

## **Background and Purpose of the Charter Commission**

The City's Charter is the fundamental governing document (akin to a constitution) of the City of San Antonio. In 1951, the City of San Antonio adopted the City Charter. The Charter was drafted by an elected Charter Commission chaired by Walter W. McAllister. Our Charter has been amended ten times since then.

A Charter Commission was authorized by an ordinance passed by the City Council in 2014, to study and make recommendations to revise provisions that were in conflict with then current state law, or which did not reflect current practices, or which were outdated and obsolete. The Commission was authorized to consider other matters, time permitting. The Mayor was authorized to make appointments to the Commission, without further action by the Council.

The Commission met seven times, held two public hearings and invited comments at five of the City Council "Citizens to be Heard" sessions. The recommendations of the Charter Review Commission, as well as input from the public, were presented to the City Council in mid-February. On February 26, 2015, the City Council approved four propositions to be placed on the May ballot, including propositions for Council Compensation and Mayoral Vacancy. All the propositions placed before the voters passed at the election held Saturday, May 9, 2015.

The current 2016-2017 Charter Review Commission is being convened today December 13, 2016, for a briefing on roles and responsibilities, and to identify Charter amendments requested to date by members of the Council through City Council Consideration Requests (CCR's).

The formal "charge" of the Commission will be determined by the City Council, again by the passage of an ordinance, in early 2017. Upon receipt of its charge, the Commission will meet to develop a calendar and may establish committees to vet the charge and potential changes, and hold public hearings to obtain citizen input. The Commission will bring its final recommendations to the full Council in late July or early August. If Council decides to have a November election, specific ballot language for a November 7, 2017 election will be developed, for approval by the Council.

*The current charter may be accessed through this link:*

[https://www.municode.com/library/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=PTICH](https://www.municode.com/library/tx/san_antonio/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTICH)