CITY OF EVERETT

Charter Review Committee

Thursday, February 26, 2026, 4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

2930 Wetmore Avenue, 10th Floor Conference Room

Public Zoom Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88501043827

AGENDA:

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Welcome from Council President Schwab (Tentative)
4. What Charter Change Can and Cannot Do
    a. Briefing from Jennifer Gregerson
5. Group Norms
    a. Discussion led by Chair Sniffen
6. Community Outreach
    a. Discussion led by Chair Sniffen and Vice Chair Vasquez
7. Public Hearing Locations
    a. Discussion led by Vice Chair Vasquez
8. Article 11.2.d: Initiative Thresholds Issue
    a. Briefing from City Staff
9. Article 2.2: Eligibility for Office
    a. Briefing from City Staff
10. Comments and Future Topics Discussion

Charter Review Committee Web Page: https://www.everettwa.gov/630/Charter-Review-Committee
Staff Contact: Jennifer Gregerson / jgregerson@everettwa.gov

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EVERETT | **Charter Review Committee Agenda Item Cover Sheet**

Project title: What Charter Change Can and Can't Do

Agenda dates:

Briefing 02/26/26
Action

Attachments:
NA

Background:

Committee leadership requested background information be provided on what a Charter Review process can and cannot do. From the National Civic League:

Charter change CAN:

- alter a form of government so the new form is better aligned with the preferences of the public
- restrict or increase options available to governmental leaders
- alter electoral representation
- clarify ambiguity or confusion caused by existing charter language
- redistribute powers among elected officials, appointed officials, and governing bodies as well as between city officials and the public
- set the stage for governmental leaders to achieve desired changes
- convert elected governmental positions to appointed positions or vice versa

Charter change CAN'T...

- automatically increase the quality of governmental products and services
- eliminate political in-fighting and make elected officials achieve consensus (although governmental form can affect the likelihood of conflict)
- expand the scope of municipal powers
- jumpstart the local economy
- decrease local crime
- improve the school system
- stop a controversial public project
- change or eliminate state-mandated activities

Recommendation (action requested of Committee):

Receiving briefing, discuss, ask questions.

EVERETT | Charter Review Committee Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Project title: Briefing on Article 11.2.d Initiative Thresholds

Agenda dates:

Briefing 02/26/26
Action

Attachments:
NA

Issue summary:

Per the Charter Article 11.2.d, initiatives can qualify for the ballot if they receive at least five percent of "*the total number of votes cast at last preceding general municipal election.*" Other cities have higher thresholds and different clarity on what the last general municipal election means.

The Committee should discuss whether a different threshold makes sense, what that threshold might be, and if the language about the last general municipal election should be clarified.

Background:

In 2024, three initiatives were submitted by petitioners to the City. All three fit the category of Article 11.2.d, having received less than 15 percent of the total number of votes cast in the preceding general election, but more than the 5 percent minimum to qualify to be placed on the ballot. The five percent minimum had been determined by the Clerk, per the Charter, to be 928, since the prior general election had 18,568 votes in Everett.

One received 935 valid signatures; one had 1307 valid signatures and the third had 934 signatures; all three were placed on the November ballot.

Everett's minimum threshold of 5% of votes cast is lower than most other cities and counties. From the Municipal Research Center, these cities operate under charters and use these thresholds:

City	Threshold Type	Percent Required	Reference
Everett	votes cast at the last general city election	5%	Everett Charter
Spokane	votes cast at the last general city election	5%	Spokane Charter
Bellingham	votes cast for the office of Mayor at the last city general election	10%	Bellingham Charter
Seattle	votes cast for the office of Mayor at the last city election	10%	Seattle Charter
Tacoma	votes cast in the last election for the office of Mayor	10%	Tacoma Charter
Vancouver	votes cast at the last city general election	15%	Vancouver Charter
Richland	total vote cast at the last regular general election	20%	Richland Charter
Yakima	votes cast at the last general city election	20%	Yakima Charter
Aberdeen	Votes cast at last general city election	25%	Aberdeen Charter
Bremerton	votes cast for the office of Mayor at the last city general election	25%	Charter refers to] RCW 35.17.260

Recommendation (action requested of Committee):

Approve a motion to request development of a policy proposal to update Charter Article 11.2.d, initiative thresholds.

EVERETT | **Charter Review Committee Agenda Item Cover Sheet**

Project title: Briefing on Article 2.2 Eligibility to Hold Elective Office

Agenda dates:

Briefing 02/26/26
Action

Attachments:
NA

Project summary background:

Article 2.2 reads:

> No person shall be eligible to hold elective office unless he or she shall have been a registered voter and resident of the City for a period of at least one (1) year next preceding his or her election, and, for Council positions elected from Council districts, a resident of an applicable Council district, for a period of at least six (6) months prior to the primary election date preceding his or her election.

In 2025, a question regarding this language was raised during the election for Council District 4. Staff can develop a recommendation on how this language should be changed to provide clarity moving forward.

Recommendation (action requested of Committee):

Approve a motion to request development of a policy proposal on Charter Article 2.2 Eligibility to Hold Elective Office.