

Section 301. - Composition; eligibility; districts; election and terms of office.

- (a) *Composition.* There shall be a city council of five (5) members elected by the qualified voters of the city. The council positions are as follows: Mayor-councilmember; councilmember, District 10; councilmember, District 12; councilmember, District 13; and councilmember, District 14.
- (b) *Eligibility.* Only qualified voters who have resided in the city for a minimum of one (1) year prior to qualifying as a candidate for election to a seat on the city council, and are eighteen (18) years of age or older, shall be eligible to hold office, and all council members, except the mayor, shall have resided in the district which they represent at least one (1) year prior to the time they qualify for office.
- (c) *Districts.* The several districts of the city are defined as follows:
- (1) District 10 shall consist of and embrace all of the territory or area of the City lying and being North of each SE Putnam Street, SE Knox Street and SW Knox Street and lying and being East of Main Boulevard beginning at the intersection of SW Main Boulevard with SW Knox Street and extending North to the City limits. Main Boulevard, as located on the effective date of this ordinance, is also designated as U.S. Highway 41.
  - (2) District 12 shall consist of and embrace all of the territory or area of the City lying and being North of both West Duval Street and West U.S. Highway 90 starting at the intersection of West Duval Street with Main Boulevard and lying West of NW Main Boulevard. West Duval Street, as located on the effective date of this ordinance, is also designated as West Highway 90.
  - (3) District 13 shall consist of and embrace all of the territory or area of the City lying and being in the following tracts:  
Tract One of District 13 shall consist of and embrace all of the territory or area of the City lying and being West of SW Sisters Welcome Road and lying South of U.S. Highway 90, LESS AND EXCEPT all of the area of the City in Quail Heights, a subdivision as per plat recorded in Plat Book 3 Page 104, public records of Columbia County, Florida.  
  
Tract Two of District 13 shall consist of and embrace all of the territory or area of the City lying and being North of each SW St. Margaret Drive, and Margaret Road extending to the intersection of SW Sisters Welcome Road and the South line of the NE ¼ of Section 1, Township 4 South, Range 16 East (the "SW Corner of Tract s") and lying East of that portion of SW Sisters Welcome Road from the Southwest Corner of Tract 2 to U.S. Highway 90 and lying South of both SW Baya Drive and West U.S. Highway 90 and lying West of SW Main Boulevard.
  - (4) District 14 shall consist of and embrace all of the territory or area of the City lying and being in the following tracts:  
Tract One of District 14 shall consist of and embrace all of the territory or area of the City lying and being East of SW Main Boulevard starting at the intersection of SW Main Boulevard with SW Knox Street and lying South of SE Putnam Street, SE Knox Street and SW Knox Street.  
  
Tract Two of District 14 shall consist of and embrace all of the territory or area of the City lying and being South of West Duval Street to its intersection with SW Baya Drive and lying North of SW Baya Drive to its intersection with SW Main Boulevard and lying West of SW Main Boulevard to its intersection with West Duval Street and SW Main Boulevard.  
  
Tract Three of District 14 shall consist of and embrace all of the territory or area of the City lying and being South of each SW St. Margaret Drive and Margaret Road from its intersection with SW Main Boulevard and extending West along each SW St. Margaret Drive and Margaret Road as extended along the South line of the NE ¼ of Section 1, Township 4 South, Range 16 East, and lying East of SW Sisters Welcome Road, and lying West of SW Main Boulevard.  
  
Tract Four of District 14 shall consist of and embrace all of the territory or area of the City located and being in Quail Heights, a subdivision as per plat recorded in Plat Book 3, page 104, public records of Columbia County, Florida.

A map identifying Districts 10, 12, 13, and 14 is attached to this ordinance as Exhibit "A" for illustrative purposes only and is on file in the Office of the City Clerk.

(d) *Election and terms.*

- (1) The regular election of the city councilmembers shall be held on the same day established by the State of Florida for the first state primary election.
  - (2) The mayor-councilmember and the councilmembers from Districts twelve (12) and thirteen (13) shall be elected in 1978 for a two-year term. In 1980 and every four (4) years thereafter, the mayor-councilmember and councilmembers from Districts twelve (12) and thirteen (13) shall be elected for four-year terms. The councilmembers from Districts ten (10) and fourteen (14) shall be elected in 1978 and every four (4) years thereafter for four-year terms.
  - (3) The mayor-councilmember shall be elected at large by all the electors of the city. The councilmembers from Districts ten (10), twelve (12), thirteen (13) and fourteen (14) shall be elected by the electors residing within their respective districts.
- (e) *Revisions of districts.* In October 2005, and at least every five (5) years thereafter, the council shall review the boundaries of the four (4) separate districts of the city as established by Section 30 (c), for the purpose of determining the number of registered voters in each of the separate districts. Following each such review, the council may, in its discretion, by ordinance, redefine the boundaries of each of the separate districts to insure that each has approximately the same number of registered voters.

(Ord. No. A-389, § 1(B), 5-15-78; Ord. No. A-390, § 1, 5-15-78; Ord. No. A-496, § 1, 8-16-82; Ord. No. 92-716, § 1, 7-6-92; Ord. No. 2002-957, § 1(a), 7-15-02; Ord. No. 2010-2003, § 1, 6-21-10; Res. No. 2010-116, § 1, 11-3-10; Ord. No. 2013-2034, § 1, 5-20-13)

Section 304. - Vacancies, forfeiture of office; filling of vacancies.

- (a) *Vacancies.* The office of a councilmember shall become vacant upon his death, resignation, removal from office in any manner authorized by law or forfeiture of his office, such forfeiture to be declared only by the remaining members of the council.
- (b) *Forfeiture of office.* The council shall declare a council seat forfeited if the council by majority vote finds that a council member:
- (1) Lacks at any time during his or her term of office any qualification for the office prescribed by this Charter, or by law;
  - (2) Violates any express prohibition of this Charter;
  - (3) Is absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the council without being excused by the council;
  - (4) Is guilty of committing a felony;
  - (5) Is guilty of engaging in conduct which violates acceptable standards of moral behavior where such conduct involves moral turpitude or would constitute a crime under the laws of Florida, or if such conduct was engaged in by a judge of any of the state courts would cause such judge to be removed from office.
- (c) *Filling of vacancies.* A vacancy in the office of mayor-councilmember should be filled as follows:
- (1) If more than eight (8) months remain in the term of office, the council shall schedule a special election to be held not sooner than sixty (60) days nor more than ninety (90) days following the occurrence of the vacancy.
  - (2) If less than eight (8) months remain in the term of office, the council shall, within sixty (60) days from the date the vacancy occurred, by a majority vote of the remaining members, choose a successor to serve said unexpired term of the vacated council seat. If the vacated seat is that of the vice-mayor, upon appointment or election of the new councilmember, whichever first occurs, the council shall elect one of their members to hold the position so vacated. Under no circumstances shall the service of the vice-mayor in the capacity of

mayor during an interim vacancy in the office of mayor be deemed to create a vacancy in the council seat occupied by said vice-mayor. A vacancy in the office of councilmembers other than mayor shall be filled as follows:

- (1) If more than two (2) years and sixty (60) days remain in the term of office, the council shall forthwith call a special election to be held at the next regular city election where said seat shall be filled for the remaining term.
- (2) If less than two (2) years and sixty (60) days remain in the term of office, the council shall within sixty (60) days from the date the vacancy occurred, by a majority vote of the remaining members, choose a successor to serve said unexpired term of the vacated council seat.

If the vacated seat is that of the vice-mayor, upon appointment or election of the new councilmember, whichever first occurs, the council shall elect one of their members to hold the position so vacated.

- (d) *Extraordinary vacancies.* In the event that all members of the council are removed by death, disability, law or forfeiture of office, the governor shall appoint an interim council that shall call a special election to be held not sooner than sixty (60) days nor more than ninety (90) days following the appointment of the interim council. Said interim council may, by emergency ordinance, establish procedures for said election, where in their opinion, the same are necessary to effectuate the intention of this Charter.

(Ord. No. A-444, § 1, 2-18-80; Ord. No. A-496, § 1, 8-16-82; Ord. No. 2002-957, § 1(b), 7-15-2002)

Section 508. - Qualifications.

In addition to those qualifications listed in Article III, Section 301(b), any person seeking to qualify as a candidate for election to a seat on the city council shall qualify for his or her respective seat by filing a written notice of his or her candidacy with the city clerk at any time after noon on the first day of qualifying for nomination or election to the respective council seat which he or she seeks. Municipal election qualifications shall run for the same period as now or hereafter provided for in The Florida Election Code (F.S. § 99.061 et seq.). Except as otherwise provided for herein, each candidate shall, at the time of filing notice of his or her candidacy, pay to the city clerk a qualifying fee equal to six percent of the annual salary of the council seat sought. Alternatively, in lieu of paying any qualifying fee, a person seeking to qualify as a candidate for nomination or election for any of the designated seats of the city council to be filled, including the office of mayor-councilmember, may qualify to have his or her name placed on the ballot by means of a petitioning process which would require a candidate for election to the respective council seat in the district that he or she seeks to obtain signatures on a petition of at least five percent of the total number of registered voters residing in such district, or with respect to a candidate for election to the office of mayor-councilmember, to obtain the signatures on a petition of at least five percent of the total number of registered voters in the city, as shown by the records of the supervisor of elections of Columbia County for the last preceding city election. The requirements and procedures of the petitioning process shall be established by ordinance enacted by the city council.

(Ord. No. A-389, § 1(D), 5-15-78; Ord. No. 92-716, § 1, 7-6-92; Ord. No. 2002-957, § 1(e), 7-15-02; Ord. No. 2019-2119, § 2, 6-17-19)