



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Date: October 2, 2020
To: Media Outlets
From: Donald Moore, City Secretary
Re: Recall Election General Information

The Charter of the City of Big Spring sets the City's governing body as the City Council. City Council is composed of seven elected officials: The Mayor and six Council Members, with each Council Member representing one district of the City. Each elected official serves a three-year term.

The City Council of Big Spring has called five elections for November 3, 2020.

Due to COVID-19, two City Council elections were moved to November. Under Texas law, the two sitting Council members for those districts have continued in office until their successors are qualified by being elected.

Of those two elections moved to November 3, 2020, one election is for City Council Member for District 1. The term will run through May of 2023.

The other election moved to November 3, 2020, is for City Council Member for District 3. The term will run through May of 2023.

The other three elections concern whether to recall three other Council Members.

The Charter reserves to voters the power to recall their elected officials by petition and recall election. Several provisions in the Charter affecting recalls conflict with state law. When there is a conflict, the City is obligated to follow state law, instead of the Charter. Notably, the Charter provision as to when three or more recalls are sought at the same time conflicts with state law with regard to this election.

If a majority of votes cast at a recall election be for the recall of the elected official named on the ballot, the elected official is deemed removed from office. Any removal would be effective upon the final canvass, when City Council certifies the election result.

If any removed elected official had one year or less remaining on his or her term, and that is the only vacancy on Council, City Council appoints a successor to serve the balance of the term. If any elected official has more than one year remaining on his or her term, City Council calls a special election to elect a successor to serve the balance of the term.

The three recall elections concern the following elected officials with terms remaining as stated, and what occurs if removed from office.

- Mayor, Shannon D. Thomason. Current term runs through May of 2022. If removed, a special election shall be called to fill the unexpired term.
- Council Member for District 5 and Mayor Pro Tem, Camilla Strande. Current term runs through May of 2022. If removed, a special election shall be called to fill the unexpired term.
- Council Member for District 6, Jim DePauw. Current term runs through May of 2021. If removed, City Council shall appoint a successor to fill the unexpired term, except if there is an additional vacancy on Council created at the same, in which case a special election shall be called to fill the unexpired term.

In the event that a special election is called to fill an unexpired term of a removed elected official, the special election should occur as soon as possible, and must occur between 46 days after the election is called and 120 days after the removal of the officeholder.

In the event that a recall election results in the elected official not being removed, the elected officer is not subject to recall until after three months from the date of the recall election.

The position of Mayor Pro Tempore or “Mayor Pro Tem” is created by the Charter. From among its members, City Council appoints the Mayor Pro Tem. There is no set term for the Mayor Pro Tem. The Mayor Pro Tem would preside over a City Council meeting when the Mayor is not present. By ordinance, if neither the Mayor nor Mayor Pro Tem are present, the Council Members present shall elect a Council Member to preside over the meeting.