

A diverse group of people, including a man in a red beanie and glasses looking at a phone, a woman in a blue jacket, and others, are gathered in a room with American flags in the background. The scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue rectangle containing the text 'CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION'.

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

OTE

What is the Austin City Charter?

- The Austin City Charter is a key document that explains how Austin is managed and governed.
- It is essentially a constitution for the city.

What is the Austin City Charter?

- City Government Structure
- Community Participation
- Legal Framework for City Laws
- Managing City Finances
- Local Autonomy and Flexibility
- Ensuring Transparency and Responsibility

What is the Charter Review Commission?

The Austin Charter Review Commission is appointed by the Mayor and City Council to recommend updates to the City's governing document to reflect current legal standards, governance practices, and community needs.

Who is on the Charter Review Commission?

- Betsy Greenberg
- Alejandro Garcia Limon
- Megan Lasch
- Brian McGiverin
- Michael Cowles
- Randy Ortega
- JC Dwyer
- Cynthia Van Maanen
- Julio Gonzalez Altamirano
- Ryan Botkin
- Jessica Palvino

What Issues is the CRC Considering?

- Use of a durable signature threshold for citizen-initiated petitions
- Limit on citizen-initiated changes to the City Charter to November elections in even-numbered years
- A process for filing petitions that ensures transparency, including an notice of intent and other requirements
- Ethical guidelines for petition signatures
- Alternative proposition lettering or numbering system
- Clarification of the outcome of an election where two similar but different ballot measures on the same subject matter both pass

What Issues Are We Discussing Tonight?

1. Signature threshold for citizen-initiated petitions
2. Signature threshold for recall elections
3. Moving ordinance initiatives and charter changes to municipal general elections

What if I Want to Talk About a Different Issue?

➤ **Upcoming CRC Meetings at City Hall (5pm):**

- Thursday, February 15, 2024
- Thursday, February 29, 2024
- Thursday, March 7, 2024

➤ **Email:** 2024charterreview@austintexas.gov

➤ Additional issues will be discussed at a later Town Hall. Please let us know if you have suggestions on discussion topics!

Format for Discussion

- 1-2 minute: general topic overview by Moderator (Jessica Palvino)
- 3-5 minutes: speaker present “pros”
- 3-5 minutes: speaker present “cons”
- Community Discussion, facilitated by Moderator

Issue #1: Petition Threshold

ISSUE #1: Should the **signature threshold** be increased for **initiative petitions**?

BACKGROUND FACTS:

- ✓ 4 types of petitions: initiative, referendum, recall and charter
- ✓ The current signature requirement for **initiative** petitions is the lower of **20,000 or 5% of voters**, whichever is smaller
- ✓ A 2019 report from the City Auditor found that most peer cities require more signatures for citizen initiatives than Austin

Issue #1: Petition Threshold

ISSUE #1: Should the **signature threshold** be increased for **initiative petitions**?

Pro:
JC Dwyer

Con:
Michael Cowles

Issue #2: Petition Threshold

ISSUE #2: Should the **signature threshold** be increased for **recall petitions**?

BACKGROUND FACTS:

- ✓ The Charter currently provides for recall of any Council Member by filing a petition with signatures of **10% of the qualified voters in that district**.
- ✓ The 2018 Charter Review Commission recommended an increase from 10% to 20%, based on a survey of peer cities.

Issue #2: Petition Threshold

ISSUE #2: Should the **signature threshold** be increased for **initiative petitions**?

Pro:
Brian McGiverin

Con:
Betsy Greenberg

Issue #3: Election Date

ISSUE #3: Should elections for citizen-initiated Charter changes and initiatives be held on the next **Municipal General Election** date?

BACKGROUND FACTS:

- ✓ The Charter currently provides that initiative petitions, if submitted to the voters, are submitted at the **next allowable election date**.
- ✓ Municipal General Elections are held every other November.
- ✓ Historically, voter turnout is higher for Municipal General Elections.

Issue #3: Petition Threshold

ISSUE #3: Should elections for citizen-initiated Charter changes and initiatives be held on the next **Municipal General Election** date?

Pro:
Julio Altamirano

Con:
Julio Altamirano

Thank you!

What if I Have More to Share?

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