

Message from Mike Gaynier

To my fellow Charter Commission members:

I would like to draw attention to the change we previously agreed upon regarding council vacancies. As you know, we currently have a council vacancy due to the resignation of Council Member Cheryl Stephens, which occurred on November 19th, following her election to represent District 10 on the Cuyahoga County Council.

If we apply our proposed 60 day limit for a council appointment, council would need to appoint someone by January 19th. Right now the city website has notice for interested individuals to submit an application to be considered for appointment. The deadline to apply is January 15th. If we agree council should solicit applications from a broad range of interested persons, this is a very reasonable deadline. With the major issues on council's agenda at the time of this resignation (Top of the Hill development, for example), to try and add a thoughtful, thorough review of appointment candidates in 60 days would be nearly impossible.

A minor factor in this case is timing. August and December are months when council is historically in recess for significant portions of the month. That noted, November is also a likely time for resignations due to members elected to other government bodies.

Therefore, I urge our commission to reconsider the 60 day appointment limit. To send our charter revisions to council including this limit will likely invite a deletion of this proposed change.

Instead, I propose we increase the 60 day limit to 120 days for council to make an appointment. In our current situation, council would then have until March 19th to make an appointment. This would provide adequate time for many applicants to make decisions to seek appointment, a complete review of all the applications received, and the time required for video recorded individual interviews and council discussion to make a reasoned decision. If council is unable to do so after 120 days, there would still be a vacancy election in November with adequate time for candidate campaigns, per our proposed 180 day requirement. And our intention to prevent past situations, such as the unusually long delay to appoint former Council Member Janine Boyd, would be achieved. I ask that we revisit our decision on this subject at our next meeting.

Thank you.