



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 01/13/2026

REQUESTER: City Council

PRESENTER: Kathryn Walker, Assistant City Attorney

ITEM TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, REJECTION, AMENDMENT AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF ORDINANCE O-2526-34 ON FIRST READING BY TITLE: AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA AMENDING ARTICLE II, SECTION 2 OF THE CITY CHARTER TO MOVE THE BEGINNING DATE OF COUNCILMEMBER AND MAYORAL TERMS TO THE FIRST TUESDAY FOLLOWING SCHEDULED RUN-OFF ELECTIONS BEGINNING IN 2028 FOR EVEN-NUMBERED WARDS, 2029 FOR ODD-NUMBERED WARDS, AND 2031 FOR MAYORAL TERMS; ARTICLE V, SECTION 2 OF THE CITY CHARTER TO ALLOW FOR ALTERNATIVE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS BEYOND CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT TO QUALIFY FOR THE POSITION OF CITY AUDITOR; ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE CONTINGENT UPON APPROVAL BY THE VOTERS AND AS PROVIDED BY LAW; AND PROVIDING FOR THE SEVERABILITY THEREOF.

BACKGROUND:

During the Council Retreat this past summer, Council discussed possible upcoming election topics. One of the topics discussed included some changes to the Charter. These included changing the beginning date for Councilmember and Mayoral terms to coincide more closely with the election date, and the addition of possible certifications to qualify for the position of City Auditor beyond certified public accountant.

Council last discussed these amendments on January 6, 2026 and provided direction to move forward with preparing the amendments and related ballot language for the April 7, 2026 election.

DISCUSSION:

Ordinance O-2526-34 proposes amendments to two sections of the Charter. Changing the beginning date of Councilmember terms to coincide more closely with the election requires an amendment to Article II, Section 2 of the Charter. Currently, Councilmember and Mayoral terms begin at 6:30pm on the first Tuesday of July. When a Councilmember or Mayor is elected in the February election, this results in an extended time between the election and the beginning of the term. For uniformity, the proposed amendment would move the beginning date of terms to

6:30pm on the first Tuesday following the run-off election so all Councilmembers will have the same length of terms regardless of whether there was a run-off election. Additionally, the change is implemented over time to ensure current terms, and terms for which an election is already scheduled, are not impacted by this change.

The second proposed change to the Charter is an amendment to Article V, Section 2 related to the appointment of a City Auditor. The City Auditor position was first created by Charter amendment in 2022 and required that the person holding the position be a certified public accountant. After discussion, Council desired to allow for other alternative certifications in order to qualify for the position of City Auditor. The amendment would allow a candidate for City Auditor to qualify for the position if he or she holds an alternative professional certification, including Certified Internal Auditor, Certified Fraud Examiner, or equivalent certification.

In order to meet election deadlines for the April election, Ordinance O-2526-34 amending the City Charter and Ordinance O-2526-35 calling an election for such purpose are currently slated for Council consideration on First Reading on January 13, 2026 and Second and Final Reading on January 27, 2026.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff forwards Ordinances O-2526-34 and O-2526-35 for Council consideration on Second and Final Reading.