

PREVIOUS CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION REPORTS
PRIORITY ISSUES

1984 report

1. Should the operation of the City Jail be a function of the city, the State of Florida, or both? If a new jail is built, it should be financed by sales tax revenues to result in the lowest possible cost to county residents. A new jail is not needed, but pretrial detention facilities should be provided at the lowest possible cost to the citizens.
2. Is the Government in the Sunshine law effective, workable, and easy to understand? Should all elected officials, full-time and part-time, come under the same restrictions? The Public Meetings Law should be applied equally to all governmental bodies, including the Legislature and its committees, to the same extent that it applies to the Jacksonville City Council.
3. Should City Council vacancies always be filled by special election or should the City Council have the power to appoint replacements for remaining terms of less than two years? Should the method of election of the City Council be changed? City Council should be authorized to appoint replacements to fill vacancies of 1 year or less. No changes to City Council election methods are recommended.
4. How much home rule does Jacksonville have, and does it need more? The commission urges the City Council to petition the Duval Legislative Delegation to try and amend state law to prohibit the Legislature from enacting legislation which limits home rule powers to municipalities.
5. How many appointments should the Governor make to the JTA (currently 3) and the JPA (currently 4)? No change is recommended in the current appointment structure.
6. Should the City Charter be amended to require a 2/3 vote of the City Council to pass any measure rezoning property? The City Council should urge the Duval Delegation to defeat the passage of proposed bill J-2 on the basis that it would unduly restrict development and growth of the community and restrict local government's ability to react thereto.

1991 report

1. Should the Civil Service Board be elected or appointed? Are any other changes recommended with regard to City personnel practices? 1) Replace the elected Civil Service Board with a Civil Service System and an appointed hearing appeals board with membership representing each of the 7 School Board districts. 2) Also, the JEA should be removed from the City's personnel system and institute its own pension and insurance programs, provided the Pension Fund Trustees and the City Finance Department can certify that such a separation would not adversely impact either the City's pension plan or its insurance program. 3) Update the list of employees exempt from the civil service system to reflect the latest administrative reorganizations. 4) Amend Sec. 17.03 of the Charter to include age and disability among the factors upon which the City may not discriminate in employment, promotion, dismissal or compensation. 5) Amend the Rule of One to the Rule of Five in selecting candidates from promotional lists.
2. What is the proper size and method of election of City Council? The commission recommends that the Council remain at 19 members with 14 from single-member districts and 5 elected at-large, although the Charter should be amended to provide for the 5 at-large members to qualify from residence areas. Vacancies in City Council seats should be filled by Council appointment if occurring less than 1 year before a scheduled election. Vacancies of over 1 year should be filled by special election if a district seat, or should be left vacant until the next citywide election if an at-large seat. The commission

- recommends that concurrent terms for all 19 council members be continued, and that council members continue to serve as part-time officials.
3. Should any changes be made in the method of amending the City Charter or in the elections process? The Charter should be amended to add specificity to the citizen initiative amendment process by establishing requirements for a citizen petitioners committee and requirements for execution and validation of petitions, standardized forms, signature collection affidavits, etc.
 4. Should the City election system be changed from partisan primaries to a non-partisan system? The City Council already having called for a referendum on the replacement of partisan primary elections with a unitary, non-partisan system, the commission offered no recommendation on that subject, leaving the issue to the voters to decide.
 5. Should the Charter be amended to change the authority of the General Counsel to issue legal opinions binding on the consolidated government? The commission recommended that 1992 J-bill 7 proposing to remove the General Counsel's authority to issue binding legal opinions not be enacted (which it was not).

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1998

City Council staggered terms: the commission recommended (by vote of 7-3) that staggered terms be placed before the voters as a referendum question at the next general election, with the suggestion that council members from odd-numbered districts would be eligible to seek election for an initial two-year term that would not count against the two-term limit; council members from even-numbered districts would be eligible for the usual two terms.

2000

City elections in the spring v. fall: the commission recommended (by vote of 9-2) that City elections continue to be conducted in the spring.

City Council staggered terms: the commission expressed opposition (by vote of 11-0) to allowing current sitting council members to qualify for additional extended terms for purposes of initiating a staggered election system, but recommended (by vote of 6-5) in favor of establishing staggered City Council terms.

Moving City Council elections to even-numbered years and staggering terms: the commission expressed opposition (by vote of 9-2) to a pending ordinance before City Council (2000-623) to move the City elections from the spring of odd-numbered years to the fall of even-numbered years to be held in conjunction with state general elections and to provide for staggered terms for City Council members by electing members representing even-numbered districts and at-large residence areas for 2-year terms in 2004 to initiate the stagger.

2003

Moving City Council elections to even-numbered years: the commission expressed opposition (by vote of 8-0) to a pending ordinance before City Council (2002-749) to move the City elections from the spring of odd-numbered years to the fall of even-numbered years to be held in conjunction with state general elections and to accomplish the change in timing by shortening the terms of all elected City officials by 6 months on a one-time basis to shift to the fall electoral cycle. Instead, the commission recommended (by vote of 8-0) that a referendum should be held to ask the voters to approve moving the City elections from the spring to the fall of odd-numbered years.