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Pierce County parks director named

Ladenburg tapped for interim administrator of juvenile court

Published: September 13, 2013

By STEVE MAYNARD — Staff writer

Former Pierce County Executive John Ladenburg is back on the county's payroll as interim administrator of juvenile court.

But he won't be there for long. Ladenburg is expected to fill the position for two to three months until a permanent administrator is hired.

Superior Court judges selected Ladenburg to be temporary director for Remann Hall, which includes the juvenile detention center.

Juvenile Court Presiding Judge Kitty-Ann van Doorninck said the court needed an interim administrator. But to keep the application process "fair and open," it didn't want someone interested in applying for the permanent position, she said.

Ladenburg fit the bill.

"Juvenile court's an important part of county government," Ladenburg said. "I just didn't want to see it stumble."

Shelly Maluo, juvenile court administrator since 2005, is retiring. Her last day of work is Sept. 18.

Ladenburg, 63, said he's not interested in filling the post permanently. He said he wants to return to his private law practice with his two sons in Tacoma.

"I have a federal trial in November," he said.

He started Sept. 5 and is being paid \$71.21 an hour, or \$2,848.40 a week.

Ladenburg said van Doorninck and the other juvenile court judge, Thomas Felnagle, asked him if he'd fill in.

It's the first time Ladenburg has been on the county payroll since he left office after working as elected county executive from 2001 to 2008. Before that, he was Pierce County prosecutor from 1987 to 2000.

He ran unsuccessfully for state attorney general in 1992 and 2008 and for state Supreme Court in 2012.

"I think he was selected (for the juvenile court interim post) because of his experience in the county itself," said Superior Court Judge Thomas Larkin.

Ladenburg knows Remann Hall and should provide stability during the transition, Larkin said.

The deadline for applying to be permanent administrator ended Friday.

A selection committee is expected to send its recommendations to the Superior Court judges in November, Larkin said.

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