

What Voters Should Know About the Proposed Revisions to Yachats City Charter

May 2012

PROPOSED CHANGE	WHAT IT DOES	WHAT IT DOESN'T DO
<p>Designate mayor as “administrative head”.</p>	<p>The existing language identifies the Mayor as the “political head” of the City. The Council felt this language was ambiguous and did not convey the authority to direct city functions and otherwise conduct the City’s oversight as intended. The new language would match the reality of responsibilities that fall to a mayor.</p>	<p>Provide new or additional authority to the City or to the mayor. It is simply clearer language to describe the tasks handled by the current and previous mayors.</p>
<p>Changes mayoral term of office</p>	<p>The existing language provides for a four year term for all City Council members except the mayor. The mayoral term is currently 2 years. The change makes the mayoral term equal to that of the other Council members. In each general election two of the council seats would be decided. In alternate general elections the mayors seat would be decided. The Council felt that this change provides term equity within the voting members of the Council, ensures adequate continuity in the mayors position, and provides a term long enough for a new mayor to become proficient at the job before a decision must be made to run for an additional term.</p>	<p>This provision makes no changes to the powers or responsibilities of the mayor. It simply adjusts the term to match those of other City Council members.</p>

<p>Role of the City Attorney, Municipal Court Judge, and municipal court establishment</p>	<p>Provides more standard language in describing the responsibilities of the City Attorney, the Municipal Court Judge, and the Municipal Court itself.</p>	<p>This provision essentially makes no change in the function of any of these entities from what exists today. It simply uses the language customarily used to describe these functions.</p>
<p>Real property purchasing or sale</p>	<p>The existing Charter requires that all property purchase and sale decisions be made by an election. This requirement often means that properties must be selected in advance, cost estimates made, and then timed such that an election precedes the purchase. Although this guarantees significant citizen participation in the final decision, it also telegraphs the City's "bottom line" and therefore assures that top dollar will usually be paid for any purchase. Properties that may be desirable to achieve the City's goals may become available at bargain prices and therefore sell quickly before the City can secure voter approval for the purchase. Negotiating or participating in multi-party transactions that would enhance the City's programs or protect City assets are not an option for the Council under the existing charter.</p>	<p>The change does not increase taxes or fees. It does not change funding mechanisms for real property purchase. It does not provide for condemnation.</p>