

Timeline of Council Actions & Public Statements on City Council Vacancies.

1. July 10, 2025. Mayor Richardson appointed, first motion to delay Council appointments to 8/20.

During the special session, Mayor Lena Richardson was appointed and makes her first motion to delay appointment to vacant Council seats to August 20th (six weeks delay). Councilor Steve Mitchell and Counselor Paige Winfrey both approved the motion.

Statement from Mayor Richardson concerning delay of appointment
“Shady Cove has recently been caught in a whirlwind of judgements, rumor and misinformation. I believe that we need a cool down period to thoughtfully examine our current state and formulate a plan to move forward with the positive momentum that has been building for the last 2 and a half years. For that reason, tonight I make a motion that we extend the application period for council positions till at least August 20th to give potential applicants time to familiarize themselves with our city goals, our charter, our city council, rules of government, and other documents you find on the city website to determine what experience, skill and knowledge you can bring to council in our efforts to successfully reach our goals.”

Source: July 10th, 2025 Special Session Meeting, Zoom Recording (starting at 39-minute mark).
<https://zoom.us/rec/share/7bDJWeb4Pt7yHkhmM6prVDyhPmW-DRJLZxhdHJRtuqVilfhdy6Dq2FtEIOLvqJAn.drJD765lJaJiUUZX?startTime=1752193879000>

As of 7/10/2025, six individuals had applied for a Council vacancy. (Based on the date of their application as published in the September 18th Council meeting packet.)

Name	Date Applied	Qualifications
Jay Taylor	7/4/2025	Former Shady Cove Councilor (2021-2022), former member of planning commission, member of Budget Committee (2024, 2025).
Hank Hohenstein	7/7/2025	Former Shady Cove Councilor (2019-2020), former member of Shady Cove Planning Commission (21-22). Extensive experience in Planning & Community development.
Samuel Clark	7/7/2025	Six years on Costa Mesa CA Planning Commission (2 as Vice-Chair)
Terry Rasmussen	7/7/2025	22 Years on Board of Directors, Trail Christian Fellowship, 12 Years as Founder and Board Chair of Redemption Ridge (a non-profit organization for support and healing for female victims of sex trafficking).
Thomas Swendener	7/8/2025	25+ year Software Development Manager focused on collaborative problem-solving and ensuring that all voices are heard.
Jared P. Considine	7/9/2025	President of Non-Profit Friends of the Woods, Forester, USMC Veteran (Infantry Company Commander)

2. August 7th, 2025. Mayor Richardson extends the deadline again.

Two weeks before the original deadline expires, Lena Richardson makes a second motion to extend the deadline for Council appointments, even though the original deadline hadn't expired. She alluded to the need to handle outstanding personnel matters as part of her reasoning. The motion is made at 7:25 pm, *almost an hour and a half into the meeting during Council comments, after the public comment period had closed*. The motion was made less than 5 minutes before the meeting ended. The motion was approved 2:1, with Councilor Steve Mitchell & Mayor Richardson approving, and Councilor Paige Winfrey dissenting. As the deadline was one day after the Sept. 4th City Council meeting, this effectively extended the deadline to at least September 18th, which is a 10-week delay.

Statement from Mayor Richardson concerning second delay of appointment (emphasis added by SCM)

“The city has outstanding personnel matters to handle, and recent events have brought those concerns into the public spotlight. To work through this process requires thoughtful deliberation and informed decision making, the process will take time to collect information, schedule an executive session and make decisions, and it must not be rushed.

Also, decisions must be made by those who have worked closely with City Hall and have the knowledge and experience to make fair and rational decisions in the best interest of Shady Cove and its citizens.

Therefore, for these reasons I move to extend the deadline to apply for open council seats until September 5th. “

When a meeting attendee objected Mayor Richardson subsequently told them *“You are out of order, sir, you’re out of order. No, the public comment is, the time is over.”*

Upon seconding the Mayor’s motion to delay, Councilor Steve Mitchell said this (emphasis added by SCM):

“So I will second the Mayor’s motion in that regard, and I’m saying that because I know that we have, as far as I last know, we only have 3 applications. Of which those were part of the interview for Mayor. And I don’t know if we’ve received any more, but to extend a little bit further out, so we get some qualified people that have a real interest, who participate in our meetings and speak up as necessary. I appreciate it a lot. So I try and nurture that to get people involved in their community, especially in Shady Cove, so I would support her motion to extend it out to September “

Councilor Paige Winfrey vehemently objected, stating:

“I completely disagree, I think it’s been way too long already. I think that there’s been only one new applicant past the date that we decided to extend it.”

SCM notes that at the August 7th meeting, Councilor Steve Mitchell didn't appear to be well-informed on the status of Council applicants. **None of the Councilors or Mayor asked the City Administrator for a recap on the status of who had applied.** Had they done so, they would have realized another extremely qualified applicant had applied, bringing the total to seven as of August 7th.

Name	Date Applied	Qualifications
Jeffrey Vanier	8/5/2025	Former City Councilor for 4 years for the City of Reedsport OR, including serving two years as Council President. California Class A Engineering License, Nuclear Testing Technician Certificate.

3. August 21st, 2025. Mayor Richardson claims to have a timeline, claims she isn't questioning the qualifications of applicants, but admits she hasn't read any applications.

At the August 21st City Council Meeting, several members of the community spoke up in public comments on non-agenda items objecting to the extension of the deadline for Council vacancies. Community members noted it was difficult to believe none of the applicants were qualified and asked about timelines. One resident recommended that Council create a written list of interview questions to help eliminate bias. At the end of public comments on non-agenda items, a resident commented on the urgency to fill vacancies and Mayor Richardson responded as follows:

Resident: "I think we're burning time, and again, as Mr. Hohenstein has already said, I'd really like to see a timeline to get this done."

Mayor Richardson: "**Well actually, we do have a timeline**, and I don't want anybody to believe that uh the uh we have questioned the qualifications or the ability to hold the position by any applicants. **Matter of fact, I haven't seen any of the applicant... applications myself.** They've not been passed on."

Mayor Richardson then went on to recap her previous statement from Sept. 5th noting that decisions must be made by those "*who have worked closely with City Hall and have the knowledge and experience to make fair and rational decisions in the best interest of Shady Cove and its citizens. And that's the reason I moved the deadline. I made the motion to move the deadline to September 5th for these applications. And, I still firmly believe that, because the citizens... See... Have... who have not been involved in... the, on... Council, and the Budget Committee, and the Planning Commission, and, Activities like that have limited interaction with what City Hall and what Staff, so that's why I requested that.*"

SCM would like to note that at this point, a total of eight candidates had already applied, with the latest being Lelah Doyle. Six of those candidates had direct experience with City Council, Budget and Planning. **Mayor Richardson stated a timeline existed, yet offered no specifics. SCM finds it surprising that she also claimed she hadn't received or read any of the applications. As Mayor, she would have had full authority to ask for applications to be passed on.**

Name	Date Applied	Qualifications
Lelah Doyle	8/18/2025	8-years as OAWU (Oregon Association of Water Utilities) Certified Small Water System Operator). Part of the implementation of 2 separate community water systems, member of Tigard Water District Budget Committee and member at-large.

Source: City Council Public Records of August 21st, 2025.

<https://zoom.us/rec/share/TUI0FzNwjv8hFJdLyb9SmxMehV6UAiH3yu4pljWiz2Oi5enDAKMv2U9yBZFgigbj.35bOQT91y-xU3s77>

01:04 minute mark starts public comments, 01:15 minute mark starts Mayor Richardson’s comments cited above.

4. August 21st, 2025. Councilor Winfrey formally objects to delays and rescinds votes.

At the same Council meeting, Counselor Paige Winfrey formally registered her objection to the continuing delays and formally rescinded her two previous votes on the matter, citing violations of ORS 192.640 and City Charter. Note: Per SCM’s understanding, Councilor Winfrey had only 1 prior affirmative vote to extend the vacancy deadline for applicants, on July 10th.

5. Sept 4, 2025 City Council Meeting.

At the Council meeting, Mayor Richardson again extended the deadline to September 12th, claiming as her excuse that the website date for Council applicants was wrong. Per Mayor Richardson:

“Until yesterday, the website still had August 20th. And the application form still said July 9th. Then, yesterday, that was changed till September 3rd, which still wasn’t the actual date, and then about 1 o’clock today, it was corrected to September 5th. So, for about two weeks there, anybody who went on the website would have assumed that it was too late to fill out an application for council... a council position. **And I want everybody to... who’s qualified to have that opportunity.** And so I don’t know at this point”.

In SCM’s opinion, this was another blatant attempt to delay the appointment of Councilors to the vacant position. **Mayor Richardson appears to have made no effort to correct the website and no effort to review the existing eight applicants.** Despite the professed concern to allow yet more time for qualified applicants, the only additional person who applied (after the third extension) was former Council President Kathy Nuckles who finally put her application in on Sept 10th.

Name	Date Applied	Qualifications
Kathryn Nuckles	9/10/2025	Resigned from City Council twice, most recently along with Mayor Jon Ball on 7/1/2025.

Councilor Paige Winfrey made a motion that City Council commit to appointing candidates to the two existing vacancies on September 18th.

Source: City Council Public Records of August 21st, 2025 (00:24 minute mark).https://zoom.us/rec/share/jy4bX_2Fyv5ISKjPJBXl8KCjDMM_Y-af62SanS053Z2qUcc27oLrJK9QM0CxK5am.djKlQDJaLLTq-gfY