



Town of Johnstown

TOWN COUNCIL WORKSESSION COMMUNICATION

AGENDA DATE: August 14, 2023

SUBJECT: Home Rule Charter Rules and Regulations Regarding Wards and Districts

ATTACHMENTS: 1. None

PRESENTED BY: Matt LeCerf, Town Manager

WORKSESSION ITEM DESCRIPTION:

The Johnstown Home Rule Charter was approved on November 7, 2006 and as amended from time to time includes a section related to the establishment of wards and district in Article 2, Section 2.1 titled Town Council. Section B of 2.1 reads as follows:

- B. The Town Council shall consist of six (6) Councilmembers nominated and elected from the Town at large, and a Mayor, who shall be nominated and elected from the Town at large. The Town Council may enact by ordinance for the nomination and election of six (6) Councilmembers from wards and districts; provided, however, the Mayor shall be elected at large. If and/or when the population of the Town reaches twenty thousand (20,000), the Town Council shall provide by ordinance, to be effective at the next general municipal election, for the election of six (6) Councilmembers to be nominated and elected by wards and districts, and a Mayor, who shall be nominated and elected from the Town at large.

While this may appear straight forward, there are many different sources that can be accessed to determine the population. The most widely accepted source is the using the decennial U.S. Census count which takes place every 10 years. This is the only official count recognized by Federal, State, & Local Governments. Following the decennial census count, political boundary districts are restructured and modified to balance accurate population census geographically.

In the 2020 census and based on a date of April 1, 2020 Johnstown's population was 17,326. This data was released around July 1, 2021. All other counts that occur between the official census counts are considered estimates and are not certified through the official census counting

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process. While there are various sources that may provide estimates from year to year, they do have variances within them and the method in which those counts are derived are not easily made clear without a significant amount of research and reading into their methodology. For example, in 2020 the following sources provide population numbers for Johnstown: U.S. Census, 17,326; the World Population Review, 17,356; Wikipedia 17,303; and Data USI USA, 14,357.

It is reasonable to predict that in 2030, during the next decennial census that the Town of Johnstown will eclipse the 20,000 mark and be obligated to establish wards and districts. While establishing the wards and districts can be achieved in a number of different ways, a recommended method and outline may look like the following described below. It is appropriate and recommended that Council establishes and memorialize a methodology for how this will be completed.

- Four Wards, Two Districts
 - City of Golden has this – Ward 1, District 1; Ward 2, District 1; Ward 3, District 2; and Ward 4, District 2.
- Establish a Commission
 - Led by outside consultant
 - Two Councilmembers
 - 2-4 citizen registered electors of the Town
- Hire an expert consultant to assist
 - Retain by Council (2030 budget year)
- Commission Initial Meeting
 - Assuming expectation that 2030 Census will show 20,000, Commission meets in 2030 and draws preliminary boundaries based on population
 - Commission meets within 30 days of census results to prepare final boundaries based on census block and block group population data
 - Town Attorney drafts ordinance and Town Manager places ordinance on agenda for Council approval setting the District boundaries.
- Election
 - If census results are finalized by October of 2031, then intent to have candidates for Wards and Districts in 2032 election
 - If census results are after October of 2031, next realistic election is likely 2034
- Candidates – Do we want to follow CRS section 31-10-302(2)(c):
 - *Each petition must be signed by registered electors in the following numbers:*
 - *(c) For a candidate in a town, at least ten registered electors residing within the town; and*
 - *(d) For a candidate from a ward within a town, at least ten registered electors residing in the candidate's ward.*
- Attempt to preserve subdivision boundaries and follow County lines
- After the first election, stagger elections so that:

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- Not both Wards in a District at the same time
- Not both Districts at the same time

Staff welcomes the feedback from Town Council to establish and prepare an ordinance that would memorialize a fair, equitable, and preferred process.

Reviewed and Approved for Presentation,



Town Manager

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