



## **ALCALDE SELECTION PROCESS, ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

***City Council Approved 11/5/2018***

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*Each year, the City Council of the City of Sonoma selects a citizen of the year who is called the honorary Alcalde. This policy outlines the selection, criteria, and role of the honored person.*

### **ORIGIN OF ALCALDES**

Alcaldes in California came about through the rise of the pueblo system and the establishment of town councils (called ayuntamientos). The councils were headed by mayors (called alcaldes), and together they provided a semblance of government, hearing a wide range of issues from land disputes to criminal matters.

The annually elected alcalde was not only the chief local law practitioner, but judge, justice of the peace (if no one else filled that function), notary public, recorder, escrow agent in land transactions, boss of the town Council, and was probably the town's most useful citizen. He often had to rule on disputes over cattle, horses, branding irons, hides, horse race wagers, bankruptcy, adoption, promissory notes, barrels of wine, and vacant lands. Alcaldes were the recorders of mortgages, wills, and conveyances, and also had to deal with criminal activity including murder.

The Alcalde's position and importance did not end with Mexican Rule. In his speech following the raising of the American Flag over Monterey on July 7, 1846, Commodore John Sloat restated the importance of alcaldes and invited them to continue to execute their duties. The function of alcaldes did not legally change until after the state Constitution was adopted, and duties previously performed by one person were separated into several positions. Today the Spanish word "alcalde" literally means Mayor.

In 1975, the City of Sonoma decided to once again find "the town's most useful citizen" and bestow upon them the title Honorary Alcalde. August Pinelli, the first to be honored, began his year January 1, 1976. The Council has voted for an "honorary Alcalde" every year since.

The honoree is given a silver-headed cane as a symbol of the honor and appears in parades and at grand openings. The honoree is also recognized with a reception hosted by the City with help from the past Alcaldes where their contributions are celebrated.

## CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The Nominee shall have accomplished several of the following:

- Participated in a broad spectrum of voluntary community service to Sonoma Valley;
- Served in a leadership role in at least one non-profit organization;
- Spearheaded at least one community-serving project without compensation;
- Be well-known for consistent behind-the-scenes good deeds;
- Does not seek public accolades or recognition for work done; and,
- Adheres to a high standard of moral and ethical values.

Other Criteria:

- Nominee must reside in the City of Sonoma or Sonoma Valley.
- Nominees may be either an individual or a couple.

## SELECTION PROCESS

1. **Nomination Period & Outreach** – In late October or early November, a press release will be sent to newspapers announcing the nomination period for Honorary Alcalde of the City of Sonoma. A summary of the criteria shall also be published with a submission deadline no later than mid-December and preferably December 1. City staff will also promote the Alcalde nomination process through other marketing and social media outlets and distribution to the Non-Profit Executive Director Roundtable and other Sonoma groups.
2. **Nomination Protocols** -- Persons submitting a nomination will do so in a letter or email format, addressing as many of the criteria as possible, and sending the nomination to the City Manager. In order to demonstrate broad support for the nominee, it is recommended that in addition to the nomination letter that a minimum of three letters of recommendation be submitted.
3. **Nomination and Ratification Process** -- Early in January, the City Manager will convene a Nominating Committee. Historically, this committee has been comprised of the three most immediate past alcaldes available, the Mayor, and the City Manager. No more than five days before the meeting, the nominee's names and nomination packets will be released to the committee members only for discussion at the meeting. In the instance that a nominee has been recommended previously, the Nominating Committee will be supplied the prior nomination packets going back two years. This Committee will review the nominations and will select three candidates for consideration.

The Mayor will then make the final nomination and the Council will vote to ratify at the first available Council meeting following the committee nominations, but in no case later than the first meeting in February.

## **Role and Responsibilities**

The Alcalde agrees to follow the City's Code of Ethics as a guideline.

The City shall provide a congratulatory welcome letter/email with an overview of the role and responsibilities for the Alcalde after the formal appointment by the City Council which will include a calendar the key events for Alcalde participation.

The Alcalde shall have the following opportunities for participation during their term.

- Participates in the Alcalde reception where they are honored;
- Participates in other public events, as requested and as interested/available, such as:
  - Rides in one of the lead positions in Sonoma's 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade and attends the ceremony after the parade;
  - Invitation and introduction at the City Party;
  - Invitation and introduction at the Vintage Festival's "Blessing of the Grapes" with other Alcaldes;
  - Invitation to participate in the Vintage Festival parade;
  - Invitation and introduction at the Memorial Day Ceremony; and
  - Other events as invited by the Mayor or City staff.

## Exhibit A – List of Alcaldes

<u>Name</u>	<u>Alcalde Year</u>
August Pinelli	1976
Henri Maysonnaave	1977
Jerry Casson	1978
Bob Lynch	1979
Dan Ruggles	1980
Paul & Adele Harrison	1981
Gail Fehrensen	1982
Chet Sharek	1983
Evelyn Berger	1984
Alan & Sandy Piotter	1985
Nell Lane	1986
Jim Metzger	1987
Helen Shainsky	1988
Jerry Tuller	1989
Ernest & Loyce Power	1990
Jo Baker	1991
Lee Booker	1992
Jim Vanderbilt	1993
Nancy Parmelee	1994
George Watson	1995
Bob & Carolyn Stone	1996
L. C. "Pete" Peterson	1997
Peggy McAleese	1998
Helen Fernandez	1999
Howie Ehret	2000
Robert Cannard, Sr.	2001
Mitch Mulas	2002
Ellie Baker	2003
Sue Holman & Susan Weeks	2004
June Sheppard	2005
Al & Kathy Mazza	2006
Phyllis Carter	2007
Sy Lenz	2008
Elizabeth Kemp	2009
Niels Chew	2010
Mary Evelyn Arnold	2011
Whitney Evans	2012
Les & Judy Vadasz	2013
Suzanne Brangham	2014
Marcie Waldron	2015
Patrick Garcia	2016
Ted & Pat Eliot	2017
Marcelo Defreitas	2018
Karen Collins	2019