

07/07/2017
Judge Tony D Hazel
Spokane County Superior Court,
Dept 6.

Dear Members of SCBA's Judicial Evaluation Committee,

This letter of intent seeks to respectfully request your evaluation of me as I campaign to retain my judicial position for Spokane Superior Court Department Six. I was appointed by Governor Jay Inslee in April of 2017 to fill the vacancy left by the tragic passing of the Honorable Judge Sam Cozza in January 2017.

I submit my name for evaluation with the knowledge that I have the relevant qualities, experience, and mental discipline to make excellent Superior Court Judge. I possess the appropriate depth of legal experience, proven leadership abilities, unwavering values, a principled commitment to following the law, a positive and even temperament, and a faithful adherence to promoting professionalism by way of example. My legal experience includes representing the State in a wide breadth of both criminal and civil matters in Superior Court and my career also serves to demonstrate the strong work ethic required to ensure that the public is thoroughly served by my labor.

I am a worthy candidate for this position for many reasons. Prior to my appointment, the Spokane Superior Court bench had recently been depleted of judicial officers with significant felony-level criminal litigation experience. My appointment served to mitigate this issue, especially when considering the recent departure of Judge Sypolt and passing of Judge Cozza, both of whom had extensive felony criminal litigation experience before joining the Superior Court's bench. With approximately 70% of the total Superior Court's workload comprised of criminal law matters, there presently remain only two sitting judges, other than myself, who possess an appreciable felony-level criminal litigation background. The current composition of Spokane's Superior Court bench is comprised primarily of judges who come from family or civil law practices. Over the past decade practicing as a lawyer, I had extensively litigated the most severe, complicated, and highly scrutinized felony cases in Superior Court. Just prior to my appointment, I had also gained civil-law experience following my transfer to the Civil Unit in 2016. Since serving as a Judge, commencing on May 1st, 2017, I have already presided over at least 100 criminal cases and decided dozens of civil and criminal motions. With this relevant first-hand experience, I have also earned and maintained a solid reputation for exhibiting consistent legal competence and skills. If retained, my background would serve to bolster the Superior Court's recently diminished expertise in criminal law. My experience of having appeared almost daily in Superior Court for over a decade, prepared me well for my new role as judge.

In addition to possessing the relevant and necessary legal skills, I am also uniquely qualified to lead, effectuate, and entrench positive and progressive changes to the bench and the wider criminal justice system. Spokane is currently in the process of implementing system-wide criminal justice reforms, which were initially spawned by the reactivation of the Law and Justice Council in 2012. This local and collaborative reform effort, aimed at normalizing evidence-based practices system wide, eventually led to the successful procurement of a sizable and generous grant from the MacArthur Foundation culminating in 2016. As the only member of the county's criminal justice system who participated on the City's Public Safety Team back in 2011, I had helped plant the seeds for reform that eventually grew into the current widespread reform efforts that are being enacted and realized in Spokane today (the Public Safety team is no longer active

as it preceded the reactivation of the Law and Justice Council which essentially replaced this Public Safety Team). In addition to having played a significant role in helping to initiate and spur Spokane's current criminal justice reform efforts, I have ever since been assigned to closely oversee and guide reform implementation across Spokane's entire criminal justice system.

Due to my involvement with reform efforts from the ground-floor, I was asked to serve on the Spokane Law and Justice Council's "CORE-Team". The CORE-Team operates under the Law and Justice Council and is tasked with overseeing the day to day implementation of reform measures system wide. Also, this team manages and coordinates all of the activities of the various Law and Justice subcommittees. This group meets weekly and directly manages the ongoing implementation of current reform measures. The CORE-Team was also directly responsible for successfully securing the MacArthur grant. The members of this small team are exclusively comprised of elected or appointed officials who are department-head level stakeholders within Spokane's criminal justice system. Prior to my appointment, I served on this team as the representative of the County Prosecutor's Office. Prior to my appointment, I was the only non-elected/appointed member to be tasked to serve on this team. Following my appointment, I was asked to continue my work on this team representing the judiciary. Specifically, the CORE-Team includes the appointed County Public Defender, the presiding judges from Superior, Municipal, and District Courts, the Executive Administrator for Pretrial Services, the elected Spokane County Sheriff, Spokane's Chief of Police, the elected County Clerk, the City Attorney (criminal dept.), the CEO of Spokane County's Detention Services (jail), the Regional Law and Justice Coordinator (Dr. Jacqueline VanWormer), and myself. In addition to my assignment on the CORE-Team, I have also been tasked to continue to serve on Spokane's Criminal Justice Strategic Planning Committee, which is responsible for the long-term studying of potential problems, programs, evidence-based practices, system integration/coordination, grants, and other solutions pertaining to the criminal justice system. In connection with my duties, I am also the sole judge assigned to Spokane's Mental Health Steering Committee. This committee oversees and coordinates all the mental health resources and agencies within Spokane County (both public and private entities). I am actively engaged in improving the current mental health and criminal justice system in Spokane.

My intimate involvement with Spokane's reform efforts has provided me with extensive knowledge and unique insights into the current problems facing the Spokane Superior Court bench and the criminal justice system as a whole. If retained, I would be uniquely qualified to identify problem areas and could effectively work to improve the court system where needed. My experiences have also provided me with unique insight into the complexity of the criminal justice system and its interworking. I've gained perspective on how judicial decisions can unintentionally impact other areas of the criminal justice system. My broad knowledge of the criminal justice system allows me to anticipate the potential consequences of judicial decisions and helps me exercise judicial discretion with wisdom and fiscal responsibility. Having been tasked with overseeing the entire criminal justice system, I am therefore uniquely aware of the current strengths and weaknesses of Spokane's court system, and retaining me to the Superior Court bench will help further solidify and entrench forward thinking and evidence-based reforms.

Since I was a very recent judicial applicant, Mrs Mounsey was kind enough to advise that it was unnecessary for me to provide an updated Governor's Judicial Questionnaire and that I could instead submit the identical materials requested in the Governor's application process. In accordance with previous SCBA instructions to provide materials identical to those that were originally considered by the Governor's Office, I am submitting my Judicial Questionnaire/Application from 2014, my attorney resume, a writing sample, and the requested signed waiver forms. Also, a summary of my career progress since the time of being interviewed by the Governor in 2014 follows this letter (December 2014-present).

I look forward to the opportunity to be evaluated for this important position by our local bar. I am honored to have earned widespread community support in my campaign to retain my judicial position in department six. I am exclusively endorsed by over 35 current and retired judicial officers and I have earned strong bipartisan support from numerous elected and appointed officials. Please visit my Facebook page "Retain Judge Tony Hazel Superior Court Pos 6" or my website "RetainJudgeTonyHazel.com" for additional information about my campaign or for a list of official endorsements. The opinions of our local bar, as expressed through the Judicial Evaluation Committee, are vital to this process and important to me personally. Thank you to all members of the committee who devote their valuable and precious personal time to participate in this important process.

Thank you for this opportunity and your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tony Hazel", with a large, stylized flourish extending to the left.

Anthony D Hazel
Judge Tony Hazel

Summary of Professional Progress, December 2014 – present:

January 2015 - April 2015 - Having worked the previous eight years in the Major Crimes Unit, I was assigned by the newly elected Prosecutor with the temporary task of streamlining and implementing the Early Case Resolution Program/Unit (ECR). The creation of the ECR program arose from reform measures initially implemented in 2011. As the then elected Prosecutor's Union President in 2010, I had successfully worked within our union to support this program and include its adoption and implementation in contract negotiations with the County. This robust ECR program is designed to create system-wide efficiencies, expedite case resolutions, and lessen the length of jail stays for low-risk nonviolent offenders. This program constitutes the current backbone of Spokane's felony Criminal Justice System as the ECR unit processes the majority of all nonviolent felony prosecutions and is comprised of only two prosecutors (myself included). My duties were to handle and quickly resolve non-violent class C and class B Felonies County wide. My personal caseload consisted of approximately 700 felony case files which represented almost one-third of all felony prosecutions within Spokane County (assigned solely to myself). While working in this unit, I also retained a caseload of homicide cases separate and apart from ECR case assignments. Once the ECR program was operating smoothly (three-month assignment), I was promoted and transferred to a newly created position tasked to prosecute high-risk offenders.

May 2015 – Promoted to Senior Attorney, obtaining the highest level of classification advancement within the Prosecutor's Office.

May 2015 – August 2016 – Assigned to the newly created chronic offender position (internally referred to as the 9+ felony position). Was one of three designated prosecutors within the office assigned a caseload comprised of "chronic offenders" (Defendants with sentencing SRA scores of 9+). In addition to the chronic offender prosecution, I continued to have homicide case assignments.

June 2015 – Concluded my term as the elected Spokane County Bar President and President of the Volunteer Lawyers Program (VLP).

January 2015 – Present – Having served as the only prosecutor on the Spokane City's Public Safety Team back in 2010, I have remained committed to continued participation in the ongoing criminal justice reform efforts occurring in Spokane. I have been a leader and advocate in the area of criminal justice reform in Spokane and have been integrally involved in evidence-based reform efforts from their beginnings in Spokane. However, I have and always will understand that progressive change must be implemented in a disciplined manner that avoids violating any prescribed legislative mandates and adheres to the principles of stare decisis as our Constitutional Democracy depends on a disciplined approach to any reform efforts. I continue to serve on the Law and Justice Council's CORE-Team and Strategic Planning Committee. Separate from the Law and Justice Council, I also serve on Spokane's Mental Health Steering Committee.

January 2015-April 29th, 2017-In addition to the case assignments, I was tasked as an advisor to the Elected Prosecutor. In this capacity, I meet almost daily with the Elected Prosecutor and provided advice and consultation on matters relating to office policy, office budget, proposed reform efforts, ongoing case prosecutions, office management, homicide charging, officer use of force incidents, public outreach, and public/media relations.

August 2016-April 29th, 2017-Assigned to the Civil Unit where I represented community hospitals in involuntary civil commitments proceedings. I had personally conducted well over 500 civil commitment hearings in Superior Court since joining the Civil Unit. Three days a week, I traveled to various Spokane hospitals where I litigated civil commitment hearings before a traveling Superior Court commissioner/judge. In addition, my duties in the Civil Unit had also included advising various county departments regarding risk management, administrative and statutory code compliance, and employment-labor issues.

May 1st, 2017-Present-Appointed by the Governor and currently serves as a Superior Court Judge in Department Six. Judicial duties include spending three days of the week serving as the presiding Juvenile Judge. I have presided over at least a 100 criminal juvenile matters

including arraignments, detention hearings, pretrials, plea and dispositions, motions, and a bench trial. I have also conducted several emergency shelter-care hearings. One day of my work week is currently dedicated to adult criminal matters where I have decided dozens of criminal motions and have conducted approximately 30 adult plea and sentencing hearings. With respect to my current assignments, Fridays are dedicated to civil cases where I have decided dozens of civil motions including summary judgements. I have also conducted several unlawful detainer hearings and have presided over adoptions. On July 17th, 2017 I will begin a new docket assignment in which I will inherit a more traditional caseload as I will be taking over case assignments for Judge Linda Tompkins (she will be reassigned to Drug Court/ECR). This traditional caseload is referred to as an "Individual Calendar Judge" (IC Judge). In this new assignment, I will alternate between criminal and civil months and much of the work will consist of presiding over trials with specific days reserved for motion hearings.

