

Ramsey County Elections Information on Amending the County Charter

The following information is provided on the methods available to amend the Ramsey County Charter. Please refer to the Charter for complete information.

A. Amendments Proposed by Voter Petition

1. Petitioners must submit the proposed amendment and petition with the signatures of at least 5% of the number of persons registered to vote at 7:00am on the date of the previous state general election. For 2012, this number is 14,874. The petitions are submitted to the County Manager's Office. To qualify for placement on the 2012 state general election ballot, the petition must be submitted to the County Manager no later than June 15, 2012. The County Manager's Office does three things: a) makes an initial determination as to whether petition is timely; b) submits the petition documents to Elections Office, which will determine that the correct number of signatures has been obtained and determine the validity of the signatures; and c) gives Charter Commission and County Board notice.
2. Within ten working days after receipt of the petition, the Elections Office reports back to County Manager and Charter Commission on petition signatures.
3. If the petition does not have the required number of signatures, petitioners will be provided an additional ten working days to collect additional signatures.
4. The Charter Commission will make a determination of the sufficiency of the petition. For 2012, this must occur no later than August 6. Upon receipt of the declaration of sufficiency from the Charter Commission, the Elections Office will prepare a title for the ballot question and submit it to the county attorney, who will provide the text of the ballot question.
5. The Charter Commission may educate the public during this period.
6. Voters vote on proposed amendment at next general county election. For 2012, the general election will be held on November 6.
7. If the 'yes' votes equal or exceed 51% of those voting on the question, the amendment becomes effective thirty days after election is certified or such other time as is fixed in the amendment.

B. Amendments Proposed by the County Board

1. The County Board develops proposed amendment and adopts by ordinance. The proposed amendment is subject to referendum as provided in Chapter Five of the Charter.
2. The Charter Commission has sixty days (or may extend this period by ninety days by resolution) to review proposed amendment, make recommendations, and submit the proposed amendment to the County Attorney's Office.
3. The County Attorney's Office has thirty days to make legal determination.
4. The Charter Commission may prepare a position paper and educate the public if needed.
5. If a substantive amendment, the proposed amendment must be submitted to the Elections Division, which will include the question on the ballot at the next general election. The Elections Office must receive the proposed amendment no later than one week after the state primary. If approved at the subsequent general election, the amendment becomes effective thirty days after the election has been certified or at such other time as is fixed in the amendment.
6. If a non-substantive amendment, the proposed amendment may be adopted by the County Board after a public hearing upon two weeks published notice. An ordinance amending the charter does not become effective until ninety days after passage by the County Board and is subject to referendum.

C. Amendments Proposed by the Charter Commission

1. The Charter Commission develops the proposed amendment and submits it to the County Attorney's Office.
2. The County Attorney's Office has thirty days to make legal determination.
3. The Charter Commission may prepare a position paper and educate the public if needed.
4. If a substantive amendment, the proposed amendment must be submitted to Elections Division, which will include the question on the ballot at the next general election. The Elections Division must receive proposed amendment no later than one week after the state primary. If approved at the subsequent general election, the amendment becomes

effective thirty days after the election has been certified or at such other time as is fixed in the amendment.

5. If a non-substantive amendment, the proposed amendment may be adopted by the County Board after a public hearing upon two weeks published notice. The ordinance amending the charter does not become effective until ninety days after passage by County Board and is subject to referendum.

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