

Legislation Text

File #: 20-498, Version: 1

Presenter/Contact
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SUBJECT:

Presentation, discussion and possible staff direction to postpone the Special Election on proposed amendments to the City Charter originally scheduled for May 2, 2020.

BACKGROUND / RATIONALE:

On April 13, 2020, in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the City Council postponed the May 2020 Charter amendment special election to November 3rd, as allowed by Governor Abbott under a proclamation temporarily suspending certain provisions of the Texas Election Code. As the number of cases continue to rise in Comal and Guadalupe Counties, so do concerns about long lines and crowds at the polling sites in November.

Some considerations for postponement of the charter amendment special election:

- With 2020 being a presidential election year, crowds will be large and lines at the polls will be long. Extremely lengthy ballots may increase wait times, lines and crowds. The charter amendment language is lengthy and will increase the ballot significantly.
- Postponement allows for the filling of the City Secretary vacancy prior to the May 2021 election. The City Secretary's Office is solely responsible for municipal elections and the vacancy creates issues with moving forward with a November election. Interim services would be required to move forward with a November election.
- Postponement allows for information sessions with new Council Members and Mayor to further review the eighteen (18) proposed Charter amendments on the ballot.
- Postponement does not affect any candidate races for regular election, as they were unopposed, the election was canceled, and those candidates have been sworn in.
- Municipal elections are always in May, so postponement would allow for consistency in the election process.
- The City will be required to use county polling locations in the November election, which will likely mean using more than the usual six municipal Election Day locations.
- Notice of the postponement will be posted on the City website and other various media.

ADDRESSES A NEED/ISSUE IN A CITY PLAN OR COUNCIL PRIORITY:

N/A

FISCAL IMPACT:

The expected cost of a municipal election is approximately \$15,000. The estimate of costs from

Comal County for the May 2, 2020 special election was \$16, 982.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the item.