

CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

FROM: The Office of the City Manager **DATE:** February 13, 2023
SUBJECT: Consider and Approve Ordinance No. 3777, ordering a Special Election on May 6, 2023, for the purpose of submitting to the qualified voters for adoption or rejection, proposed amendments to the existing Charter of the City of North Richland Hills.
PRESENTER: Mark Hindman, City Manager

SUMMARY:

The North Richland Hills City Charter was originally adopted in 1964 and was last amended in 2001. Since the last amendments, portions of the City Charter are now in conflict with State law and updates should be considered to a few other sections. In anticipation of calling for a City Charter election in May 2023, the City Council established a Charter Review Task Force in October 2022 to evaluate any proposed amendments to the City Charter and to bring a recommendation back to the City Council on January 9, 2023. The Charter Review Task Force met during the months of November and December and have submitted recommended changes to the City Charter for consideration by City Council. These proposed amendments were presented to the City Council during the Work Sessions on January 9 and 23, 2023. The City Council will make the final determination regarding calling an election to amend the City Charter, and the specific amendments to propose for consideration.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The Charter Review Task Force is composed of three (3) members of the City Council and eight (8) citizens of the City of North Richland Hills. Meetings of the Charter Review Task Force were open to the public. The members of the Charter Review Task Force are:

Scott Turnage, Chair
Mason Orr, Vice Chair
Rita Wright Oujesky
Briane Goetz
Jason Steinsultz
Jason Winans
Melissa Kates
Mike Benton
Patti Hourihan
Phil Beckman
Steve Koons



The Charter Review Task Force was charged with considering possible revisions to the articles and sections of the City Charter as noted below, determining which of these articles and sections require amendment, deletion or addition, and presenting the Task Force's recommendations to the City Council for the purpose of ordering a Special Election (City Charter Amendment).

- a. Article V: City Council.
 - i. Section 1. City Officials. The Task Force is only to consider provisions in this Section related to Open Meetings.
 - ii. Section 2. Qualifications.
- b. Article VI: Powers and Duties of Officers.
 - i. Section 2. Duties of Mayor-Mayor Pro Tem
 - ii. Section 5. Appointment and Removal of City Secretary. The Task Force is only to consider provisions in this Section related to the Assistant City Secretary.
 - iii. Section 7. Municipal Court
- c. Article XIV: Planning/Building Regulations.
 - i. Section 1. The Planning and Zoning Commission
 - ii. Section 2. The Planning and Zoning Commission Powers and Duties
- d. Article XVII: City Civil Service
- e. Article XVIII: General Provisions.
 - i. Section 6. Official Newspaper
 - ii. Section 13. Ethics
- f. Remove redundancies and inconsistencies and correct any typographical errors in the City Charter.
- g. Remove or modify language that conflicts with or is preempted by other legislation.

The majority of the amendments are minor in nature and are focused primarily on bringing the City Charter up to date with current laws and practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CHARTER REVIEW TASK FORCE ATTACHED

The Charter Review Task Force voted to recommend 26 amendments to the City Charter. A copy of the 26 recommended amendments and report from the Charter Review Task Force which outlines the proposed changes and the justification for those changes are attached. These amendments are the same as discussed during the Work Sessions on January 9 and 23, 2023.

Based on the consensus of the City Council to move forward with submitting an item on the February 13, 2023, City Council meeting, staff developed proposed ballot language and an ordinance ordering a Special Election (City Charter Amendment) on Saturday, May 6, 2023. The proposed ballot language includes 26 propositions which are included in Exhibit "A", Ordinance No. 3777.



The City Council now has the responsibility to consider the recommended City Charter amendments, provide any additions, corrections or deletions to the recommended amendments, finalize ballot language, and formally order the Special Election (City Charter Amendment). The City Council must order the election no later than February 17, 2023.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve Ordinance No. 3777, ordering a Special Election on May 6, 2023, for the purpose of submitting to the qualified voters for adoption or rejection, proposed amendments to the existing Charter of the City of North Richland Hills.