

DRAFT

**CITY CHANNEL
ADVISORY REFERENDUM PROGRAM
Outline/Script**

Host: Eve Galantar

Participants: John Strange – Assistant City Attorney (Maribeth?)

Introduction – Eve Galantar (3-5 minutes)

A. Introduction

Welcome, I'm Eve Galantar, your host today as we discuss the four advisory referendum questions that will appear on the April 6, 2021 spring election ballot asking Madison voters to weigh in on the size and shape of Madison's Common Council.

I am joined today by Brook Solveidt from the League of Women Voters, and Assistant City Attorney John Strange, who served as city staff to the eleven-member Task Force on the Structure of City Government that spent nearly two years examining the structure of Madison's government.

Together, we will introduce you to the questions that will appear on the ballot and explain how you can learn more about these issues before heading to the polls on April 6.

The questions will ask voters about alderperson pay, the size of the Common Council, the length of alderperson terms, and whether alderpersons should be subject to term limits.

- Q1. John, you were staff to the Task Force on Government Structure and are now helping the Common Council pose these questions to the voters. Why are they asking these questions?
- Q2. And why now? Why did the City create the Task Force and, now, decide to ask voters these questions?
- Q3. I notice this is an advisory referendum. What is an advisory referendum?
- Q4. So, will the results of this referendum make any immediate change?

OK. Let's look at the first question.

QUESTION 1 (3-5 minutes)

The first question that will appear on the ballot relates to council member pay and status.

[Read the question]

[GRAPHIC]

1. Madison currently has a part-time Common Council with members who are paid approximately thirteen-thousand seven hundred dollars (\$13,700) per year. Beginning with the 2023 Spring Election, SHOULD the City of Madison transition to a full-time Common Council with each Common Council member earning between fifty percent (50%) to eighty percent (80%) of the Adjusted Median Income for Dane County for a single parent with two children (approximately \$45,000 to \$71,000 per year)?

Yes ___
No ___

- Q1. What does part-time mean?
- Q2. What would full-time mean?
- Q3. Has Madison's council always been part-time?
- Q4. What is the role of a council member in Madison?
- Q5. Who defines that role?
- Q6. What would be required for the City to make this change?

QUESTION 2 (3-5 minutes)

The second question asks about the size of the Common Council.

[Read the question]

[GRAPHIC]

2. Madison currently has a part-time Common Council comprised of twenty (20) alderpersons, one from each alderperson district. Beginning with the 2023 Spring Election, SHOULD the size of the City of Madison Common Council:

Be reduced ___
Be increased ___
Remain the same ____

- Q1. Has the Council always had 20 members?
- Q2. Do all of Madison's council members represent districts, or do any serve at-large?
- Q3. The answer to this question may be obvious, but if the number of council members changes, what happens to the size of the districts? When would that happen? How would that happen?
- Q4. I see this particular question is multiple choice, whereas the other questions are yes/no, why is that? Are multiple choice questions common in voter referendums?
- Q5. What would be required for the City to make this change?

QUESTION 3 (3-5 minutes)

The Third question relates to the length of alderperson terms.

[read the question]

[GRAPHIC]

3. Madison alderpersons are currently elected to two (2) year terms. The Madison Mayor is currently elected to four (4) year terms. Beginning with the 2023 Spring Election, SHOULD City of Madison alderpersons be elected to four (4) year terms?

Yes ___
No ___

- Q1. I see that the Mayor serves a 4-year term and Council members serve 2-year terms. Has it always been that way?
- Q2. Are all Council members elected at the same time, or are their elections staggered?
- Q3. If Council members served 4-year terms, would that change?
- Q4. What would be required for the City to make this change?

QUESTION 4 (3-5 minutes)

The final question on the ballot deals with council member term limits.

[read question]

[GRAPHIC]

4. Madison alderpersons are currently not subject to term limits. Beginning with the 2023 Spring Election, if the City transitions to a full-time Common Council SHOULD the City of Madison alderpersons be subject to term limits of twelve (12) consecutive years?

Yes ___
No ___

- Q1. In the part-time alderperson structure, there are no term limits. This question asks whether there should be term limits if the city transitions to a full-time Council. Why is the Council asking voters this question?
- Q2. The question proposes term limits of 12-consecutive years instead of a certain number of "terms". Why?
- Q3. What would be required for the City to make this change.

CONCLUDING QUESTIONS (2-3 minutes)

- Q1. So, once the election is over and the Common Council has the results, what will it do with them?

- Q2. When the Task Force reviewed these questions and made recommendations, did they discuss the pros and cons of each possible outcome?
- Q3. Do voters have access to those recommendations and discussions?
- Q4. How can voters learn more about these issues?

SUMMARY BY HOST (1 minute)

To register to vote in the April 6, 2021 election and to learn more about the City's efforts to explore these and other important questions related to the structure of Madison's government, please find the following resources:

- ✓ **Register to Vote** by visiting the [Clerk's Office Webpage](#) or contacting the City Clerk's Office, 210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, Room 103, Madison, Wisconsin 53703; (608) 266-4601.

- ✓ Read the Common Council resolutions authorizing the advisory referendum and the Notice of Advisory Referendum by visiting [The Task Force Webpage](#) or contacting the City Clerk's Office at the address above.

- ✓ Review the Task Force on the Structure of City Government Website and Final Report with Recommendations to the Common Council: [FINAL REPORT](#). Please allow a moment to download.