

Important Amendments to the Shawnee City Charter

Proposition 1: Ward-Specific Voting for Commissioners

Current Charter language calls for a Commissioner to be nominated from the Ward in which he/she resides, and the Commissioner is then elected by vote of the City at-large. Citizens and elected officials proposed this amendment to determine if the citizens of Shawnee would prefer to have only Ward residents elect the Commissioner for that Ward.

If approved, registered voters residing in the individual Ward will have the opportunity to vote for the Commissioner they wish to represent their specific Ward.

Proposition 2: Streamlining the Bidding Process

Current Charter language requires contractors and vendors to comply with local procedures not necessarily required by the State of Oklahoma. By aligning the City procedures with State law, the contractors' and vendors' familiarity with the common process will save the City time and money.

If approved, this amendment will align the City's competitive bidding requirements with those required by the State of Oklahoma, providing procedural clarity.

Proposition 3: Clarifying Start Date for Newly-elected Mayor and Commissioners

Current Charter language requires the swearing-in of newly-elected Mayors and Commissioners on a specific date that does not always coincide with the dates of regularly scheduled City Commission meetings.

If approved, this amendment will adjust the term of office for a newly-elected official to start on the first regularly scheduled City Commission meeting following the election certification.

Proposition 4: Updating Requirements for City Employees

Current Charter language conflicts with State and Federal employment regulations and laws.

If approved, this amendment will expand employment prospects and align the City's employment requirements with State and Federal laws.

Proposition 5: Aligning Conflict-of-Interest Policies

Current Charter language differs from the requirements established by State law.

If approved, this amendment will align the City's requirements for Commissioners, City officers, and employees with those established by State law.

Proposition 6: Updating the Recreational Use Policy for Shawnee Twin Lakes

Current Charter language related to swimming, water skiing, surfboard riding, and other water recreation sports conflicts with Shawnee Twin Lakes related City codes, most recently updated in March 2022 following the conclusion of an in-depth review by the Lake Advisory Committee.

If approved, this amendment will align the Charter with adopted City codes regulating recreational activities on the Shawnee Twin Lakes.

Proposition 7: Updating the Policy for Cemetery Perpetual Care

Current Charter language regarding the management of revenues generated at the municipal cemetery for Perpetual Care Funds differs from requirements established by State law.

If approved, this amendment will align the Charter with State law regarding the management of Perpetual Care Funds for the Fairview Cemetery.

YOUR VOTE, YOUR CHOICE ON JUNE 13, 2023



Frequently Asked Questions



Why do we have to vote on these Charter updates?

The City of Shawnee adopted its first Charter in 1908 to establish the basic structure of the City's organization, powers, functions, and essential procedures. Over time as the City changes, the language of the Charter may no longer reflect the roles, responsibilities, or requirements of City government or the concerns of citizens. According to Oklahoma State law, proposed Charter amendments or additions must be approved by a vote of the citizens governed by the Charter.

Why are these Charter amendments proposed?

Proposition 1, the consideration of "Voting by Ward" and its associated ward-specific representation, has been requested both from citizens and Commissioners to be brought to a vote of the people.

Proposition 3 would change the timing of the "Swearing-In of Mayors and Commissioners" to coincide with the regularly scheduled meetings of the City Commission.

Proposition 6 would eliminate "Twin Lakes Regulations," which have become redundant with the adoption of updated City codes.

Propositions 2, 4, 5, and 7, related to "Competitive Bidding," "Qualifications for City Employees," "Conflict-of-Interest Policies," and "Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund," have been identified by City staff as not being in alignment with applicable State or Federal laws and municipal best practices.

Where can we find additional information on the ballot and the Charter?

The ballot language and additional information on the proposed Charter amendments can be found on the City's [website](#), by scanning the QR Code on the right, or calling **405-878-1601**.



Will these Charter amendments cost taxpayers money?

Other than the cost of the Charter election itself, no additional costs will be incurred. Several of the proposed amendments are intended to streamline procedures, reducing costs to citizens and the City by increasing efficiencies.

Do we have to vote for or against all the propositions or can we vote on each separately?

Each amendment will be listed separately on the ballot. Citizens can vote for or against any proposition.

If approved, when would the Charter amendments go into effect?

The Charter amendments that are approved by the majority of voters will be submitted to the Governor for review. Upon gubernatorial approval, the new language will become the governing law of the City of Shawnee and replace existing Charter language.

What happens if voters do not approve these Charter amendments?

Except for ward-specific voting and swearing-in of newly-elected officials, which are local matters, the proposed changes to the Charter are intended to reduce confusion and eliminate potential conflicts between the City of Shawnee and State or Federal laws. If one or more of the propositions do not pass, it is possible that future litigation may be needed to resolve differences.

When and where do we vote?

On June 13, 2023, polls will be open from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. For details on where you can cast your vote, please call **405-273-8376** or visit www.pottawatomiecountyoak.gov/government/county-election-board.

How can we register for the Charter election?

Voting-age citizens of Shawnee can register to vote. If you are not sure about your voter registration status, please visit the Oklahoma State Election Board's [Online Voter Tool](#).



VOTE ON JUNE 13, 2023