

# Former city attorney named new Benton County judge



1 of 2

Former Kennewick City Attorney John Ziobro will serve out the balance of Joe Burrowes' seat on the Benton County District Court bench. Courtesy Telquist Ziobro McMillen Clare

By Wendy Culverwell

Tri-City Herald

March 28, 2017 1:17 PM

Former Kennewick City Attorney John Ziobro will serve out the balance of Joe Burrowes' seat on the Benton County District Court bench.

Burrowes resigned in January after being elected to Benton-Franklin Superior Court. Ziobro will serve until the seat is up for election in 2018.

Benton County commissioners chose Ziobro from a field of three finalists Tuesday, voting 2-1 following a short closed-door discussion.

Commissioners Jim Beaver and Shon Small voted for Ziobro. Commissioner Jerome Delvin voted no without giving a reason.

Beaver and Ziobro share a long history working together at the city of Kennewick.

Beaver was elected to the Kennewick City Council in 1990 and served as its mayor from 1996 to 2008, when he won a seat on the county commission. He is its current chairman.

Ziobro was Kennewick's city attorney from 1999 to 2007 and has been in private practice with Telquist Ziobro McMillen Clare Attorneys at Law focused on land use and business related litigation. He was not immediately available to talk about his new job.

The five judges of the district court bench handle civil and criminal matters, small claims, anti-harassment cases and preliminary hearings for some felonies.

Nine local attorneys applied for the nonpartisan judicial post, which pays an annual salary of \$158,000. A committee advised by court administrators and local city managers narrowed the list to three.

[In addition to Ziobro](#), the finalists were former Franklin County Deputy Prosecutor James Bell and Jennifer Azure, a private practice attorney who has served as a judge pro tem.

The commission [interviewed the candidates two weeks](#) ago but was unable to reach a decision on a finalist at that time.

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