

Charter Review Commission Presentation to Council

January 30, 2020

The logo for Addison, featuring the word "ADDISON" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The text is centered within a white circle, which is set against a blue background. The blue background is part of a larger graphic on the right side of the slide, consisting of a blue triangle pointing downwards, with a white circle inside it. The top and bottom corners of the blue triangle are cut off by a diagonal white line, revealing a dark grey background.

1. Meeting since December
2. Discussions of Council-initiated items, staff-initiated items, issues raised by members of the Commission
3. Discussions of “cleanup” issues
 - Ensuring that Charter language matches voter mandates
 - Elimination of sections included back in the 70’s to transition to having a Charter (no longer relevant or needed)
 - Section headings that need to more accurately reflect the purpose of the Section
 - Adoption of a more gender-neutral approach
4. Discussions were thorough and spirited, leading to a very comprehensive review of the Charter
5. Recommend 26 propositions – it’s time to address these issues!

- Bruce Arfsten, Chair
- Susan M. Halpern, Co-Chair
- Kim Boyle
- David Collins
- Nancy Craig
- Kent Domingue
- Jim Duffy
- Margie Gunther
- JT McPherson
- Jimmy Niemann
- Liz Oliphant
- Mary Anne Mayer Redmond
- Nancy Williams
- Ron Whitehead

TEN Propositions are essentially “clean-up” matters

1. Proposition 1: Change references from “qualified voters” to “registered voters”
2. Proposition 2: Remove references to specific state statutes in favor of language that simply requires compliance with state law
3. Proposition 11: Title change regarding Section 5.19 from “Power to correct errors” to “Power to cancel taxes” to better reflect the purpose of this Section
4. Proposition 12: Title change regarding Section 5.31 to add “of taxation” to “General Powers” to properly reflect that the Section deals with the power of taxation, and to refer generally to state law

Texas Public Information Act Supersedes

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Proposition 21: Delete Section 11.15 “Publicity of Records” because the Texas Public Information Act controls and supersedes what is in the Charter

Eliminating Unnecessary Sections

1. Proposition 23: Eliminates “Town depository” because this is governed by state law
2. Proposition 25: Eliminates Section 11.27 (“When provisions take effect”), which only applied to the original Charter adoption
3. Proposition 26: Eliminates Section 11.30 (“Ordinance, rules and regulations validated”), which only applied to the original Charter adoption

Cleanup Regarding Petitions

1. Proposition 15: Remove outdated petition forms in favor of a general requirement that petitions comply with state law (affects Section 8.03, also part of Proposition 19)
2. Proposition 16: Require petition signatories to include DOB or voter registration number as required by Texas Election Code (applies to a number of charter sections)

1. Proposition 22:

- Renames Section 11.23 to from “Rearrangement and renumbering” to “Non-substantive changes” to clarify its purpose
- Clarifies that the Council can make non-substantive changes by ordinance
- Removes Section 11.18 and rewords Section 11.23(d) regarding gender-neutral terms
- Clarifies the technical procedures for making non-substantive changes to the Charter

Elections: Placing Name in Nomination

1. Proposition 17: require a petition rather than self-nomination
2. Proposition 18: Increase to 25 the minimum number of signatures needed to place a name in nomination, consistent with state law
3. Proposition 19: Increase to 50 the maximum number of signatures allowed on a petition to place a name in nomination, consistent with state law

1. Proposition 8: Clarification and cleanup of Section 2.17 regarding the first meeting following an election relating to election of Council Members, including the Mayor
2. Proposition 20: Clarification and cleanup of Section 8.06 regarding the first meeting following all municipal elections (e.g., bond elections, charter elections, recall elections, etc)

1. Proposition 9: Name change of Section 5.11 to more accurately describe its purpose, changing “evidences of indebtedness” to “debt matters:”

Bonds, warrants and other debt matters.

2. Proposition 10: Clarifies that debt instruments can be issued to support economic development

Proposition 3:

1. Currently Charter Section 2.04 requires approval of Council expenses at Council meetings
2. Commission felt that checks and balances should be at process level
3. Budget and other processes provide appropriate controls

1. Proposition 4: Revise to require that members must be registered voters and Addison residents
2. Proposition 5: Revise to prohibit anyone from serving concurrently on both P&Z and BZA
3. Proposition 14: Eliminate references to “City Zoning Commission” and “City Planning Commission” to properly reflect that Addison has one commission and it is called the “Planning and Zoning Commission”

1. Proposition 13:

- Cleanup references to “master” plan, as the working document is actually the Comprehensive Plan
- Provide for changes to the comprehensive plan by majority vote of the Council at any Council meeting, removing reference to the “whole” Council

1. Proposition 24 amends Section 11.26, which details the procedure for dealing with a disaster that prevents a legal quorum of the Council from assembling
2. Current Charter provision includes references to non-existent entities like the “Board of Trustees of the local school district” (we have multiple in Addison) and “Chamber of Commerce”
3. Maintains reference to the County Judge of Dallas County

Special Meetings of the Council – Section 2.10

1. Proposition 6: Reduce to three the number of Council members who can call a meeting (currently requires 4)
2. Proposition 7: Allow the City Manager to call a meeting

1. Council initiated: Move to 3 year terms?
2. Discussion: Two three-year terms, keeping term limits at 6 years
3. Practical Application:
 - Each Council Member would have to be elected by a majority (versus the current top three vote-getters)
 - Would require a “place” system
 - Causes focus on opponent versus issues
 - Introduces the possibility of runoff elections
 - Expense of additional elections
 - Delays seating the new Council
 - Disruptive to governance, including in particular the budgeting process that commences shortly after the May election

No consensus in comparator municipalities

- By City Manager – 25%
- By City Manager with City Council Approval – 20%
- By City Council – 33%
- By City Council on recommendation of the City Manager – 11%
- By Mayor with City Council approval – 6%
- Other – 2%

Current approach provides good checks and balances

The Ordering of Proposition on the Ballot

- Commission Report presents propositions in the order in which the affected sections appear in the Charter
- Our presentation has grouped them to some degree in categories
- Some are more important than others, so the Council might consider the order of presentation on the ballot

Questions?

