

**Article II, Section 2, 5, 6, and 14 – Mayor and Councilmember’s Term Expiration.**

**Background:**

Prior to 2003, the terms of the Mayor and Councilmembers expired “at the time fixed for the last regular meeting of the Council in April”. In 2003, voters approved the current language that sets the expiration of mayoral and councilmember terms on the first Tuesday of July.

A chart comparing Norman’s current term expiration date with other cities’ term expiration date was provided to the CRC at its August 12, 2019 meeting. The Committee discussed the potential for a lengthy period of time between election and officially seating the newly elected member and expressed a desire to reduce this time. The Committee liked the approach used in Stillwater, where seating newly elected officials is tied to the certification of the election results.

During the September meeting, the CRC reviewed proposed language and expressed concerns about the term of office not being exactly two years as set forth in the existing Charter language. Option 1 below has been modified to reflect a two-year cycle for Councilmember elections and a three-year cycle for Mayoral elections.

During the October meeting, Member Bates requested that this issue be revisited in order for Staff to prepare language for three year terms for all elected officials, with odd-number ward elections continuing to occur together in the same year, even-numbered ward elections occurring the next year together, and the Mayoral election occurring every third year as a standalone election. To achieve this without affecting current terms, the language is drafted to begin in 2023 as shown on the chart below.

	Current Term	New Term
Odd Wards	July 2, 2019 – July 7, 2021  July 7, 2021 – 2023 (Tuesday following election results)	2023 – 2026 (Tuesday following election results)
Even Wards	July 3, 2018 - July 7, 2020  July 7, 2020 – July 5, 2022  July 5, 2022 – 2024 (Tuesday following election results)	2024 – 2027 (Tuesday following election results)
Mayor	July 2, 2019 – July 5, 2022	July 5, 2022 – 2025 (Tuesday following election results)

On November 4, 2019, the CRC voted 6-5 to move forward with amendments to Section 2 that would implement three year terms for all members of Council. On June 14, 2021, the CRC examined ancillary amendments also needed to implement three year terms for all members of Council and adopted changes to Sections 5, 6 and 14 unanimously.

## **Language adopted by the CRC:**

### **Section 2. - Term of office.**

The term of Councilmembers shall be for a period of two years. Beginning with the 2023 elections, elections for Councilmembers shall occur every three years, with the odd-numbered ward elections occurring in 2023 and every three years thereafter, the even-numbered ward elections occurring in 2024 and every three years thereafter. The terms of Councilmembers chosen to represent Council wards two (2), four (4), six (6), and eight (8) shall ~~expire~~begin on the first Tuesday of July of the next even numbered year after their election. Beginning in 2024 and every third year thereafter, the terms of Councilmembers chosen to represent such wards shall begin at six-thirty in the evening (6:30pm) on the first Tuesday following certification of the election results by the election board secretary.

The term of Councilmembers chosen to represent Council wards one (1), three (3), five (5), and seven (7) shall ~~expire~~begin on the first Tuesday of July of the next odd numbered year after their election. Beginning in 2023 and every third year thereafter, the terms of Councilmembers chosen to represent such wards shall begin at six-thirty in the evening (6:30pm) on the first Tuesday following certification of the election results by the election board secretary.

Each elected officer shall continue to hold and to perform the duties of his office until his successor is elected and qualified, unless he is removed or forfeits his office under other provisions of this Charter.

~~The term of office of the Mayor elected at regular elections, Elections for Mayor shall be occur every three (3) years. The term of the Mayor shall ~~expire~~begin on the first Tuesday of July and each three (3) years thereafter. Beginning with the 2025 election, and every third year thereafter, the term of the Mayor shall begin at six-thirty in the evening (6:30pm) on the first Tuesday following certification of the election results by the election board secretary.~~

### **Section 5. – Municipal Elections.**

By resolution duly adopted each year, the City Council shall designate a date in the following year, which is approved under then-current state law, for the holding of Norman's municipal election, at which time there will be election contests conducted by the Cleveland County Election Board for each of the following positions for which two (2) or more qualified (as described above) registered voters have filed for office: wards two (2), four (4), six (6), and eight (8) in even-numbered years; wards one (1), three (3), five (5), and seven (7) in odd-numbered years; and Mayor in 2007 and each third year thereafter. Beginning in 2023, and every third year thereafter, elections for the following wards should be held, provided two (2) or more qualified (as described above) registered voters have filed for office: wards one (1), three (3), five (5), and seven (7). Beginning in 2024, and every third year thereafter, elections for the following wards should be held, provided two (2) or more qualified (as described above) registered voters have filed for office: wards two (2), four (4), six (6), and eight (8). Beginning in 2025, and every third year thereafter, elections for Mayor shall be held, provided two (2) or more qualified (as

described above) registered voters have filed for office. If allowed by then-current state law, the date for municipal elections shall be in February. In each such municipal election, a person receiving a majority of votes cast shall be deemed to be the winner. If no person receives a majority of votes in the municipal election, the two candidates receiving the most votes shall proceed in the municipal runoff election, described below. If two or more persons tie for second place in the municipal election, and the person receiving the most votes did not receive a majority of votes cast, then the second-place nominee shall be determined from among those tying, fairly by lot, by the Cleveland County Election Board. If three or more persons tie for first place in the municipal election, then the two municipal runoff election nominees shall be determined from among those tying, fairly by lot, by the Cleveland County Election Board.

### **Section 6. – Municipal Runoff Elections.**

By resolution duly adopted each year, the City Council shall designate a date in the following year that is subsequent to the date chosen for Norman's municipal election described in Section 5 herein, which is approved under then-current state law, for the holding of Norman's municipal runoff election, at which time there will be runoff election contests, if necessary, conducted by the Cleveland County Election Board for each of the following positions for which two (2) or more qualified (as described above) registered voters have filed for office: wards two (2), four (4), six (6), and eight (8) in even-numbered years; wards one (1), three (3), five (5), and seven (7) in odd-numbered years; and Mayor in 2007 and each third year thereafter. Beginning in 2023, and every third year thereafter, elections for the following wards should be held: wards one (1), three (3), five (5), and seven (7). Beginning in 2024, and every third year thereafter, elections for the following wards should be held: wards two (2), four (4), six (6), and eight (8). Beginning in 2025, and every third year thereafter, elections for Mayor shall be held. If allowed by then-current state law, the date for municipal runoff elections shall be in April.

### **Section 14. – Form of ballot.**

~~In odd-numbered years~~ in which the terms of the odd numbered wards expire, the names of the candidates for City Council for each Council ward numbered one (1), three (3), five (5) and seven (7) shall appear upon the ballot in the appropriate ward of the City and placed under the words: "For Councilmember in Ward No. \_\_\_\_\_", followed by the instruction in each case: "Vote for One".

~~In even-numbered years~~ in which the terms of the even numbered wards expire, the names of the candidates for City Council for each Council ward numbered two (2), four (4), six (6) and eight (8) shall appear upon the ballot in the appropriate ward of the City and placed under the words: "For Councilmember in Ward No. \_\_\_\_\_", followed by the instruction in each case: "Vote for One".

In the years in which the Mayor's term expires, the names of candidates for Mayor shall be placed upon the ballot under the words: "For Mayor", followed by the instruction: "Vote for One".