

Judicial Nominating Commission To Conduct Interviews on Aug. 1

CLEARWATER – Two current Pinellas County judges and five attorneys currently on the Sept. 5 ballot as candidates for other seats are among the 26 applicants seeking appointment to one of the two vacant circuit judge positions that will be filled by appointment.

The Sixth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission (JNC) will meet on Aug. 1 to interview the applicants for the vacancies created by the retirement of Circuit Judge James Case and the Supreme Court's removal from office of former Judge John Renke.

Both sitting Pinellas County judges – Shawn Crane and Dorothy Vaccaro – have previously been finalists for vacant circuit positions. Also among the applicants are three Sixth Judicial Circuit magistrate/hearing officers: Joseph Flannery, Joe Lovelace and Beverly Plummer. All three oversee court proceedings directed to them by judges as a way of providing an expedited forum for the resolution of legal matters while preserving the right to due process.

Robert Michael, Glenn Martin and Pat Siracusa are candidates in elections that will fill three vacant circuit judgeships in the fall. Michael is one of two candidates for a new position approved by the 2006 Legislature; Martin is one of three candidates seeking to replace retiring Judge Crockett Farnell, and Siracusa is one of three candidates to replace retiring Judge Brandt Downey.

Nathaniel Kidder and George Brown are among four candidates vying two new county judgeships that were created by the Legislature. They are not seeking same seat in the election,

JNC Chair Emory Wood said interviews, beginning at 9 a.m. on Aug. 1, will be conducted in the Third Floor Conference Room in the Judicial Reception area of Pinellas Criminal Justice Center, 14250 49th St. North, Clearwater.

Following the interviews, the JNC will present Gov. Jeb Bush with a list of at least three names and no more than six for each position. By law, Bush will have 60 days to select appointees from the JNC's list.

In addition to the sitting judges, hearing officers and candidates, those who have applied for the two positions are:

Pamela Cole Bell, Michael C. Berry Sr., Dan Kevin Duryea, Pamela Ann Meacombs Campbell, Loula Giannet, Brian C. Guenther, Allyson Hughes, Randall Love, Victor Gerald Meaders Jr., Tonya Oliver, Matthew H. Perry, Michael Eric Rosario, Charles Malouf Samaha, Joseph Sowell, John E. Tuthill, and Lanell Williams.