



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Master

File Number: 88483

File ID: 88483

File Type: Ordinance

Status: Report of Officer

Version: 2

Reference:

Controlling Body: COMMON
COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE

File Created Date : 05/27/2025

File Name: Signature Requirement for Alder Vacancies

Final Action:

Title: SUBSTITUTE: Amending Section 2.03 of the Madison General Ordinances related to alder vacancies, to add detail to the application process and information to be submitted by applicants to fill vacancies on the Common Council.

Notes: 6966VacancySignatures

Sponsors: MGR Govindarajan, Derek Field And Sean O'Brien

Effective Date:

Attachments: 88483 Version 1

Enactment Number:

Author: Michael Haas

Hearing Date:

Entered by: mglaeser@cityofmadison.com

Published Date:

History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
1	Attorney's Office	05/27/2025	Referred for Introduction				
	Action Text: This Ordinance was Referred for Introduction						
	Notes: Common Council Executive Committee (7/1/25), Common Council (7/1/25)						
1	COMMON COUNCIL	06/03/2025	Referred	COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE			
	Action Text: This Ordinance was Referred to the COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE						
1	COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	07/01/2025	RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO RE-REFER - REPORT OF OFFICER				Pass
	Action Text: A motion was made by Govindarajan, seconded by Lankella, to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO RE-REFER - REPORT OF OFFICER to the 8/5/25 Common Council Executive Committee meeting and the 8/5/25 Common Council meeting. The motion passed by voice vote/other.						
	Notes: Recommended re-referral to the Common Council Executive Committee (8/5/25) and Common Council (8/5/25)						
1	COMMON COUNCIL	07/01/2025	Re-refer	COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE			Pass

Action Text: A motion was made by Vidaver, seconded by Govindarajan, to Re-refer to the COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

1	COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	08/05/2025	RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO RE-REFER - REPORT OF OFFICER	Pass
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Action Text: A motion was made by Lankella, seconded by Guequierre, to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO RE-REFER - REPORT OF OFFICER. to the 9/16/2025 CCEC and 9/16/25 Council meeting. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

1	COMMON COUNCIL	08/05/2025	Re-refer	COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	Pass
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Action Text: A motion was made by Govindarajan, seconded by Guequierre, to Re-refer to the COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

Text of Legislative File 88483

Fiscal Note

Implementing the ordinance will require staff time to create the petition document, review petitions, and process challenges. Fiscal impacts are anticipated to be minimal and would be absorbed in the Clerk's office personnel budget. No appropriation is required.

Title

SUBSTITUTE: Amending Section 2.03 of the Madison General Ordinances related to alder vacancies, to add detail to the application process and information to be submitted by applicants to fill vacancies on the Common Council.

Body

DRAFTER'S ANALYSIS: This ordinance requires applicants to fill a Common Council vacancy to submit a petition containing the names, addresses and signatures of at least 20 electors of the district which has the vacancy. Currently, applicants must submit an application containing the information required by MGO 2.03. This ordinance would require the City Clerk to create a petition document and to review the names and signatures submitted by applicants to determine sufficiency of the signatures, process any challenges to the signatures, and determine whether applicants have qualified to proceed to review by the Common Council Executive Committee.

The SUBSTITUTE removes the proposed requirement to submit a petition containing elector signatures and adds some details related to the application process and information to be submitted by applicants for vacant alder positions. The Substitute establishes timelines for the Common Council Office to publicize the application process and for submitting application materials for review by the Council. The Substitute also removes the special provision for filling an alder vacancy that occurs between the first Tuesday of January and the Spring Election. Finally, the Substitute adds clarifying language regarding the notice responsibilities that transfer to the President and then the appointed alder as a result of an alder vacancy.

The Common Council of the City of Madison do hereby ordain as follows:

1. Section 2.03 entitled "Procedure to Fill Vacancies on the Common Council" of the Madison General Ordinances is amended as follows:

"2.03 PROCEDURE TO FILL VACANCIES ON THE COMMON COUNCIL.

(1) The Common Council Executive Committee shall routinely review and modify the procedure

~~to fill aldermanic vacancies, to be facilitated by the Common Council President shall oversee the application process to fill aldermanic vacancies.~~

(2) Applications to fill any aldermanic vacancy shall include information on:

- (a) Name,
- (b) Address,
- (c) Home telephone number,
- (d) Work telephone number,
- (e) E-mail address,
- (f) Public social media handles.
- (fg) Biographical or professional resume including education, work, neighborhood, and civic experience,
- (gh) A statement on why the applicant wishes to serve,
- (hi) A statement of what the applicant wants to accomplish,
- (ij) If the applicant plans to run for office during the next special or regular election, and,
- (ji) ~~Such other information as the Common Council President in consultation with the Common Council Executive Committee may request.~~

(3) Within ten (10) business days of an vacancy taking effect, the Common Council Office shall publicize notice of the vacancy and instructions for interested residents to file an application. The application period shall close on a date determined by the President, but shall remain open for not less than ten (10) business days, excluding any city holidays and election dates. The Common Council Executive Committee shall review the applications and, following opportunities for personal candidate interviews, shall recommend to the Common Council a candidate selected for confirmation to fill the vacancy. The Common Council Office shall post all application materials provided by the applicants in the Legislative Information website no less than five (5) business days before the Executive Committee meeting, which if held in person or hybrid shall take place in the aldermanic district the vacancy has occurred. If the Common Council Executive Committee is unable to agree on a candidate to recommend, it may recommend more than one candidate, or it may reopen the application process to seek additional applicants.

(4) The Common Council shall appoint and confirm the recommended candidate, or appoint and confirm another candidate from among the applicants.

(5) If a vacancy occurs after November 15th of the first year of an alder's term, the appointed and confirmed candidate shall serve until an alderperson is elected pursuant to sec. 17.23(1), Wis. Stats. and is qualified. If a vacancy occurs on or prior to November 15th of the first year of an alder's term, the appointed and confirmed candidate shall serve until an alderperson is elected at a special election scheduled on the same day as the Spring Election of the following year.

(6) Effect of Vacancies on Notices to the Alderperson of the District.

- (a) Many sections of the Madison General Ordinances require notice to the alderperson of the district before certain other actions may be taken. Some of these sections allow the alderperson to waive the notice. Whenever there is a vacancy on the Common Council, such notices shall be given to the President of the Common Council and the Common Council Chief of Staff. The President may exercise any rights given to the alderperson of the district regarding such notices until the vacancy is filled. Upon appointment and confirmation, such rights shall transfer to the interim alder. The Common Council Chief of Staff shall provide the interim alder with a list of any rights previously exercised by the President during the vacancy period. Failure to give notice shall not invalidate any subsequent action by the Council or other body of the City.
- (b) This subsection covers all sections of the ordinances that require notice to an

alderperson. Among the sections of the Madison General Ordinances with notices as referenced in this subsection are: 8.33(5) (edible landscaping), 9.13(1)(b) (vend near schools), 25.10(6) (nuisance party), 28.066(12) (minor alterations), 28.074(4) (appeal of UDC), 28.076(4) (appeal of UDC), 28.087(7) (minor alterations), 28.097(1) (minor alterations), 28.098(6) (minor alterations), 28.151(a) (market garden), 28.181(5) (zoning changes), 28.183(5)(b) (conditional use), 28.184(6)(b) (variance extension), 28.185(9)(b) and (11) (demolition extension), 31.112(5) (replacement advertising sign), 33.24(4)(e) (Urban Design Districts), 38.05(3)(c) and (h) (alcohol licensing), 41.15(4)(a) (Landmarks appeal) and 41.20(1) (Landmarks appeal).

- (7) ~~Alternative Procedure. If (a) there is a vacancy on the Common Council, and (b) the time for filing nomination papers for a spring election has passed, and (c) the spring election has not been held, the vacancy shall be filled by the procedure in this subsection. The Council President shall seek applications from one two (1-2) persons who have been members of the Council or the County Board, are resident(s) of the district at issue, and have not filed papers to run for the seat. The Common Council Executive Committee will review the application(s), and will make a recommendation to the Council to fill the unexpired term until the spring election. The Council may fill the seat with the recommended person, or decline to fill the seat."~~

EDITOR'S NOTE:

TITLE

SUBSTITUTE: Creating Section 2.035 Amending Section 2.03 of the Madison General Ordinances related to requiring elector signatures with application to fill vacancy alder vacancies add detail to the application process and information to be submitted by applicants to fill vacancies on the Common Council.