## STAFF REPORT

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| **Agenda Items:** | 6-8 | **Name:** | Miranda Leskinen |
| **Proposed No**.: | 2021-0171  2021-0172  2021-0173 | **Date:** | May 5, 2021 |

**SUBJECT**

Proposed Motions to confirm the Executive’s appointments of the following persons to the King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission:

* Jenna Yang, who resides in Council District Eight, for a partial term expiring September 30, 2021;[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Kwadwo Oware, who resides in Council District Four, for a partial term expiring September 20, 2022;[[2]](#footnote-2) and
* Jacob Taylor-Mosquera, who resides in Council District Four, for a partial term expiring September 20, 2022.[[3]](#footnote-3)

**BACKGROUND**

In 2018, the King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission was established by Ordinance 18653 (codified as King County chapter 2.78) to serve as a central point of contact, communication and coordination to encourage coordination and efficient intersection of the work of stakeholders serving and engaging immigrant and refugee residents to achieve greater impact. The Commission also focuses on understanding and addressing challenges faced by immigrant and refugee communities living in suburban cities and unincorporated areas of the county. A non-exhaustive list of the Commission’s duties is provided in K.C.C. 2.78.020.

The Commission is comprised of thirteen members and has the following requirements:[[4]](#footnote-4)

* A diversity of members reflecting a range of ethnicities, professional backgrounds, socioeconomic status and places of origin to reflect the diversity of the county's immigrant and refugee communities;
* All members must be residents of King County;
* All members shall demonstrate active and engaged civic participation in one or more immigrant and refugee communities and be well versed on the issues affecting those communities;
* Membership shall reflect gender diversity;
* At least six members shall be from suburban cities or unincorporated areas;
* At least three members shall have had personal experiences as a refugee or asylee from any location worldwide;
* Membership shall represent a range of age groups, including persons representing youth issues;
* At least five members shall represent and be appointed by an immigrant-led organization serving immigrant communities and of these representatives at least three members shall represent and be appointed by a small grass-roots community-based organization that has an annual budget of less than two-hundred fifty thousand dollars, that supports the needs of distinct immigrant and refugee communities and is composed predominantly of members of those communities;
* At least one member should have familiarity with King County government, systems and agencies; and
* Persons representing faith-based organizations are encouraged to apply.

Additionally, the Commission may include four nonvoting members who shall be community leaders that are actively engaged with local government, business or philanthropic organizations, and add value to the commission and raise its visibility and capacity through their expertise, relationships, and networks.

Per County Code, appointments to the Commission are subject to Council confirmation. Approval of the proposed motions would fulfill this requirement.

Attachment 7 to the staff report (IRC Board Profile) provides a summary of the Commission’s current membership.

**APPOINTEE INFORMATION**

**Appointee Jenna Yang.** Proposed Motion 2021-0171 would confirm the appointment of Jenna Yang, who resides in Council District Eight, for a partial term expiring September 30, 2021. As described in her application materials, Ms. Yang grew up as a daughter of an immigrant family and she currently works as the Casework Director for Congressman Adam Smith, handing all immigration and foreign affairs-related cases in Washington’s Ninth Congressional District.

**Appointee Kwadwo Oware.** Proposed Motion 2021-0172 would confirm the appointment of Kwadwo Oware, who resides in Council District Four, for a partial term expiring September 20, 2022. As described in his application materials, Mr. Oware has served as the President of the Washington State Coalition of African Community Leaders, currently serving on the Advisory Council of the coalition. As further described, Mr. Oware works as a Senior Product Manager at T-Mobile and serves as a coach and mentor with the Soccer Without Borders Seattle program that serves newcomer immigrant, refugee and asylee youth.

**Appointee Jacob Taylor-Mosquera.** Proposed Motion 2021-0173 would confirm the appointment of Jacob Taylor-Mosquera, who resides in Council District Four, for a partial term expiring September 30, 2022. As described in his application materials, Mr. Taylor-Mosquera works as a Spanish instructor and has an extensive academic background and familiarity with immigration issues, including time spent abroad as a student and as a Peace Corps volunteer.

**ANALYSIS**

Staff has not identified any issues with the proposed appointments. They appears to be consistent with the requirements of county code.

**INVITED**

* Jenna Yang, Appointee to the Immigrant and Refugee Commission
* Kwadwo Oware, Appointee to the Immigrant and Refugee Commission
* Jacob Taylor-Mosquera, Appointee to the Immigrant and Refugee Commission
* Hamdi, Mohamed, OESJ, Staff Liaison the Immigrant and Refugee Commission
* Reeni Nair, KCC, Staff Liaison to the Immigrant and Refugee Commission

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Proposed Motion 2021-0171
2. Transmittal Letter
3. Proposed Motion 2021-0172
4. Transmittal Letter
5. Proposed Motion 2021-0173
6. Transmittal Letter
7. IRC Board Profile

1. Proposed Motion 2021-0171. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Proposed Motion 2021-0172. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Proposed Motion 2021-0173. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Per K.C.C. 2.78.030.B., no more than three members of the Immigrant and Refugee Task Force (established by Ordinance 18085) shall be appointed to the Commission during the first term of the thirteen membership positions. For context, in July 2015, Ordinance 18085 was enacted directing the Executive to convene a task force to develop a final report with recommendations on the creation of an immigrant and refugee commission. The members of the task force were appointed in October 2015, and the task force presented it final report, “*Advancing Equity and Opportunity for King County Immigrants and Refugees: A report from the King County Immigrant and Refugee Task Force*” (Report 2016-RPT0107) to the Council in July 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)