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Referee Hammock Files for Judge Stevens' Post, Setting Up First Open Seat Contest

By a MetNews Staff Writer

Los Angeles Superior Court Referee Randolph M. Hammock yesterday filed a declaration of intent to seek election to the seat being vacated by Judge Emily Stevens.

Hammock's declaration sets up a head-to-head contest for an open seat on the court, as Deputy City Attorney Chris Garcia also filed a declaration of intent to run for that post. Garcia took out his papers last week, whereas Hammock had announced he would run, but had not previously targeted a specific seat.

Hammock said he had been assigned as the acting judicial officer in Stevens' courtroom at the Edelman Children's Court while she has been on leave of absence

"I believe that I am the logical and appropriate successor to Judge Stevens' seat, given my current judicial assignment, my extensive legal qualifications, and as well as my considerable experience as a Superior Court referee in the dependency court since July 2007," he said, adding that if he were elected, "it would certainly be a desire of mine to remain assigned to the Dependency Court, and to attempt to carry on the legacy of Judge Stevens in assisting the children, parents and families of Los Angeles County."

This will be Hammock's second run for the court. Hammock ran in 2006, when he was still in private practice, and finished sixth in a field of seven. Garcia is a first-time candidate.

Filing Period

Yesterday was the first day of declaration-of-intent filing—the deadline is Feb. 10 for those wishing to challenge incumbents and Feb. 16 for open seats—and also the deadline for candidates to report their fundraising and spending numbers through the end of 2009.

Hammock was one of several candidates who provided copies of their reports to the MetNews. He showed over \$236,994 in cash on hand as of Dec. 31, after having received \$800 in contributions and a \$250,000 loan from himself.

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