September 2, 2022

**To:** Board of Directors, Dispute Resolution Center of Thurston County

**From:**  Robert (Bob) Butts, DRC Board Development Committee Chair

**Subject**: Recommendations for New Board DRC members

**Summary**

During the past several months, the DRC Board Development Committee has recruited new board candidates, held interviews, checked references, and earlier today, unanimously agree to recommend two individuals be appointed the DRC Board: **Cassandra Batdorf** and **Rob Wilson-Hoss**. The committee is recommending that a third candidate, **Michael Furze,** be invited to serve on a Board Committee and be considered if there is a future vacancy on the Board. We request that the recommendations be considered at the DRC Board Meeting on September 21, 2002.

The current Board consists of 11 members. The bylaws (Article II, Sec. 3.) state that “The number of directors shall be 9-15”. With the additional two recommended individuals, the Board would consist of 13 members. According to the by-laws, new Board members are selected in September and their term begins on October 1.

**Process**

In early spring, it was decided to expand the size of the Board with a priority of candidates who lived in Mason County; were a person of color, including of Hispanic origin; and/or worked in the business community. Candidates were recruited in the spring and four candidates applied. Subsequently, one of the four candidates withdrew her application.

The remaining three candidates were interviewed and their references were checked. The committee met on September 2 to discuss each of the candidates, review information obtained from the references, and make a recommendation to the full board.

**The Candidates**

Below is a summary of each candidate’s education, professional, and volunteer experience. See the attached resumes and letters of interest for additional information, including what prompted them to apply for a DRC Board position.

**Robert Wilson-Hoss**

Rob graduated from Willamette University in 1972 and received his J.D. from the UW in 1978. He had a private law practice in Mason County from 1981 to 2021. His work included civil rights plaintiff representation; representation of non-profit associations and corporations, including owner associations; clients with real property issues; and other small-town general matters. After retirement, he continues to work with local non-profits, but is not a licensed attorney and does not do attorney work for them.

He served several terms as Mason County Judicial Commissioner, in Juvenile Court, Domestic Relations Court, and as Settlement Conference Commissioner. His previous experiences include service in the United States Peace Corps, work for Evergreen Legal Services, participation in the establishment of the Northwest Intertribal Court System, and as the first Reservation Attorney for the Squaxin Island Tribe.

Rob has participated in the formation and/or work of several Mason and Thurston County nonprofit agencies and associations. He was part of the efforts to establish the local homeless shelter, the Habitat for Humanity chapter, the domestic violence shelter, and most recently, a local YMCA. As a former member of the DRC Board, he was recognized by the Dispute Resolution Center of Thurston County for “his years of outstanding contributions to the success of this agency.

**Casandra Batdorf**

Casandra has obtained three degrees:

* Oak Brook College of Law and Government Policy, Juris Doctorate Degree, October 2008
* The Evergreen State College, Bachelor's in Liberal Studies Degree, June 2000
* South Puget Sound Community College, Associates in Paralegal Studies, June 1997

In addition, she successfully completed DRC’s 40-hour training.

Most recent volunteer and professional work experience includes:

* Board of Director/Treasurer, Highlands Homeowner Association

Role is to run the association. Hire vendors for maintenance and repair. Review contracts and make decisions regarding maintaining the common areas, managing budgets/fiscal responsibilities, and enforcing/complying with governing documents. Resolve conflicts within the association.

* Volunteer Certified Senior Mediator, Thurston County Dispute Resolution Center, Olympia, WA

As Senior Mediator facilitate and lead fair and impartial mediations with disputants concerning civil matters and family mediations. Actively listen, identify the underlying interest, and prepare written settlement agreements.

* + Litigation Specialist, Department of Labor and Industries (L&I)

As Litigation Specialist, exercise discretion and render expert resolution of employer disputes relating to field audits, successor liability, prime contractor liability, personal liability for business tax debt. Responsible for conducting fair and impartial informal conferences with employers. Provide technical advice to other divisions within L&I. Train staff and develop training materials. Prepared written decisions, including findings of fact, conclusions applying legal principles, statutes, and relevant case law. Research and analyze all manners of legal issues. Prepare settlement agreements and participate in settlement conferences. Manage and prioritize multiple cases. Acts as the Department's non-attorney representative before the Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals (BIIA). Provide assistance to the Assistant Attorneys General in case preparation for hearings. Responsible for leading in the mediation hearings before the Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals.

**Michael Furze**

Michael’s education has included:

* Master, Community + Regional Planning, University of New Mexico, Fall, 2010
* University of Massachusetts-Amherst, B.A., Anthropology, Spring, 2003

Recent professional experience includes:

* Assistant Director, Energy Division + Commerce Executive Team
* Policy and Contracts Section Manager and Local Agencies.
* Energy Matchmaker Program Manager
* Resource Center for Raza Planning, Planner

Volunteer, Non-Profit, and Board Experience includes:

* Vermont State Senate Intern
* USGBC-NM Board
* USGBC-NM Board Chair
* NASEO Board
* NASEO Equity Committee (co-founder)
* Youth Soccer Coach
* Thurston County DRC Tech/Observer

**Committee Recommendation Rationale**

The committee concluded that all three individuals would be great additions to the Board but concluded that since the number of Board members has grown in recent years, it would be prudent to add only two new Board members. **Casandra Batdorf and Rob Wilson-Hoss** were determined to be the most qualified candidates based on their previous service to the DRC, the criteria established for new members, the positive recommendations from their references, their education and professional backgrounds, and their motivation for joining the Board.

Highlights of **Cassandra’s** qualifications included:

* Has been a long-time mediator for the DRC
* Has a strong sense of social justice
* She has served on other Boards and we were told by the Executive Director of one of the board she served on that she plays well with others, is a thoughtful listener, and is a good facilitator
* She wants to expand DRC’s reach in communities of color
* She is a person of color, which was a priority area for recruitment

Highlights on **Rob’s** qualifications included:

* He has been on the DRC Board in the past and received recognition for his work for the DRC
* Is well connected in the legal and other communities in Mason County and has most recently been instrumental in the construction of a new “Y” in the county
* Was highly recommended by the Executive Director of a Board he serves on. According to her, he “always shows-up, completes lots of extra work, very professional, makes connections, and knows the Shelton/Mason County community.”
* He lives in Mason County, which was a priority area for recruitment

**Further Information**

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Mickey, Waeni, Debra, and/or Jody. Curt participated in the interviews but was not able to join the conversation when the committee made its recommendation.

Attachments