

Riordan names diverse choices for commission

By Rick Orlov
Staff Writer

Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan on Monday announced his seven nominees for the new Neighborhood Empowerment Commission, including three from the San Fernando Valley.

The seven, if approved by the City Council, will face the daunting task of developing over the next 18 months the size, scope of power and number of neighborhood councils in the city.

"This is a new era in city government," Riordan said. "It is creating a system where the people will have a chance to say what kind of government they want."

Riordan said the seven people he is nominating came from a group of 40 individuals he considered for the post—many of whom had contacted his office asking to be considered.

"The people I selected are from different parts of the city but they all share one common thing—their love for Los Angeles," Riordan said. "I wanted a commission that reflected the diversity of this city and whose faces represent the people of Los Angeles."

The three Valley members are attorney Lee Kanon Alpert of Northridge, teacher Carrie Castro Armour of Sylmar and community affairs liaison Keith Weaver of Sherman Oaks.

The other members are Pat Herrera Duran of San Pedro, Sister Jennie Lechtenberg of East Los Angeles, Christopher Pak of Playa del Rey and William Weinberger of the Mid-City Area. Weinberger also was a member of the Elected Charter Reform Commission.

The nominees include three women, two Latinos, a Korean and a gay member.

Riordan said he reviewed the recommendations from the City Council on the type of person to be nominated and tried to follow its guidelines in choosing people who have been active in the community.

All the nominees expressed their pleasure at the appointment in what it could mean to the city.

Riordan said he will be including the new commission in his final decision on whom he will select as

City Charter committee outlines job

By Deborah Sullivan
Staff Writer

The director of the Department of Neighborhoods should earn between \$100,000 and \$150,000, and be adept at organizing communities, the City Council ad hoc charter committee recommended at its first meeting Monday.

"The skill of the director to organize communities is probably the single most important quality," said Councilwoman Jackie Goldberg.

"If this person hasn't had personal experience organizing in communities that are low income and minority and with different languages, and isn't able to direct other people how to do that, I think you will end up with great form but very little content," Goldberg said.

Councilman Joel Wachs said that even in neighborhoods that are well-organized, the director must be able to draw in residents who have not been represented by community groups in the past.

The first ordinances putting the new City Charter in force will be drafted as early as next month, and the full raft of laws required for the new charter will be completed by next March, City Attorney James Hahn told the committee.

Riordan said. "They will have to live with the person and should take part in the discussions. That's what a republican democracy is about."

There is also wide interest in the community about what the commission will undertake.

"Even though I'm for secession, I'm for these neighborhood councils," said Ida Gurvin, a block captain with the Valley Glen Neigh-