

Fwd: Comments to Charter review

David Singer

Mon, Apr 26,
12:29 PM (19
hours ago)

to me

Tammy-

Please forward this email to the Committee members, the Mayor and Penny before tonight's meeting.

Thanks.

David

Begin forwarded message:

From: Al Norman <info@sprawl-busters.com>

Subject: Comments to Charter review

Date: April 26, 2021 at 12:16:25 PM EDT

To: "David j. Singer" <djsinger@verizon.net>

Cc: Anita Fritz <afritz@recorder.com>

committee

To: Charter Review Committee

Fr: Al Norman

Please consider these 3 comments tonight:

1. 7-7 Initiatives

For a citizen initiative petition, the Charter version you are reviewing tonight recommends a 2 part initiative petition: initial & supplemental petitions, that require in total 15% of all voters to sign, or 1,908 signatures. This is "ridiculously high." The supplemental phase is totally unnecessary and dilatory. If an initiative gathers 10% of voter signatures, the Council gets a chance to accept it, and thereby prevent the petition from having to go on the ballot. If the council does not accept it, then let it go to the ballot with the signatures that have been already gathered. The second supplemental step is merely punitive, and the additional 5% means that petitioners have to gather almost 2000 signatures, which is burdensome, and may discourage some citizens from trying to present an initiative.

2. 7-8 Referenda

For referenda, 10% of all voters must sign, 1,272, within 30 days (half of which are spent waiting for the city lawyer to review and the city clerk to issue petitions), so citizens will have less than 15 days to gather 1,272 names. (Citizens also have to get wording from the clerk, copies voter lists, and set up a committee, so it's really more like 13 days.) By contrast, initiative process gives Citizens initially **90 days** to collect 10% voter signatures. Section 7-8 gives them 30 days—1/3rd as much time as in section 7-7. The committee narrative says the Council should consider “not more than 45 days to gather signatures.” If you don't strongly recommend 45 days you are likely to get 30 days—which boils down to 13 days.

The referenda signature requirement of 1,272 is four times more signatures than were required in the 2019 referendum.

3. Putting 7-7 and 7-8 on the ballot

Unfortunately, the report also says nothing about referring the initiative and referendum signature requirement and timetable to the voters to ratify at a general election. Instead it allows 13 councilors alone to decide how their decisions will be challenged, which is a conflict of interest. The committee discussed the ballot idea at its April meeting— but no vote was taken. The chairman indicated his support for putting these sections on the ballot. I urge you to recommend the Council, using section 7-10, to put 7-7 and 7-8 on the ballot for ALL voters to decide.

Thank you,

Al Norman