

Election — November 1, 2011

City of Lafayette Ballot Questions



League of Women Voters of Boulder County

The League of Women Voters is not responsible for the accuracy or fairness of the arguments of either side.

Note: Approximately eight years ago, the City Council of Lafayette, along with the city attorney, recognized the need to update the Home Rule Charter and to revise or eliminate any irrelevant portions. This year’s five ballot questions, placed on the ballot by City Council, present the third batch of requested changes.

LAFAYETTE QUESTION 2A SPECIAL ELECTIONS ON CITIZEN INITIATIVES

SHALL CHAPTER VII, SECTION 7.12 OF THE CHARTER BE AMENDED TO INCREASE FROM SIXTY (60) TO NINETY (90) DAYS THE TIME FOR THE CITY TO CONDUCT A SPECIAL ELECTION ON A CERTIFIED CITIZEN INITIATIVE FROM THE DATE THE INITIATIVE IS PRESENTED TO CITY COUNCIL?

Major Provisions

This proposal would give thirty (30) more days for the Council to call a special election. If no

election is to be held in the city for any other purpose within one hundred fifty (150) days, then the Council must conduct a special election.

Those IN FAVOR say

1. It requires more time now than in 1958 (when this section was written) to prepare for a special election. Ballot printing, set-up, and testing accuracy are more complex tasks than in the past.

Those OPPOSED say

1. This is an example of government interference with speedy action on citizen initiatives.

LAFAYETTE QUESTION 2B CREATION OF YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD

SHALL CHAPTER IV OF THE CHARTER BE AMENDED TO ADD A NEW SECTION 4.17 CREATING A YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD, WHICH ALLOWS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF INDIVIDUALS UNDER THE AGE OF 18?

Major Provisions

This proposal would create a brand new Youth Advisory Board with members appointed by City Council. This added section replaces an existing committee with an official board. Any appointed member under the age of 18 must have been a resident of the city for at least one year or must attend a school located in the city. When a member turns 18 while still on the board, he/she must register to vote as a Lafayette elector within ninety (90) days to remain in office.

Those IN FAVOR say

1. The Youth Advisory Board members will be appointed by City Council and will be able to present recommendations directly to City Council. The new board will be able to establish its own by-laws and ordinances.

Those OPPOSED say

1. The Youth Advisory Committee has been working fine. Why change it now?

LAFAYETTE QUESTION 2C PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCES BY TITLE

SHALL CHAPTER VII, SECTION 7.4 OF THE CHARTER BE AMENDED TO ALLOW PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCES BY TITLE, WITH A STATEMENT THAT THE FULL TEXT OF ORDINANCES SHALL BE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION IN THE CITY CLERK’S OFFICE AND IN POSTING LOCATIONS ESTABLISHED BY CITY COUNCIL?

Major Provisions

This proposal eliminates the charter requirement of publishing the full text of an ordinance in a newspaper. Instead, the title would be published with a statement explaining that the full text would be available in the City Clerk’s office and in other locations established by City Council.

Those IN FAVOR say

1. Publishing the ordinance title in the newspaper provides sufficient information about the business at hand for those curious enough to go further. The city will use the newspaper to notify the public that it can see the full text at the City Clerk’s office and other locations like the website, the library, or the recreation center.

2. Although cost savings to the city would vary depending on the number and length of ordinances for a given year, the 2011 projection for publication costs is \$6,300.

3. Other cities are trending in this direction. A 2010 survey combined with a recent poll of 156 Colorado cities revealed that 66 publish in full in the newspaper, 68 publish by title only, 10 do not publish in the newspaper at all, and 12 did not reply.

Those OPPOSED say

1. Omitting details of laws and regulations from a source as universally available as a local paper denies residents access to information about their elected leaders' decisions, and erodes transparency in government.
2. Accessing a community's newspaper is something almost everyone can do.
3. While publication of legal notices constitutes a miniscule portion of Lafayette's \$45 million budget for 2011, curtailing the practice can affect the democratic process.

**LAFAYETTE QUESTION 2D
RESIGNATIONS AND REMOVALS
FROM BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

SHALL CHAPTER V, SECTIONS 5.4 AND 5.5 OF THE CHARTER BE AMENDED TO STANDARDIZE THE PROCEDURES FOR RESIGNATIONS AND REMOVALS OF MEMBERS OF CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, AND TO RECOGNIZE RESIGNATIONS UPON RECEIPT AND VERIFICATION OF SAME BY THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE?

Major Provisions

This proposal would not change at all the procedures for the removal or resignation of an elective officer by the City Council. This charter amendment states that the procedure for removal of appointed members of boards and commissions shall be prescribed by city council ordinance. Resignations of appointed members must be made in writing to either the City Clerk or to a member of the board or commission to which he/she belongs. In the latter case, the resignation must then be forwarded to the City Clerk. That resignation becomes effective immediately upon receipt and verification by the City Clerk's office.

Those IN FAVOR say

1. The charter was either silent or disjointed about removals and resignations of appointed members of boards and commissions.
2. This amendment clarifies how a resignation takes place which will allow boards and commissions to work and flow more smoothly.

Those OPPOSED say

No organized opposition has been identified.

**LAFAYETTE QUESTION 2E
ELIMINATION OF OBSOLETE
CHARTER PROVISIONS**

SHALL SECTIONS 4.9, 4.14, 4.15, 7.3, 8.3, 8.9, AND 13.5 OF THE CHARTER BE AMENDED TO ELIMINATE OBSOLETE PROVISIONS OF THE CHARTER?

Major Provisions

This proposal would eliminate small portions of six (6) sections in the charter and would delete Section 4.15 Building Code completely because a building code has been in place for many years. The deleted phrases in Sections 4.9, 8.3, 8.9, and 13.5 refer to tasks that are no longer performed or needed. The eliminations in Section 4.14 on the City Planning Commission refer to goals that were reached in July, 2002. Finally, the deletion in Section 7.3 corrects an error that conflicts with Section 14.2.

Those IN FAVOR say

1. These recommended eliminations are simply no longer relevant.
2. In the sections where deletions are made, the Charter was "stuck" in the past. These eliminations will update the Home Rule Charter.

Those OPPOSED say

No organized opposition has been identified.

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