

**FIRCREST CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA**

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2025
6:00 P.M.**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS
FIRCREST CITY HALL, 115 RAMSDELL STREET**

Pg.#

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION

To evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g)

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. [Confirmation of Municipal Court Judge Appointment](#)

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6. ADJOURNMENT

Join the Zoom Meeting:

Dial-in Information: 1-253-215-8782 Webinar ID: 895 4621 5399 Password: 545105

FIRCREST CITY COUNCIL AGENDA SUMMARY

NEW BUSINESS: Confirmation of Municipal Court Judge Appointment
ITEM: 5A
DATE: November 24, 2025
FROM: Dawn Masko, City Manager

RECOMMENDED MOTION: I move to confirm the City Manager's appointment of James Orlando as Municipal Court Judge, effective January 1, 2026.

PROPOSAL: The Council is being asked to confirm the City Manager's appointment of James Orlando as Municipal Court Judge, effective January 1, 2026.

FISCAL IMPACT: None. The Municipal Court Judge's salary is included in the adopted budget.

ADVANTAGE: Appointing an experienced, highly qualified Judge is critical to the efficient operation of both the Fircrest and Ruston Municipal Courts. Judge Orlando's extensive knowledge of court operations and familiarity with court staff will ensure a smooth transition.

DISADVANTAGES: None identified.

ALTERNATIVES: The Council may choose not to confirm the appointment.

HISTORY: Under State law, in a Code City, the Municipal Court Judge is appointed by the City Manager, subject to confirmation by the City Council.

Judge Meagan M. Foley has served as the Fircrest Municipal Court Judge since January 2024, following her appointment to complete the unexpired term of retired Judge John Miller. She will retire at the end of 2025, completing her term after providing exemplary service to the City.

Judge James Orlando has served as a Pro Tem Judge for the Fircrest and Ruston Municipal Courts since February 2025 and previously served as the Municipal Court Judge for Fircrest from 1992 to 1995. He was the unanimous top choice of the interview panel, which included Court Administrator Olivarez, Fife Judge Kevin Ringus, Prosecutor Will Gunderson, and Gig Harbor Court Administrator Stacy Colberg.

Born in Seattle and raised in Gig Harbor, Judge Orlando graduated from Peninsula High School and earned a Bachelor's in Economics and Political Science from the University of Washington. He then earned his Juris Doctorate from the University of Puget Sound Law School.

Judge Orlando spent 12 years in private practice before his 1995 appointment to the Pierce County Superior Court. He served for five years as a Pierce County Superior Court Commissioner and was subsequently elected as a Pierce County Superior Court Judge, serving from 2000 to 2022. He served as Presiding Judge of the Superior Court's criminal division (2003-2004) and juvenile court (2006). In addition to his prior service as Fircrest's Municipal Court Judge, he also served

as the Municipal Court Judge for the City of Fife and as a Pro Tem Judge in Pierce County District Court.

His extensive judicial experience encompasses a wide range of legal proceedings, including criminal and civil matters, family law, business and estate law, personal injury, and at-risk youth. Judge Orlando was named *Outstanding Court Commissioner* for 1997 – 1999 and was rated *Exceptionally Well Qualified* by the Tacoma-Pierce County Bar Association. Over his 27 years on the bench, he received numerous accolades and awards, including the 2010 *Judge of the Year* award from the Washington State Association for Justice, which recognizes judges who, through their exemplary rulings or leadership, promote a civil justice system that serves the community.

In addition to his judicial service, Judge Orlando has contributed to the broader legal and local community through his work on the Governor’s Juvenile Advisory Committee, the Washington State Partnership Council for Juvenile Justice, the Pierce County Guardian ad Litem Committee, and the board of the Comprehensive Health Education Foundation. He is a long-time Fircrest resident and previously served as a volunteer firefighter for the City from 1989 to 1995.

Judge Orlando looks forward to bringing his judicial career full circle by returning to serve as Municipal Court Judge for the City of Fircrest, the place where his judicial journey first began.

ATTACHMENTS: [Appointment Letter](#)
[FMC 2.28.040](#)
[RCW 35A.13.080](#)



115 Ramsdell Street
Fircrest, WA 98466
253-564-8901
www.cityoffircrest.net

November 17, 2025

James Orlando
115 Ramsdell Street
Fircrest, WA 98466

Re: Appointment – Municipal Court Judge

Dear Mr. Orlando,

As authorized by Fircrest Municipal Code Section [2.28.040](#) and [RCW 35A.13.080](#), I am pleased to appoint you as Fircrest Municipal Court Judge effective January 1, 2026. The term of this appointment will expire on December 31, 2030.

Pursuant to the Interlocal Agreement between the City of Fircrest and the City of Ruston, you will also serve as Judge of the Ruston Municipal Court.

In accordance with FMC Section [2.28.040](#) and [RCW 35A.13.080](#), this appointment is subject to confirmation of the Fircrest City Council. Confirmation is scheduled for consideration at the regular City Council meeting on November 25, 2025.

Thank you for your willingness to serve and for your commitment to the administration of justice in our community!

Sincerely,

Dawn Masko

Dawn Masko
Fircrest City Manager

2.28.040 Appointment and term of judge – Qualifications listed.

The judge of the municipal court shall be appointed by the city manager of the city, with the approval and concurrence of a majority of the city council, for a four-year term. Succeeding appointment shall be made in like manner by the fifteenth day of December preceding the end of every such four-year term. The person appointed as municipal judge shall be a citizen of the United States and of the state of Washington, and shall be an attorney in good standing, duly admitted to practice law before the courts of record in this state. (Ord. 1389 § 16, 2005; Ord. 1314 § 3, 2002; Ord. 1077 § 2, 1994).

City manager—Powers and duties.

The powers and duties of the city manager shall be:

- (1) To have general supervision over the administrative affairs of the code city;
- (2) To appoint and remove at any time all department heads, officers, and employees of the code city, except members of the council, and subject to the provisions of any applicable law, rule, or regulation relating to civil service: PROVIDED, That the council may provide for the appointment by the mayor, subject to confirmation by the council, of a city planning commission, and other advisory citizens' committees, commissions, and boards advisory to the city council: PROVIDED FURTHER, That if the municipal judge of the code city is appointed, such appointment shall be made by the city manager subject to confirmation by the council, for a four year term. The council may cause an audit to be made of any department or office of the code city government and may select the persons to make it, without the advice or consent of the city manager;
- (3) To attend all meetings of the council at which his or her attendance may be required by that body;
- (4) To see that all laws and ordinances are faithfully executed, subject to the authority which the council may grant the mayor to maintain law and order in times of emergency;
- (5) To recommend for adoption by the council such measures as he or she may deem necessary or expedient;
- (6) To prepare and submit to the council such reports as may be required by that body or as he or she may deem it advisable to submit;
- (7) To keep the council fully advised of the financial condition of the code city and its future needs;
- (8) To prepare and submit to the council a proposed budget for the fiscal year, as required by chapter 35A.33 RCW, and to be responsible for its administration upon adoption;
- (9) To perform such other duties as the council may determine by ordinance or resolution.

[2009 c 549 § 3025; 1987 c 3 § 17; 1967 ex.s. c 119 § 35A.13.080.]

NOTES:

Severability—1987 c 3: See note following RCW 3.70.010.