

City Charter Amendments

Article 5.1 summary:

Change the threshold required to recall a city Councilmember or Mayor from *30% of total voters to 50% of votes cast* in the last election.

Change Article 5, Section 5.1 from:

(a) The people of the City reserve the power to recall any elected officer of the City and may exercise such power by filing with the City Secretary a petition demanding the removal of the elected officer and signed by registered voters of the City equal in number to at least 30% of the registered voters of the City, in the case of the Mayor, or at least 30% of the registered voters in a single member district, in the case of a Councilmember elected from or appointed to represent a single member district.

(b) The required number of registered voters for the recall petition will be determined by the existing voter registration rolls maintained by the Bell County Elections Department on the date the petition is filed with the City Secretary.

Change To:

(a) The people of the City reserve the power to recall any elected officer of the City and may exercise such power by filing with the City Secretary a petition demanding the removal of the elected officer and signed by registered voters of the City equal in number to at least **50 percent of the total number of votes cast in the most recent election for the office of the member whose removal is sought, that was not a runoff election.**

(b) The required number of registered voters for the recall petition will be determined by the **election results** as maintained by the Temple City Secretary.

Article 5.1 Discussion:

There are 58,000 registered voters in Temple, TX.
However, less than 7,000 actually vote.

Under the current rule, for example, it takes approximately 17,400 petition signatures to recall the Mayor. In his most recent, opposed election, the Mayor received less than 1,300 votes, with less than 2,000 people voting, at all, in that election.

1,300 votes to be Mayor
17,400 to recall him
7,000 active voters

Texas state law already uses this standard (Local Gov't Code §21.102) and this general approach to petition thresholds as a percentage of actual votes cast, not total registration.

1,300 votes to be Mayor (700 against)
1,000 to recall him.

Article 4.3 summary:

Change city council term limits from 3 to 2 and change the Mayor term limit from 3 to 1. Remove the loop-hole for non-consecutive terms.

Change Article 4, Section 4.3 from:

No person may serve more than three consecutive terms as either a Councilmember elected from a single member district, or as the Mayor elected at large, except that a person serving as a Councilmember from a single member district, or the Mayor elected at large, at the time of the 2014 Charter amendments, may serve for a total of four consecutive terms in the office they hold at the time of the Charter amendments. All previous full, consecutive terms served by the current Councilmembers will count against the four consecutive terms allowed. A partial term to which a person is appointed or elected shall not be counted as a full three year term for purposes of this Section, except that a partial term will be counted as a full three year term if the person resigns or forfeits his office. This Section does not prohibit a person from serving three consecutive terms as a Councilmember from a single member district, and then serving three consecutive terms as Mayor, or vice versa.

Change to:

No person may serve more than **two terms in a lifetime** as a Councilmember elected from a single member district. No person may serve more than **one term in a lifetime** as the Mayor elected at large. All previous full terms served by the current Councilmembers will count against the terms allowed. A partial term to which a person is appointed or elected shall not be counted as a full three year term for purposes of this Section, except that a partial term will be counted as a full three year term if the person resigns or forfeits his office. This Section does not prohibit a person from serving two terms as a Councilmember from a single member district, and then serving one term as Mayor, or vice versa.

Article 4.3 discussion:

Currently, Mayor and Councilmembers serve 3-year terms.

Current term limits are “3 consecutive terms.”

So, a person could be on city council forever. 9 years as a Councilmember, then 9 years as Mayor, then 9 years as Councilmember again, and so on forever.

That’s the consecutive loop-hole.

Even without the consecutive loop-hole, a person could serve 18 years continuously on city council which is far too long to be in office.

This amendment will change that to 2 terms for Councilmember and 1 term for Mayor, reducing the total time on city council to 9 years maximum and removing the consecutive loop-hole while explicitly specifying lifetime limits.