interim Registrar of Voters, effective August 1, 2022.

On November 17, 2017, the Board of County Commissioners appointed Deanna Spikula as the Washoe County Registrar of Voters.

On April 9, 2013, the Board of County Commissioners appointed Luanne Cutler as the Washoe County Registrar of Voters.

On September 21, 1999, the Board of County Commissioners appointed Dan Burk as the Washoe County Registrar of Voters.

On December 8, 1998, the Board of County Commissioners accepted the resignation of Washoe County Registrar, Laura Dancer and appointed Dan Burk, Administrative Assistant serving in the capacity as Assistant Registrar, as the Interim Registrar of Voters.

### **BACKGROUND**

Under NRS 244.164, in each county having a population of 100,000 or more, the Board of County Commissioners may appoint an individual to the position of Registrar of Voters. Once appointed, the Registrar of Voters assumes all the powers and duties vested in and imposed on the county clerk with respect to elections. Options available for the selection of a candidate to appoint to the position include directly appointing an individual as Registrar of Voters; appointing an individual as Acting Registrar of Voters for a defined period concluding with a permanent appointment of a Registrar; and conducting an open and competitive recruitment. The County Manager is recommending the direct interim appointment option.

The County process for appointing an interim/acting department head is based on past practice. The process for appointing interim/acting department heads is summarized as follows:

- The County Manager receives notification that a Board appointed department head is vacating his/her position.
- The County Manager selects an employee to serve as interim/acting department head to oversee the management and day-to-day operations of the department during the recruitment/selection process for the permanent appointment of the department head.
- The County Manager makes a recommendation for the Board to approve and accept the interim/acting appointment. The person appointed as the interim/acting department head serves in that role from the date that the department head vacates his/her position to the date that a permanent department head is appointed.
- The interim/acting appointment ends on the date that the Board approves the permanent appointment of the newly selected department head.

The current Registrar of Voters will resign effective March 15, 2024, including leave utilization. Due to the nature of the requirements of the position and in light of the

upcoming election in February 2024, it is imperative that the Board appoint a person to temporarily perform the duties of the Register of Voters in the absence of Ms. Rodriguez, effective January 16, 2024, and appoint an interim Registrar of Voter effective following Ms. Rodriguez's effective date of resignation to reduce any impact on Voter integrity, transparency, and accountability.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no incremental fiscal impact for this interim appointment as the Registrar of Voter is a budgeted position. Personnel costs will be absorbed by an existing position during the interim period.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners accept the resignation of Jamie Rodriguez, Registrar of Voters, effective March 15, 2024; accept the County Manager's recommendation to appoint Deputy Registrar of Voters, Cari-Ann Burgess to temporarily perform the duties of the Registrar of Voters pursuant to NRS 245.180 in the absence of Ms. Rodriguez, effective January 16, 2024, and to accept the County Manager's recommendation to appoint Deputy Registrar of Voters, Cari-Ann Burgess, to the position of Interim Registrar of Voters, effective March 16, 2024; and, if approved, to direct the Washoe County Clerk within 10 days of March 15, 2024, to certify the vacancy and new appointment of an Interim Registrar of Voters to the Secretary of State's Office. This appointment is pursuant to NRS 244.164 and/or 245.180 and, if approved, will remain effective until either resignation by the appointee or an appointment by the Board of a Registrar on a non-interim basis. While temporarily carrying out the duties of the Registrar of Voters until March 16, 2024, and while serving in an interim capacity, the appointee shall be vested with the same authority to carry out the powers and duties of a Registrar appointed on a non-interim basis.

### **POSSIBLE MOTION**

Should the Board agree with the recommendation, a possible motion would be:

*“Move to accept the resignation of Jamie Rodriguez, Registrar of Voters, effective March 14, 2024; accept the County Manager's recommendation to appoint Deputy Registrar of Voters, Cari-Ann Burgess, to temporarily perform the duties of the Registrar of Voters pursuant to NRS 245.180 in the absence of Ms. Rodriguez, effective January 16, 2024, and accept the County Manager's recommendation to appoint Deputy Registrar of Voters, Cari-Ann Burgess, to the position of Interim Registrar of Voters, effective March 16, 2024; and, to direct the Washoe County Clerk within 10 days of March 15, 2024, to certify the vacancy and new appointment to the Secretary of State's Office. This appointment is pursuant to NRS 244.164 and/or 245.180 and will remain effective until either resignation by the appointee or an appointment by the Board of a Registrar on a non-interim basis. While temporarily carrying out the duties of the Registrar of Voters until March 16, 2024, and while serving in an interim capacity, the appointee shall be*

*vested with the same authority to carry out the powers and duties of a Registrar appointed on a non-interim basis.”*