



Legislation Text

File #: 19-203, **Version:** 1

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SUBJECT: Council Discussion and Direction Regarding the Formation of a Citizens Advisory Charter Review Committee

REPORT IN BRIEF

Considers the composition of an advisory committee to review the City of Merced Charter for possible updates to be placed on the March 2020 Primary Election and the process of recruiting and accepting applications for the committee.

RECOMMENDATION

City Council - Adopt a motion:

- A. Establishing an intent to form an Citizens Advisory Charter Review Committee specifying the number of members and makeup of the committee (i.e. selected by district or at large); and,
- B. Declaring the vacancies and directing staff to commence the standard process for filling the committee by noticing the vacancies and recruiting qualified applicants (qualified electors of the City) for a period of 30 days after the posted notice; and,
- C. Directing staff to bring the qualified applications to the May 20, 2019, regular City Council meeting for possible appointment.

ALTERNATIVES

- 1. Approve, as recommended by staff; or,
- 2. Approve, with any modifications to the composition of the committee or the recruitment process; or,
- 3. Deny the request completely; or,
- 4. Refer to staff for reconsideration of specific items as requested by Council; or,
- 5. Continue to a future City Council meeting (date and time to be specified in the motion).

AUTHORITY

Merced City Charter Section 200 *et seq.*

CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIES

To pursue various ballot measures for 2020 elections.

DISCUSSION

At the April 1, 2019 City Council meeting, staff reported on a timeline and set of milestones that would need to be met in order to place possible Charter Amendments on the March 2020 Primary Election. At the same meeting, Council directed staff to begin the process that would lead to that end.

The Council agreed that a Citizens Advisory Charter Review Committee should be used, similar to the last comprehensive Charter review in 2007. This committee would have the sole purpose to carry out the charge of the City Council in reviewing all or part of the City of Merced Charter and making a recommendation to the City Council when the task is complete.

Staff recommends a committee of 7-9 members in any combination of by-district and at-large seats as determined by the Council. Once the committee is formed, all meetings will be posted and agendaized in accordance with the Brown Act in order to help foster public participation in the Charter review process.

The City Clerk's Office will vet the applicants by confirming voter registration with the Merced County Registrar of Voters to ensure voter status and make note of the Council District in which the applicants reside. Being a qualified elector of the City is required by the Charter for all boards and commissions voting members.

Unless directed otherwise by Council, the recruitment of applicants will consist of a newspaper publishing, social media posts, visits to local service groups and any other means staff feels will generate qualified applicants for the committee. The recruitment should take approximately 30 days with the item being brought back to the Council at the May 20, 2019 meeting for Council review and possible appointments to the committee.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

Depending on the number of questions placed on the March 2020 ballot regarding Charter Amendments, the cost will vary. Staff will be requesting \$20,000 to cover election expenses for the March 2020 Primary in the upcoming 2019/20 Budget. Measure Y in 2018 cost the City approximately \$11,000 in elections expenses.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Updated Timeline