



Local Agency Formation Commission of Napa County
Subdivision of the State of California

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We Manage Local Government Boundaries, Evaluate Municipal Services, and Protect Agriculture

Agenda Item 7c (Consent/Action)

TO: Local Agency Formation Commission

PREPARED BY: Brendon Freeman, Executive Officer *BF*

MEETING DATE: February 2, 2026

SUBJECT: Direction for Public Member Appointment Procedure

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

This is a consent item for formal action. Accordingly, if interested, the Commission is invited to pull this item for additional discussion with the concurrence of the Chair.

It is recommended the Commission direct the Executive Officer to recruit candidates and schedule a public hearing to consider making an appointment or reappointment to the Public Member position currently held by Kenneth Leary. Approval of this item as part of the consent calendar on the Agenda will suffice for purposes of providing direction to the Executive Officer.

California Government Code section 56325(d) states the composition of LAFCOs shall include one Public Member representing the general public. The Public Member is appointed to a four-year term and cannot be an officer or employee with local governmental agencies.

The Commission's *Policy on the Appointment of a Public Member and Alternate Public Member* ("the Policy") is included as Attachment 1. The Policy directs the Executive Officer to notify the Commission no less than 120 days prior to an impending vacancy and whether the incumbent is eligible to seek reappointment. Upon notification, the Commission must direct the Executive Officer to (a) recruit candidates and schedule a hearing to make an appointment or (b) schedule a hearing to expedite the reappointment of the incumbent if they are eligible and have served no more than one term.

This notification is being provided as part of today's agenda and falls within 120 days of the impending vacancy. Staff intended to provide the notification and receive direction from the Commission at its December 2025 meeting, which was eventually cancelled.

Beth Painter, Chair
Councilmember, City of Napa

Paul Dohring, Commissioner
Councilmember, City of St. Helena

David Oro, Alternate Commissioner
Councilmember, City of American Canyon

Belia Ramos, Vice Chair
County of Napa Supervisor, 5th District

Anne Cottrell, Commissioner
County of Napa Supervisor, 3rd District

Joelle Gallagher, Alternate Commissioner
County of Napa Supervisor, 1st District

Kenneth Leary, Commissioner
Representative of the General Public

Eve Kahn, Alternate Commissioner
Representative of the General Public

Brendon Freeman
Executive Officer

The Commission originally appointed Commissioner Leary as the Public Member beginning in April 2021 to fill an unexpired term ending May 2022. In April 2022, consistent with the reappointment procedures outlined in the Policy, the Commission formally reappointed Commissioner Leary to a new four-year term beginning May 4, 2022, and expiring on May 6, 2026, and without requiring an open recruitment.

Commissioner Leary is eligible to seek reappointment but is not eligible for the expedited reappointment described in the Policy due to having served more than one full four-year term. Therefore, an open recruitment is required.

Staff recommends the Commission direct the Executive Officer to initiate an open recruitment for the Public Member position and schedule a public hearing date consistent with the procedures identified in the Policy. The next possible meeting date for the formal appointment or reappointment is April 6, 2026. However, the Commission may choose instead to schedule the hearing for a later date, which would cause a temporary vacancy in the seat from May 6, 2026 through the date of the formal appointment or reappointment.

An example application form for Public Member candidates is included as Attachment 2. Staff will post the application form on the LAFCO website and issue a press release inviting interested members of the public to apply for the position.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Policy on the Appointment of a Public Member and Alternate Public Member
- 2) Application for LAFCO Public Member



LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF NAPA COUNTY

Policy on the Appointment of a Public Member and Alternate Public Member

(Adopted: October 11, 2001; Last Amended: November 18, 2019)

I. Background

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization (CKH) Act of 2000 includes provisions for the composition of the Commission including the Public Member as follows:

The composition of the Commission shall include one member representing the general public, hereinafter referred to as “public member.” The Commission may designate one alternate public member. The selection of the public member and alternate public member shall be subject to the affirmative vote of at least one of the members appointed by each of the appointing authorities ([California Government Code \(G.C.\) §56325\(d\)](#)).

II. Purpose

It is the intent of the Commission to establish a policy for the appointment of a public member and alternate public member which is consistent with CKH. This policy also includes procedures to address a vacancy in the position and other relevant matters.

III. Eligibility

The public member and alternate public member shall be a resident of Napa County. No person may serve as public member or alternate public member if at the same time they are an officer or employee of the County, a city, town or district within Napa County.¹ For purposes of this policy, an officer of a local government agency is a member of a local public board, commission, committee, or council with the authority to make advisory or final decisions relative to land use or the provision of municipal services.

IV. Term of Office

The term of office for Public Member and Alternate Public Member shall be four years and shall end on the first Monday in May of the year in which the term expires. The Public Member and Alternate Public Member shall continue to serve until a successor is appointed.

¹ The term “district” is defined in [G.C. §56036](#).

V. Appointment Procedures

A) New Term for Public Member or Alternate Public Member

It is the policy of the Commission that in anticipation of the expiration of a four-year term for the Public Member or Alternate Public Member, the following procedures will be taken:

At a regular meeting at least 120 days prior to the scheduled expiration of the Public Member or Alternate Public Member's term, the Executive Officer shall inform the Commission of the impending vacancy and whether the incumbent is eligible to seek reappointment. The Commission shall take one of the following two actions as set forth in the following subsection 1 or 2 below.

- 1) Direct the Executive Officer to recruit candidates and schedule a public hearing to consider making an appointment to the position. Tasks of the Executive Officer shall include, but not limited to, the following:
 - (a) At least 60 days prior to the scheduled hearing for the appointment, issue a notice announcing the vacancy and that the Commission is accepting applications for the position. The notice shall be posted at the LAFCO office and on its website, sent to all local agencies, and published in a newspaper of general circulation in Napa County.² The notice shall indicate if the incumbent is eligible for reappointment.
 - (b) Determine the filing period to receive applications for the position. All applications shall be made available to each city and county member on the Commission at least 14 days prior to the scheduled hearing for the appointment.
 - (c) If it becomes necessary for the Commission to cancel or reschedule the meeting at which the hearing for the appointment has been scheduled, the Executive Officer shall reschedule the hearing for the next regular meeting.
- 2) If the incumbent is eligible and has served no more than one four-year term, the Commission may direct the Executive Officer to schedule a public hearing to consider approving reappointment. Tasks of the Executive Officer shall include, but not limited to, the following:
 - (a) Issue a notice announcing the scheduled reappointment of the incumbent. The notice shall be posted at the LAFCO office and on its website and sent to all local agencies. The notice shall be posted at least 21 days prior to the hearing for which the reappointment has been scheduled.
 - (b) If it becomes necessary for the Commission to cancel or reschedule the meeting at which the hearing for the reappointment has been scheduled, the Executive Officer shall reschedule the hearing for the next regular meeting.

² For purposes of this policy, notice to local agencies is fulfilled by sending a copy of the notice to the clerk or secretary of the legislative body of each local agency in Napa County. Publishing in a newspaper of general circulation in Napa County shall be conducted by publishing, at minimum, a prominently placed display ad.

B) Mid-Term Vacancies

An appointment to fill an unexpired term for the position of Public Member or Alternate Public Member shall be preceded by posting a notice of vacancy. The notice will be posted at the LAFCO office and on its website and sent to all local agencies. The notice will be posted at least 21 days prior to the meeting at which time the Commission will consider taking action to fill the unexpired term. An appointment to fill an unexpired term will occur as follows:

- 1) Public Member: If the position of Public Member becomes vacant prior to the expiration of the term, it is the policy of the Commission that it may fill the unexpired term through one of the following:
 - (a) Appoint the Alternate Public Member.
 - (b) Fill the position in the manner prescribed in Section V(A) “New Term for Public Member or Alternate Public Member” for the appointment of the Public Member to a new term.
- 2) Alternate Public Member: If the position of Alternate Public Member becomes vacant prior to the expiration of the term, it is the policy of the Commission that it may fill the unexpired term in the manner prescribed in Section V(A) “New Term for Public Member or Alternate Public Member” for the appointment of the Alternate Public Member to a new term.

C) Conducting Public Hearings for Appointing a Public Member or Alternate Public Member

It is the policy of the Commission that a public hearing to appoint either the Public Member or Alternate Public Member shall be conducted as follows:

The Chair shall open the public hearing and first invite candidates to address the Commission. The Commission may ask questions of the candidates. The Chair shall then invite public comments from the audience. Upon the close of the public comment period, the Public Member or Alternate Public Member will be selected based upon a motion and second followed by an affirmative vote.



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APPLICATION FOR LAFCO PUBLIC MEMBER

The Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) of Napa County is accepting applications for its Public Member position. The position involves an appointment made by the city and county members on LAFCO. The term commences on May 4, 2026, and expires on May 1, 2030. The Public Member is expected to actively participate in LAFCO meetings with respect to providing input and voting on all regulatory and planning matters before the agency. The incumbent, Kenneth Leary, is eligible for reappointment.

Eligibility

Applicants must be a resident of Napa County. Applicants also must not be currently employed by a local public agency or serving as a member on a local public body with the authority to make final or advisory decisions relative to land use or municipal service.

Time Commitments

LAFCO currently meets on the first Monday of every even-numbered month unless otherwise scheduled. Regular meetings are calendared to begin at 2:00 P.M. in the County of Napa Administration Building located at 1195 Third Street in Napa. Special meetings and subcommittee meetings are calendared as needed. All members are expected to attend each meeting unless excused and currently receive a \$150.00 per diem for each Commission meeting attended.

Deadline for Applications

Completed applications must be received by LAFCO by **5:00 P.M. on Friday, March 6, 2026**. The city and county members on LAFCO are expected to consider making an appointment for the Public Member position as part of a public hearing item at LAFCO's regular meeting on April 6, 2026. Letters of recommendation and references are not required but will be accepted and should be attached to the completed application at the time of submission. Questions should be directed to LAFCO Executive Officer Brendon Freeman at (707) 259-8645 or bfreeman@napa.lafco.ca.gov.

