



The City Charter:

what it is, what it does, and
how it can be changed.



The Basic Framework of Our Municipal Government

- Brief -- 14 pages long (+ legal description of City boundaries)
- Created by Special Act of the Florida Legislature
- Organized into 6 Articles



Article I. Establishment, Corporate Limits, and Powers

- Created by Chapter 12760, Laws of Florida, 1927
- General Powers
 - “... exercise any power for municipal purposes, except as otherwise provided by law.”
- Special Powers
 - Acquire & manage property
 - Acquire & manage utilities
 - Finance utilities
 - Enter interlocal agreements
 - Exercise the power of eminent domain
 - Exercise police powers
 - Provide fire protection services
 - Issue bonds
 - Levy taxes
 - Compel the abatement of nuisances
 - Own & operate public transportation
 - Others



Article II. City Commission

- Legislative power vested in the Commission
- Number of Commissioners
- Mayor, At-large, and District members
- Eligibility & term limits
- Filling vacancies
- Commission as judge of qualifications of members
- Prohibition on interference with Charter Officers



Article III. Administration

- Charter Officers vested with authority to administer the assigned duties of their offices including the employment and removal of subordinate employees.
 - City Manager
 - City Attorney
 - General Manager for Utilities
 - Equal Opportunity Director

 - Clerk of the Commission
 - City Internal Auditor



Article IV. Boards and Committees

- Advisory Boards and Committees created by the Commission as it deems necessary
- City Plan Board – shall be created by the Commission
 - Prepare, make recommendations pertaining, and monitor effectiveness of Comp Plan
 - Review Land Development regulations and codes and make recommendations as to consistency with Comp Plan
- Building and Land Development Regulatory Boards – may be created by Commission
 - Hear and decide appeals of administrative decisions regarding enforcement of building or land development regulations
 - Hear and decide Special Exceptions
 - Grant Variances



Article V. Special Provisions

- Charter Amendments (requires 4/5 majority of Commission)
- Issuance of Ad Valorem Bonds
- Retirement and Pension Plan for City Employees (requires 4/5 majority of Commission)
- Disposal of Utilities (requires majority vote of Electors)
- Fresh Pursuit and Arrest by Municipal Officers
- Prohibition of paved surfaces for trails or transportation on City-owned Conservation land within Hogtown Creek Watershed
- Equal Opportunity; Duties of Charter Officers
- Registry of Protected Public Places (requires 5/7 majority of Commission)



Article VI. Transition Schedule

- Concerns original implementation of Charter



Amending the Charter

- Special Act of the Legislature
- Ballot Referendum
 - Petition signed by > 10% of City electors, or
 - 4/5 majority of Commission
 - City Commission places referendum on ballot by passage of ordinance
 - Single-subject requirement per ballot item
 - Ballot language must not be > 75 words
 - Special advertising requirements (4 consecutive weeks)