

LOCAL AGENDA FOR ACTION

CITY CHARTER

Editor's Note: City Charter is under review by Charter Review Commission in 2022-2023

The League of Women Voters supports a charter for the City of Tiffin which provides effective government responsive to the needs of the people.

Position:

The League supports local self-government for the City of Tiffin. The League supports continuation of a charter form of government for Tiffin in order that the form of government, system of representation, and election system of the city may be locally determined.

General Criteria:

The League believes the following provisions should be included in a charter:

- a. Form of government;
- b. Legislative branch, including powers, terms of office, and manner of election. There should be provisions for citizen input in the legislative process;
- c. Executive branch, including manner of selection, qualifications, powers and duties, and lines of authority;
- d. Principal boards and commissions, including composition, term of office, powers and duties, and relationship to legislative and executive branches. Provisions should be established for the creation and dissolution of other boards and commissions;
- e. Election procedures, when held, whether partisan/nonpartisan;
- f. Amendments;
- g. Initiative, referendum, and recall;
- h. Transition procedures;
- i. Finance and taxation.

The League supports the following provisions of the charter which would provide for:

- a. Municipal administrative management that incorporates increased technical training, professionalism, and administrative expertise;
- b. Accountability and responsiveness to the electorate (voters) in both the legislative and executive branches, i.e., a system of checks and balances;
- c. The responsibility of Council as the policy-making body;
- d. Recognition of the subordinate position of staff department heads to the head administrator. All department heads should be appointed by and responsible to the head administrator;
- e. The Director of Finance should be appointed by the Mayor. Qualifications for the office should include a degree in business administration and a minimum of five years business experience;
- f. The Mayor, Director of Law, and Treasurer should be elected by the voters.

Background on Position:

With the strong possibility that Tiffin voters would agree to the formation of a Charter Commission to study and present a charter to the electorate in 1977, this study was recommended at the Annual Meeting 1976.

A committee observed the progress of the City Charter Commission and also presented a general meeting and two sets of units in 1976-1977. With consensus in support of a charter, League members campaigned successfully for its adoption. In the fall of 1977, League supported three amendments to the Charter. Units were held in April 1978 on the city manager form of government.

In March 1982, a general meeting was held for an update and consensus on the method of selection of a Director of Finance.

At the Annual Meeting in 1990, the name of this position was changed from “Alternate Forms of Local Government” to “City Charter.”

In 1991, League lobbied the Charter Review Commission during the revision process for Director of Finance as an appointed office.

In 1992, League recommended to City Council that amendments proposed by the Charter Review Commission be submitted to the electorate as recommended, with no additions or deletions. The voters subsequently adopted proposed amendments as a package.

In 2000, a City Charter Commission was elected to review the Charter of the City of Tiffin. A League committee was formed and observed the progress of this Commission during the ensuing months.

In 2000, two general meetings were held for updates and in 2001, another general meeting was held at which consensus was taken to retain our position that the Director of Finance be appointed. A public meeting, together with members of the City Charter Review Commission, was also held in April 2001.

In June 2001, a statement was made to the City Council members, at a committee of the whole meeting, again in support of our position and also to urge Council to submit the amendments, recommended by the Charter Review Commission, to the voters in November. League members also made a statement at the public meeting held by City Council in August 2001.

The voters approved the amendments to the City Charter in November 2001.

The voters approved the amendments to the City Charter in November 2011.

The voters approved the amendments to the City Charter in November 2021.

A League member served on the 2020-2021 Charter Review Commission.