

Charter Review Survey

Summary of Responses

(received prior to 8am, Tuesday, Oct. 10th)

Overview of Responses

34 responses were received. Four were determined to be exact duplicates; the duplicates were excluded. Thus, 30 responses were tallied. Of the 30, one respondent sent two submissions, thus there were only 29 unique responses included in the tabulations below. For the respondent with two submissions, answers to Q4 were inconsistent; therefore, both Q4 responses were excluded in the tally, leaving only 28 responses tallied for Q4.

7 respondents chose to remain anonymous.

1 respondent was not a city resident.

3 respondents were not registered electors.

9 respondents offered no freehand suggestions. Others made multiple suggestions.

7 respondents indicated they had not read the Charter.

Tabulation of Questions:

- 1) Remain at 5 seats:
 - a. YES: 17 (58.6%)
 - b. NO: 12
- 2) Retain at-large\citywide voting:
 - a. YES: 21 (72.4%)
 - b. NO: 8
- 3) Full-time city commissioners on par w/ county commission:
 - a. YES: 19 (65.5%)
 - b. NO: 10
- 4) Not conducting a Primary when only two candidates:
 - a. YES: 18 (62%)
 - b. NO: 10
- 5) Charter Review every 10 years:
 - a. YES: 24 (82.7%)
 - b. NO: 5

Summary of Freehand Suggestions:

Full-time Commissioners

- My strongest recommendation is to make the City Commission a full-time position. Their work is too important for them to work "part-time."

Mayoral seat

- City does not need an elected mayor. Charter should be changed for the position to rotate annually or every two two years.
- The format of the mayor and commissioner setup provides a good balance. I don't see a reason to change it.
- I was unsure if the Mayor was one of the 5 Commissioner seats or a separate entity so that there would actually be 6 elected officials at the City meetings. I do feel the Mayor should be a separate position and seat when the other 5 Commissioners meet.
- Moving to a strong mayor should be considered.
- Remove amendment from 1990s allowing for an elected mayor. Go back to having the mayor as a city commission member appointed by the commission.

Term Limits

- It should be a max of 4 years to seat in hold a seat.
- Consider setting term limits for Commissioners.

At-Large seats vs. Districts

- (You should offer an ""undecided"" option for the above questions. I could not submit without responding to all questions, but require more information regarding the number of commissioners and whether they should be selected at large.)"
- We need more representation from diverse political opinions. Districts would help.

No. of City Commission seats

- Add two at-large seats. Tallahassee is too big now for only 5 seats.
- I think the number of Commission seats should be increased to 7.

City Manager

- The City manager position should have term limits and a limit on the number of times they can run for the position. No one person should be city manager for 20 + yrs. The city needs to grow under new ideas and new leadership.
- Require a super majority to hire/fire city manager (Section 24) to provide stability and allow our city to enjoy the benefits of longevity in the city manager position.

Police Department

- The TPD is not mentioned in the charter. The charter should spell out clear lines of authority and accountability for the TPD, which is the largest single segment of the city budget.

Ethics Board

- 1. Provide the Independent Ethics Board with jurisdiction over lobbyists. 2. Provide the Independent Ethics Board with whistleblower authority for the City Auditor/Inspector General and the five city commissioners.
- I would like to see the Ethics Board be the designated agent for whistle blower protection in areas where the Inspector General doesn't have authority such as over City Commission and the Inspector General's office. I'd also like to have authority of the Ethics Board expanded to cover City Commissioners when they sit as members of other boards, such as CRA and Intergovernmental Agency. Further, I'd like to see expansion of Ethics Board jurisdiction to cover staff of CRA and Blueprint IA. These comments refer to sections 61 and 62 of the current City Charter.

Protection of City Utilities

- I recommend amending the chapter to explicitly state that the utility will remain publicly owned indefinitely.

Consolidation

- We should consolidate city and county governments!

Make no Charter Changes

- Don't change it. This current majority doesn't have a mandate to change the City Charter and no one besides a small group of insiders wants any of the proposed changes.

Charter Review Survey

Summary of Responses

(received after to 10am, Tuesday, Oct. 10th to Nov. 26th)

Overview of Responses

38 responses were received. Three were determined to be exact duplicates; the duplicates were excluded. Thus, 35 unique responses were tallied.

8 respondents chose to remain anonymous.

2 respondents were not city residents.

5 respondents offered no freehand suggestions. Others made multiple suggestions on an array of topics.

5 respondents indicated they had not read the Charter.

Tabulation of Questions:

- 1) Remain at 5 seats:
 - a. YES: 18 (51.4%)
 - b. NO: 17
- 2) Retain at-large\citywide voting:
 - a. YES: 24 (68.6%)
 - b. NO: 11
- 3) Full-time city commissioners on par w/ county commission:
 - a. YES: 21 (60%)
 - b. NO: 14
- 4) Not conducting a Primary when only two candidates:
 - a. YES: 21 (60%)
 - b. NO: 14
- 5) Charter Review every 10 years:
 - a. YES: 29 (82.9%)
 - b. NO: 6

Summary of Freehand Suggestions:

Full-time Commissioners

- ..., full time, higher salaries for commissioners earning less than a specified amount.
- I believe City Commission salaries should be higher, the same as County Commission salaries. Hopefully with a higher wage we can attract stronger candidates to run for office. ...
- ... City commissioners pay increased to match county commissioners
- ... Increase pay of commissioners- attract more candidates to run
- I'd like to see City Commissioners be considered full-time and be compensated as such. I believe that would increase the pool of potential candidates and enable commissioners to fully focus on their roles.

At-Large seats vs. Districts

- ... Keeping at-large seats on the Commission allows the citizens more of a voice in city gov't.
- City Charter Commission should examine the following: 1. ... ; 2. Partisan versus non-partisan; 3. Single member districts, at-large, mixed systems; 4. Timing of elections; 5. Number of districts based on population (a float system); 6. ...
- The City should consider ... and the method of election (at-large only, single member districts only, a mixture of single member districts and at large).
- ... do not create voting districts
- ... We need to ensure that each geographic area is represented.

No. of City Commission seats

- More commissioners....
- ... The City should have the same # of commissioners as the County: 7. The city budget is larger, why would the # of commissioners be fewer? The greater # of commissioners might help break the 3-2 gridlock on the commission.
- The City Charter should not expand the number of City Commission seats at this time, as there is no logical or needed reason to do so. We already have a highly polarized Commission that does not want to work together or take time to empathize with the others' opinion.
- City Charter Commission should examine the following: 1. Number of commissioners;
- The City should consider the number of commissioners ...
- Increase to 7 commissioners....
- Expand to 7 commissioners- more representation ...
- We need more seats on the commission.
- The 3-2 vote is old, the obvious division of the commission is not benefiting the citizens.
- It's time the commission grow to 7 seats with 5 districts. ...

Election format(s) / Primary Election

- City Charter Commission should examine the following: ... 7. Ranked voting; 8. Other electoral systems.

- The City may also want to consider the use of rank voting.
- ... If only 2 candidates that election should happen in the general election ...

City Commission Procedures

- Roberts' Rules of Order should be officially followed during all commission and commission appointed committee meetings.

Term Limits

- City Charter Commission should examine the following: ...6. Term limits or no term limits
- I would like to see term limits for commissioners. ...

Renewable Energy

- Secs. 114—116. City shall begin a transition to renewable energy, setting standards and goals that seek to achieve a net-zero carbon emission goal for city electricity generation. ... City Utilities shall buildout a network of public charging stations for electric cars. Star Metro will continue the expansion of electric buses with a goal of all electric buses by 2030.

Ethics Board

- Give the Ethics Board independent authority to investigate bring charges against any city official acting in their official capacity.
- Our city has a long way to go to achieve real ethics reform, which would increase public trust in our gov't. The rules re: ethics should apply to the CRA, as that agency is subject to pressure from developers whose interests may put making lots of \$\$ above what may be good for our community. Ethical conduct by all elected officials and transparency in gov't are both very important to me.
- ... City elected officials and employees should be subject to ethics requirements while serving on bodies other than the City Commission. ... And the Ethics Board should be given the authority to enforce violations of the lobby ordinance.
- Support Peter Butzin's Amendment suggestions. He can argue the issues better than I. I like Peter's suggestions he provided in the Tallahassee Democrat.
- The City Charter should include the recommendations made by the Ethics Board and Inspector General. We all benefit when our elected officials use our tax dollars and votes ethically, rather than ignore them for the will of the highest (developer) donor. ...
- include ethics
- ... enact serious ethics policies, with teeth. ...

Inspector General

- Create an independent inspector general who reports directly/answers to the Ethics Committee. The position is NOT appointed by the city commission/mayor.
- I would have an office of Inspector General be put into the charter, to ensure compliance with ethics in gov't.

- ... Whistle blower protections should be expanded to cover complaints against city commissioners and the city auditor/inspector general. ...
- Establish an Office of Inspector General (OIG) with the IG as department head and include a Director of Audit (current city auditor) a Director of Investigations, one auditor and one investigator, to allow for more transparency and efficiency in government. The IG should be unrestricted and report to the County Commission and only be removed for cause by a two thirds vote of the commission. Having a joint auditor/IG is not sufficient given the size of this city and does not allow for the needed oversight (Whistleblower) type of investigations. Once established, the OIG can become accredited and follow approved standards already established by the Commission for Law Enforcement Accreditation, inc. <https://flaccreditation.org/>

Financial Reporting

- Lastly, the City should move from the current financial reporting system to the one used by Leon County Commissioners and County Constitutional officers.

Protection of City Utilities

- No sale of public utilities can occur without a general election by the public, requiring a 60% affirmative vote to sell any and all parts of the TalGov utilities.

Charter Review

- The Charter Review Committee should be able to recommend any amendments to any section of the City Charter, just as the 2009 review committee did. This includes the section on ethics.
- We don't need amendments. We need a healthy robust democracy that is inclusive of everyone.
- Tallahassee residents should review the city charter every 10 years, giving the voters the ability to decide, and decide to not allow so much power in the hands of a few.
- I would like to see an unrushed full review of the charter. I said "no" to all answers bc it stated I had to chose an answer and I think all these topics deserve more than a yes or no response
- I would like opportunity to hear all sides prior to making any recommendations for amendments.

Public Transit

- ... Star Metro will add cover bus stops with benches and electronic signage detailing bus number and arrival times of all buses. Signs will be added to every bus stop. ...

Transparency

- City needs more transparency for Blueprint and Children's Services Council.

Advisory Boards

- the City should evaluate the need for all of the citizen committees and boards, they seem like they are either defunct and do nothing or cause problems

Contracts & Sale of Land

- 1. Requiring that any sale or swap of city-owned land or buildings be approved by a unanimous vote by City Commission or by ballot initiative. 2. Prohibiting any sale of city-owned land or buildings without an appraisal performed within the last 12 months. 3. Stipulating that the City may not enter into no-bid contracts without unanimous approval of City Commission. These provisions would improve public trust by reducing the opportunities for insider deals.

Taxation

- All property tax increases should require a minimum of 4 votes out of 5.

Growth \ Affordable Housing \ Social Services

- We want sustainable growth not developer-driven destruction. Urban infill is supposed to protect green spaces and be neighborhood oriented. Affordable housing should be a priority but we're just getting more luxury residences thanks to Mayor For-Saley and his stooges.
- We need to increase the maintenance of our infrastructure and find some resolution for the homeless/mentally ill people making multiple areas less desirable to live.