

## **School and Special Election**

### **Summary of Charter Related Questions**

**April 8, 2014**

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Mayor James appointed a 13-member Charter Review Commission in June, 2013 to examine the City's Charter and recommend updates. A variety of topics were presented for discussion and study. After a series of meetings, public testimony, and consultation from Dr. Jared Carr at UMKC's Cookingham Institute, the Commission issued its recommendations to the City Council.

The City Council discussed and debated the proposals and ultimately decided on those to proceed to the voters for consideration. The approved ballot language, and additional information on the issues, is below:

#### **QUESTION 3**

(Election Dates)

Should the Charter of Kansas City be amended by moving election dates from late February and late March to early April and late June and beginning terms of office on August 1?

\*\*This provision will move municipal Council and Mayoral elections later into Spring to increase the opportunity for citizen participation. Additionally, this switch aligns KCMO election dates with other Counties, thereby allowing them to hold them at the same time and save taxpayers money.

#### **QUESTION 4**

(Financial and Administrative Matters)

Should the Charter of Kansas City be amended by updating financial reporting and procedures; providing for submission of the annual budget by the City Manager to the Mayor and Council based on a required five-year financial plan; expressly permitting the Mayor to work with other governments if the interests of the City can also be advanced; renaming recognized emergency ordinances as ordinances with an accelerated effective date; permitting elected officials to serve in non-City appointive positions not inconsistent with their public office?

\*\*Described as the “housekeeping” provision, this set of changes would clarify the Mayor and Manager’s roles within the budget process. Although already implied, the next component would allow the Mayor to work with and develop relationships with other governmental entities to advance the mission of his office. Similar to this is the recommendation to allow elected officials to serve on external appointed positions consistent with the mission of their office. And, finally, the last recommendation is to clarify and rename the process for “emergency” ordinances.

## **QUESTION 5**

(Organizational Flexibility)

Should the Charter of Kansas City be amended by removing the requirement that certain operational Charter departments be listed in the Charter but retained until modified by the City Council and requiring the existence of a Health Commission?

\*\*Currently section 401 identifies several “required” departments, and the corresponding subsequent sections in Article IV outline the duties and powers of those departments. Because they are contained in the Charter under a provision titled “Departments required,” the City must maintain them in the form outlined in the Charter.

The recommendation recommends removing most of the enumerated departments and codifying them in ordinance. It does not advocate eliminating the departments. Rather, the Commission anticipates that the departments will continue to exist. This will allow for greater organizational flexibility as service delivery needs evolve over time.

### **For further information:**

Charter Review Commission site -- <http://kcmayor.org/charter-review-commission>

Discussion of Proposals before the Finance, Governance & Ethics Committee on January 23rd, 2013 --

[http://kansascity.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=&clip\\_id=8034&caption\\_id=2696097](http://kansascity.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=&clip_id=8034&caption_id=2696097)

Discussion of Proposals before Business Session on January 16th, 2013 --

[http://kansascity.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=&clip\\_id=8027&caption\\_id=2686747](http://kansascity.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=&clip_id=8027&caption_id=2686747)

Discussion of Proposals before Business Session on December 19th, 2013--

[http://kansascity.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=&clip\\_id=7946&meta\\_id=114687](http://kansascity.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=&clip_id=7946&meta_id=114687)

Discussion of Proposals before Business Session on December 12th, 2013--

[http://kansascity.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=&clip\\_id=7935&caption\\_id=25855](http://kansascity.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=&clip_id=7935&caption_id=25855)

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