

Short list' of council hopefuls long on names

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SANTA CRUZ — The "narrowed" list of candidates for a vacant City Council seat shrank by only 10 over the weekend, so the council will hear a field of 17 candidates tonight — the same number as ran in last November's election for three seats.

Those candidates will speak to the City Council tonight at 7:30 p.m.

Because of the large number of candidates, Mayor Mardi Wormhoudt said, each candidate's pitch to the council will be limited to no more than five minutes. A maximum of three minutes will be allowed for the council to ask each candidate follow-up questions.

The council hopefuls are vying to fill the seat of Councilman Mo Reich, who resigned last month after just three months in office.

The field of 17 includes four people who were unsuccessful council candidates in last November's election, and includes progressives, liberals, conservatives and non-aligned people.

The remaining candidates are Don Webber, Louis Emmett Rittenhouse, Rod Quartararo, Linda Quale, Ed Porter, John P. Mills, Rick A. Lofvendahl, John Patrick Liteky, Bill Lee, Robert Jorgensen,

Susan Groff, Bruce M. Gabriel, Linda Edwards, Dan Dickmeyer, Bruce N. Cooperstein, Katherine Beiers and Kyle B. Arndt. Each submitted a two-page application with a political statement and list of qualifications.

Out of the running are Mary Olea, George "Bud" Winslow, Arthur Wood, Murray Sims, Brian Staley, Hakin Abdullah Hassan, Brian Koepke, Patrick Keven

O'Rourke, Nancy Noel and Stuart M. Turnansky.

The special council session for candidate presentations and interviews is set to start at 7:30 tonight. City Clerk Pat Kenyon wrote in a memo to the council that the session could be over by 9:45 p.m.

Wormhoudt said she was surprised by the length of the list of candidates left after this weekend.

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when each of the council members gave Kenyon a confidential list of six candidates they wished to interview.

Councilman Joe Ghio said Monday that he believed the list was long because of "a little bit of window dressing."

He said he thought some council members probably tried to include diverse candidates on their list in hopes that a longer, more diverse field would "make the ultimate choice more acceptable."

Ghio said he wished the council could have spread out the interviews over several days, so each candidate could be examined more thoroughly. But, he said, the council never had a formal discussion about the process.

Wormhoudt said she too was sorry that so little time will be given to each candidate, especially now that there are so many people in the running.

Originally, Wormhoudt said, she had hoped to give each candidate 10 minutes at the mike, followed by a similarly long period for questions from the six council members. But, she said, after seeing the list of candidates compiled by Kenyon,

Wormhoudt and Kenyon decided to cut the interview periods in half.

Under an agreement between Kenyon and the council, only Kenyon knows who was on each council member's list. The council and Kenyon intend to keep confidential which candidates were nominated by which council members.

Wormhoudt said the measure was taken to "take the pressure off" all parties, and to avoid giving any candidates status as "front runners" in the selection process.

If all goes well, the council will finish hearing presentations and asking questions tonight, and a new council member will be appointed next Tuesday.

Wormhoudt said that at the end of the meeting, the council must decide what its selection procedure will be next Tuesday, as well as whether the selection meeting will be at City Hall or the Civic Auditorium. At least one council member has suggested that the council vote by paper ballot so council members won't be influenced by the vocal votes of those before them. Wormhoudt said that the council will have to decide on that procedure tonight, as well, although in either case, the vote will not be secret.