

Twelve pull papers to run for Palo Alto City Council

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Palo Alto 's city council election is shaping up to be a full horse race, with a total of 12 people pulling candidacy documents as of Monday.

Among those seeking election are Mark Weiss, who runs a small concert company and artist management company called Earthwise Productions. He said he'll be running on an "arts platform" and became interested in running for council after working to put together June's Palo Alto World Music Day.

Greg Scharff, a lawyer who has a general practice firm in Palo Alto, pulled papers on Wednesday. He said he's lived in the city since 1988 and felt it was "time to give something back to the community." He said the recent business tax approved by the council was the "wrong way to go."

Another candidate, Brian Steen, pulled papers and launched a campaign Web site Monday. Steen is a conservationist and land- use consultant, and recently has been working with community groups that support tunneling high-speed rail. Steen said he decided to run, encouraged by Mayor Peter Drekmeyer.

Roger Mansell, a retired businessman who worked in printing and publishing, is a historian who runs a Web site called "Center for Research: Allied POWS Under the Japanese." He said he is concerned about

city finances, and is still deciding whether to run after he pulled papers last week.

Realtor Leon Leong sells homes primarily in Palo Alto and said he sees how city housing issues affect his clients. He's worked with local government as a current chairman of the government relations committee for the [Silicon Valley Association of Realtors](#) .

Candidate Nancy Shepherd said serving on city council is "something I've always wanted to do." She served as president of the Palo Alto Council of PTAs from 2000-02 and is a board member with Palo Altans for Government Effectiveness, in addition to other roles in local education and community groups.

"City council races are a time where we can elevate the conversation, too," Shepherd said. "It's a good time to kind of take stock and remind everybody that it takes all of us to make this work."

The new candidates join: current Council Member Larry Klein; Planning and Transportation Commissioner Karen Holman; former Board of Education member Gail Price; panhandler and activist Victor Frost; Realtor and Council of PTAs President Dan Dykwel; and business consultant Tim Gray.

So far Klein is the only one to have submitted the 25 signatures candidates need from Palo Alto residents to get on the Nov. 3 ballot. Candidates have until Aug. 7 to file their paperwork.

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