



ISAAC B. "ZAC" BEARS
President

City of Medford

OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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To: Chair Tseng and Members of the Medford City Council Governance Committee
From: Council President Isaac B. "Zac" Bears
Date: January 16, 2025
Re: Summary of Proposed Amendments to Article I, II, and 9-6 of Draft Proposed City Charter

Dear Chair Tseng and Members of the Governance Committee,

I am proposing the following amendments and edits to the draft proposed city charter as pertaining to Article I, Article II, and Section 6 of Article IX.

1. Proposed Composition of the City Council | Section 2-1 and associated sections

- **What:** City Council composed of 7 members, 3 elected at-large and 4 from districts
- **Representation** - Creates local district councilor representation for city's neighborhoods
- **Accessibility** - Keeps composition of City Council and School Committee consistent, voters would have 1 district councilor and 1 district school committee member in the same district, and an easier understanding of our elections makes local government more accessible
- **Efficiency** - No increase number of elected officials, no cost increase for additional councilors, no need for renovations of the chambers, and no increase in meeting length

This amendment takes a balanced approach that maintains the spirit and intent of the residents of the city who desire increased neighborhood representation, preserves the benefits of the existing at-large system, and ensures that city government is more consistent, efficient, and accessible.

2. Compensation of Election Officials | Section 2-4, 3-1, and 4-4

- **What:** Set the compensation of the Mayor, City Council, and School Committee by charter, eliminate authority of City Council to set compensation, maximum increase of 2% per year
- **Ends perceived conflict of interest** by eliminating authority of elected officials to set their own pay or the pay of fellow elected officials
- **Establishes a maximum increase of 2% per year** with smaller increase if city's key department heads do not receive increases of at least 2% per year
- **Empowers voters** because only voters can make changes to compensation set by charter

This amendment eliminates a perceived conflict of interest, sets a clear process, and settles a hot button issue that has been a topic of public meetings, charter changes, special acts, and more in Medford city government for decades.

3. List of Minor Amendments and Correction of Errors

- **Section 2-5:** Set time of Council regular meetings by Council Rules, not ordinance
- **Section 2-7:** Maintain office of city messenger and make clear the city clerk and city messenger must be residents of the city, update subsection numeration
- **Section 2-9:** Council can reject mayoral appointments by majority vote, not 2/3rds
- **Section 2-10:** Updates references to city clerk role in elections to elections commission
- **Section 2-11:** Move section 9-6 to Article 2, periodic review of the ordinances provided for by the city council, special committee established by a vote of the city council