

THE CHARTER OF THE
CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OHIO

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ARTICLE ~~III~~THREE. THE COUNCIL

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~~SECTION 43~~. VACANCIES.

— Any vacancy in the Council, shall be filled ~~in the first instance~~ by the appointment, by a majority of the remaining members of the Council, of an individual qualified under this Charter to serve as a member of Council. In the event Council fails to fill any vacancy within ~~forty five (45)~~sixty (60) days ~~efafter~~ the occurrence of such vacancy, then the Mayor shall fill such vacancy within ten (10) days. The individual appointed to fill the vacancy shall serve until ~~a successor is elected and qualified at an election as provided herein; provided, however, that if the vacaney in Council occurs in the year that the regular election for that office is already scheduled, then the person appointed shall hold office through December 31 of that year~~the first to occur of either (i) the expiration of the term of the member who vacated the office, or (ii) a successor is elected and qualified.

— ~~For any~~ A successor shall be elected for the unexpired term at the next regular municipal election if (a) such election occurs more than two (2) years prior to the expiration of the unexpired term and (b) the vacancy occurs more than ninety (90) days prior to such election; otherwise, the individual appointed shall serve the expiration of the term of the member who vacated the office. Successor(s) to fill the unexpired term of any member(s) who vacated their seat(s) shall be elected in the same election as Council not occurring in the members elected for full four-year terms. In municipal elections that the regular election for include the election of any successor(s) to fill the unexpired term of any member(s) who vacated their seat(s), the number of seats to be filled in that office is scheduled, an election for the unexpired term shall be held at the next general election occurring more than one hundred and twenty (120) days election shall increase by the number of successors to elect, and the number of votes needed to win a seat shall change accordingly. Candidates shall be elected for full four-year terms as specified by the Council in its ordinances until all seats for full four-year terms are filled. Candidate(s) elected after the date of the vacaney all seats for full four-year terms are filled shall be designated as elected to fill the unexpired term(s) of the member(s) who vacated their seat(s). The term of a person elected to fill the vacancy at such election shall begin at the first regularly scheduled meeting of Council following the certification of ~~electoral~~the official election results of such election and shall extend for the remainder of the unexpired term.

— ~~Subject to the provisions of this Section III-4, persons desiring to become candidates for the office in which the vacaney arose shall file nominating petitions, with the election authorities prescribed by general law, not later than 4:00 p.m. on the ninetieth (90th) day before such election. Such petitions shall not be signed by any electors more than one hundred eighty (180) days prior to such election. Other than with regard to the time limits in this section applicable to the filing and signature of petitions, such nominating petitions shall be subject to the requirements of Article VII, Section 3 of the Charter, including the number of required signatures.~~

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ARTICLE ~~VII~~ SEVEN. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

SECTION 7. 1. TIME OF HOLDING ELECTIONS.

The regular municipal election shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November in the odd numbered years. Any matter which, by the terms of this Charter, may be submitted to the electors of the City at any special election, may be submitted at the time of a primary election or of a general election.

When there exists a vacancy in the office of the Mayor, an election for Mayor shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, occurring in any calendar year, and in accordance with the requirements specified in Article IV, Section 10.

~~– In the event there are three or more certified candidates for the office of Mayor, a non-partisan primary election unexpired term shall be held for that office in accordance to the laws of the State of Ohio on the second Tuesday after the first Monday in September, in the year that an election is held for the office of Mayor. The names of the two candidates for Mayor receiving the highest number of votes in the non-partisan primary election shall appear at the subsequent November election as provided in Section 4.6.~~

~~– This section shall become effective January 1, 2021.~~ 2021.20[XX].

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SECTION 7. 3. PETITION FOR PLACES ON BALLOTS

The name of any elector of the City shall be printed upon the ballot if there is filed with the election authorities prescribed by general law a petition in accordance with the following requirements:

- (a) Such petition shall state the name and place of residence of the person whose name is presented for a place upon the ballot and the name of the office for which he is a candidate. The nomination of each candidate shall be made by separate petition.
- (b) Such petition shall be signed by electors of the Municipality equal in number to not less than two percent of the total number of voters voting at the last regular election of municipal officers.
- (c) Each elector signing a petition shall add to his signature his place of residence, with street and number and date of signing. No elector shall sign more nominating petitions for different candidates for a particular office than there are positions to be filled for that office at the election for which the petition is signed. If he does so, his signatures on all petitions which postdate his signing the permissible number of petitions shall be invalid. All signatures shall be made with ink.
- (d) The signature of all petitioners need not be appended to one paper, but to each separate paper there shall be attached a signed statement of the circulator thereof, made under penalty of election falsification, stating the number of signers thereto, that each person signed in the circulator's presence on the date mentioned, and that the signature is that of the person whose name it appears to be.

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(e) Such petition shall not be signed by any electors more than one hundred eighty (180) days prior to the date established in Section VII-1 for the regular municipal primary election that is required to be held when there are three or more candidates certified for the office of Mayor, and such petitions shall be filed with the election authorities prescribed by general law not later than 4:00 p.m. on the ninetieth (90th) day prior to the date set for that regular municipal primary election, ~~regardless of whether or not a primary is actually required to be held for a Mayoral election.~~

This section shall become effective January 1, 2024[XX].

SECTION 7. 4. ACCEPTANCE

Any person whose name has been submitted for candidacy by any such petition shall file an acceptance of such candidacy with the election authorities not later than eighty-five (85) days previous to the date established in Section VII-1 for the regular municipal primary election ~~that is required to be held when there are three or more candidates certified for the office of Mayor, regardless of whether or not a primary is actually required to be held for a Mayoral election~~; otherwise, the name of that person shall not appear on the ballot. The signature of a candidate upon a declaration of candidacy contained as part of petitions filed with the election authorities, in accordance with law, shall constitute compliance with the requirements of this section.

This section shall become effective January 1, 2024[XX].

SECTION 7. 5. WHO ELECTED

The voter may write the name of any candidate who has properly filed a declaration as a write in candidate with the election authorities on or before the seventy-second (72nd) day before the date established in Section VII-1 for the regular municipal primary election that is required to be held when there are three or more candidates certified for the office of Mayor, regardless of whether or not a primary is actually required to be held for a Mayoral election. Such declaration shall state the name of the candidate, his or her place of residence, and the office for which he or she desires to run. A write in candidate shall be an elector of the City at the time his or her declaration as such a candidate is filed with the election authorities.

This section shall become effective January 1, 2024[XX].

SECTION 7. 6. CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS AND CANVASS OF VOTES

All elections shall be conducted and the results canvassed and certified by the election authorities prescribed by this Charter and by general election laws, and all other matters relating to elections not herein or by ordinance of the Council specifically provided for shall be determined by the general election laws of the State.

Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the Mayor, Judge of the Cleveland Heights Municipal court, and members of the Council shall be elected by ranked choice voting. Ranked choice voting is a method of casting and counting votes in which voters rank candidates in order of preference and votes are counted in rounds. Ranked choice voting is also known as “instant runoff voting” when electing a single winner or the “single transferable vote” when electing multiple winners in proportion to their support among all voters.

The Mayor and Judge shall be elected via instant runoff voting. If a candidate receives more than half of the total votes counting for candidates, that candidate is elected and the tabulation of votes is complete. Otherwise, tabulation shall proceed in rounds as follows. The candidate with the fewest votes shall be eliminated and each voter's ballot shall count as one vote for its highest-ranked remaining candidate in each round. When two or fewer candidates remain, the candidate with the greatest number of votes shall be elected.

The Council shall be elected by single transferable vote. Candidates shall be elected or eliminated in each round and each ballot shall count in whole or in part for its highest-ranked remaining candidate in each round. Candidates shall be elected if they receive the number of votes needed to win a seat. The number of votes needed to win a seat shall be determined by dividing the number of votes cast by the sum of the number of seats to be filled and one, plus one additional vote. If a candidate receives more votes than needed to win a seat, a part of each vote received by that candidate instead shall be counted for each ballot's next-highest-ranked remaining candidate. When a candidate is eliminated, votes shall be counted for each ballot's next-highest-ranked remaining candidate.

The Council shall, by ordinance, establish:

(a) the ballot format;

(b) the rules for casting and counting the votes;

(c) a process to release unofficial preliminary round-by-round results starting as soon as a reasonable number of precincts have reported but in no event later than as required by law and continuing at regular intervals until the counting of ballots is complete, unofficial preliminary ballot-level ranking data on a contest-by-contest basis no later than the counting of ballots is complete, and official final round-by-round results and ballot-level ranking data on a contest-by-contest basis upon certification of the results.

This section shall become effective January 1, 20[XX].

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ARTICLE VIIIEIGHT. INITIATIVE, REFERENDUM AND RECALL

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SECTION8.4. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Any initiative or referendum petition, or one for a recall, may be presented in separate parts. Each part of any initiative petition shall contain a full and correct copy of the title and text of the proposed ordinance or other measure, and each part of any referendum petition shall contain the number and the full and correct copy of the title of the ordinance or other measure sought to be referred, but need not contain the full text of such ordinance or other measure.

Each signer of a petition shall be a registered voter of the City and shall sign his name in ink and shall place on the petition his name and place of residence by street and number. Each part of any such petition shall contain the affidavit of the person soliciting the signatures to the same, which affidavit shall contain a statement of the number of signers of such part of such petition and shall state that to the best of the affiant's knowledge and belief each of the signatures contained on such part is the genuine

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signature of the person whose name it purports to be, and that he believes such persons are registered electors of the City, and that they signed such petition with the knowledge of the contents thereof. Each part of such petition shall also have printed thereon the names and addresses of at least five registered electors, who shall be officially regarded as filing the petition and shall constitute a committee of the petitioners for the purpose herein elsewhere named.

All such petitions shall be filed with the Clerk of the Council and all parts of any such petition shall be assembled by the Clerk as one instrument.

Within ten days after the filing of a petition the Clerk shall ascertain whether the same is signed by the required number of qualified electors. Upon the completion of his examination the Clerk shall endorse upon the petition a certificate of the result thereof.

If the Clerk's certificate shows that the petition is insufficient he shall at once notify each member of the committee of the petitioners herein elsewhere provided, and the petition may be amended at any time within fifteen days from the date of the Clerk's certificate of examination by filing with the Clerk an additional petition in one or more parts in the same manner as provided for the original petition. In the event that it shall be determined by judicial proceedings that the certificate of the Clerk to the effect that the petition is sufficient is erroneous, a similar period of time shall be granted for additional petitions after the final determination of such question.

Upon the filing of any such additional petitions, the Clerk shall within ten days thereafter examine the petition as thus amended and attach thereto his certificate of the result, and the petition shall thereafter be treated in the same manner as it would have been treated after the original certification. The final determination of the insufficiency of a petition shall not prevent the filing of a new petition for the same purpose.

The sufficiency of the number of signers to any initiative, referendum or recall petition, shall be determined on the basis of the number of registered voters at the last general election for municipal officers.

The filing of an initiative, referendum or recall petition by the Clerk with the Council within the times herein elsewhere provided shall be computed from the date of the attaching of the final certificate of the Clerk to such petition.

Whenever it becomes the duty of the Council to call an election by reason of the filing of an initiative or referendum petition or one for recall, the Council shall call an election for the submission of such question, or recall, at the next regular ~~primary or~~ general election occurring not less than sixty (60) days nor more than one hundred twenty (120) days thereafter. If no such regular ~~primary or~~ general election is to be held within such time, the Council shall provide for calling a special election not less than sixty (60) days nor more than one hundred twenty (120) days thereafter. In either event, the Council shall certify its action to the Director of Elections. Provided, however, that if the recall of more than three (3) members of the Council is sought by petition, the period of sixty (60) days hereinbefore provided shall be changed to one hundred twenty (120) days.

When any legislative measure resulting from any initiative or referendum petition is approved by a majority of the electors voting thereon, such legislative measure shall become effective at the time fixed therein and if no time is fixed therein, then such legislative measure shall become effective upon its

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approval by the electors; provided, however, that in the event that two or more inconsistent legislative measures on the same subject are submitted at the same election, only the one receiving the largest affirmative vote, not less than a majority, shall become effective.

This section shall become effective January 1, 20~~17~~XX.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Charter may be submitted to the electors of the City by a vote of five members of the Council, and shall be submitted by the Council when a petition signed by not less than ten percent of the total number of electors as shown by those registered at the last general or municipal election, setting forth any such proposed amendment shall have been filed in the manner and form prescribed herein for the submission of ordinances by initiative petition. The amendment shall be submitted to the electors at the next regular ~~primary or~~ general election, if one shall occur not less than sixty (60) days, nor more than one hundred twenty (120) days after its passage or filing; otherwise the Council shall provide for the submission of the amendment at a special election to be called and held within the time aforesaid.

If any such proposed amendment be approved by a majority of the electors voting thereon, it shall become a part of this Charter at the time fixed in the amendment; and if no time is fixed therein, then such amendment shall become a part of this Charter upon its approval by the electors; provided, however, that in the event that two or more inconsistent amendments on the same subject are submitted at the same election, only the one of such amendments receiving the largest affirmative vote, not less than a majority, shall become a part of this Charter.