

RESOLUTION OF INTENT TO CONSIDER AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF GREENSBORO TO RETAIN THE CURRENT FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND TO CHANGE THE TERM OF OFFICE FROM TWO TO FOUR YEARS AND TO SUBMIT THIS PLAN TO A REFERENDUM

WHEREAS, in 1983 the City of Greensboro adopted a City Council election system of one (1) Council member elected from each of its five (5) districts, three (3) Council members elected at-large, and one (1) Mayor elected at large. The system adopted in 1983 is commonly referred to as the 5-3-1 system. The City of Greensboro supports its current system because it ensures fair and equitable representation of all residents of the City.

WHEREAS, the City Council of Greensboro adopted a legislative agenda on January 20, 2015, which included extending the term of office from two years to four years for Council members and the Mayor.

WHEREAS, on February 4, 2015, Senate Bill 36 was filed and has proposed a City Council election system of one (1) Council member elected from each of seven (7) newly created voting districts, and one (1) at-large Mayor with the Mayor having veto power. The system proposed by Senate Bill 36 is commonly referred to as the 7-1 system.

WHEREAS, the General Assembly, in Part 4 of Article 5 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes, has authorized municipalities in the State of North Carolina to alter their form of government (also known as the charter change authority) and to make any change effective if approved by a vote of the people by special election.

WHEREAS, Part 4 of Article 5 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes also provides the people with the right to initiate a referendum on proposed charter amendments.

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Statutes, § 160A-101(4) and (8) permit the City Council and the Mayor to be elected for terms of either two or four years.

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 36 proposes to take the charter change authority from the City Council and people of Greensboro by repealing Part 4 of Article 5 of Chapter 160A in Greensboro, but no other place in North Carolina.

WHEREAS, in keeping with the democratic ideals of the City of Greensboro, the City Council desires to allow the people to decide what form of government is appropriate.

WHEREAS, the City of Greensboro proposes a binding referendum of the voters to consider whether to keep the current 5-3-1 system and to change to current two year terms for City Council and the Mayor to four year terms.

WHEREAS, because State election laws will only allow a special election at the time of the general election on odd numbered years, the first available special election would be on November 3, 2015, and therefore, the Council's proposed change, if approved by the voters, could not be effective until the 2017 election.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREENSBORO that the City Clerk schedule a public hearing at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 3rd, 2015, to receive public comment on whether the citizens of Greensboro prefer the 5-3-1 system or the 7-1 system and to receive public comment on an ordinance to amend Section 2.41 of the City Charter to change the term from two years to four years for both the City Council members and the Mayor and to submit this proposed change in the Greensboro Charter to a binding resolution. This proposed change, if approved by the voters, will not take effect until the 2017 election.