



Legislation Text

File #: 120369., **Version:** 3

ELECTION TOWN HALL MEETING -- PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENTS TO TRANSITION TO 4-YEAR CITY COMMISSION TERMS AND CITY ELECTIONS TO BE HELD IN THE FALL OF ODD NUMBERED YEARS (B)

On November 1, 2012, the City Commission authorized the City Attorney to draft an ordinance to place the following charter amendments on the Spring 2013 City ballot: 1) move city elections to odd numbered years in early October with a runoff, if necessary, in November; and 2) change the City Commission terms from 3 years to 4 years and retain the existing two consecutive term limit.

In addition to the ballot language, each charter amendment ordinance must include the text of the charter revisions. This ensures the public can be reasonably informed of the effect the ballot language. In this case, the transition schedule is important to understanding the effect of the ballot language. Staff has prepared two alternative transition schedules which are included in graph form in the back-up to this agenda item. Staff is seeking Commission direction on the preferred schedule to include in the ordinance.

In addition, the Commission's motion requested the election dates be specified in the Charter as October and November; however, upon speaking to the Supervisor of Elections, it appears advisable to leave the setting of the actual election dates to be done by ordinance (as it currently is) to allow for more flexibility in the event of conflicts or unforeseen circumstances may arise. As such, staff recommends that the Charter amendment specify only the dates that Commissioners begin and end their term in office, not the date the elections are held. By way of example, the charter amendment could state "Commissioners shall hold office from 12 o'clock noon on the date of the first regular City Commission meeting held in December of the year in which they are elected until their successors in office are elected and qualified or until recalled as provided by law." Alternatively, the Charter could provide two different commencement dates, one if only a regular election is held and another if a runoff is required. Staff is seeking Commission direction on the election date continuing to be set by ordinance and the ending and beginning of terms to be set by the Charter.

Due to the time constraints to place these items on the Spring 2013 City ballot, staff requires policy direction at this time in order to finalize a draft Ordinance for first reading on December 20, 2012 and second reading on January 3, 2013.

The City Commission provide direction on 1) which transition plan to include in the proposed charter amendment ordinance, 2) whether the election dates should continue to be set by ordinance, rather than in the charter; and 3) whether to provide one or two dates for commencement of terms in the proposed charter amendment ordinance.