

TFOGS Implementation Workgroup Introductory Presentation on Possible Changes to Structure of Madison Common Council

SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

TFOGS Implementation Workgroup

1. Created by RES-20-00209 (Legistar 59671)
2. Purpose is to prepare recommendations contained in the TFOGS Final Report; not to change TFOGS recommendations.
3. Workgroup includes Alders Abbas, Foster, Furman, Kemble, and Tierney.
4. Tonight focused on two recommendations that would require a city-wide binding referendum to implement.

TFOGS

1. Created by RES-17-0714 (Legistar File 47707).
2. 11-member Task Force.
3. Charged with considering issues related to powers and duties of the **Common Council, Mayor's Office, and Boards, Commissions, and Committees**, and to examine issues of **resident representation and engagement**.
4. Major emphasis placed on examining these issues through the lens of **whether the city's current government structure adequately represents people of color and those living with lower incomes**.

Inequities in Government Structure

1. **TFOGS identified inequities in Madison's government, including in the structure of its Common Council; Board, Commission, and Committee system; and resident representation and engagement.**
2. **TFOGS noted these inequities act as impediments to full participation and representation and, therefore, that the City's structure is fundamentally unfair to residents of color and low income.**
3. **TFOGS noted Madison's current government structure works best for people with the time, resources, and knowledge to actively participate within the framework of Madison's current structure.**

Recommendations for Change

1. These core findings related to structural inequities in Madison's government **drove many of the recommendations contained in the [TFOGS Final Report](#) (Legistar File 58656).**
2. Including **reorganizing and reducing the size of the City's BCC system, implementing new and robust resident engagement strategies, and creating an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support, and...**

Recommendations for change

That the **City transition to a full-time Common Council of 10 members elected to four (4) year terms.**

TFOGS looked at this as a three (actually, many more) part puzzle.

A. Full-time?

B. Size?

C. Length of terms?

Context for Council Recommendations

- A. Size and characteristics of Current Council
- B. Size and characteristics of Councils in other Cities
- C. Input from Current and Former Council Members and Mayors.
- D. Input from Community Liaisons
- E. Input from Community Surveys, Open Houses
- F. Input from TFOGS Common Council Subcommittee

Context for Council recommendations

- A. Size of Madison's Council vs. Size of Council's in similarly sized cities. See [Table](#)
- B. Actual status of current "part-time" alders.
- C. Volunteer vs. professional Council.
- D. Other considerations as detailed in the Final Report, including the ability of a full-time Council to implement and maintain additional key structural recommendations.

Recommendation 1 = Full-Time Council

- A. Task Force **recommends City transition to a full-time Council.**
- B. Recommended **paying Council members eighty percent (80%) of the Adjusted Median Income for Dane County for a single parent with two children (approximately \$67,000 per year).**
- C. TFOGS noted that **as Madison has grown, so too has the complexity of the challenges it faces; and that adequately representing constituents facing these challenges requires a full-time Council.**

Recommendation 2 = 10-Member Council

- A. Task Force Recommended reducing size of Council from 20 to 10 members.
- B. Coincide with 2020 Census redistricting.
- C. Some viewed this as a financial necessity of moving to a full-time Council.
- D. Others thought it conflated the issues of full-time – part-time with size of the Council, perhaps at the cost of resident representation.

Recommendation 3 = Four-Year Terms

- A. The Task Force also recommended transitioning from 2-year alderperson terms to 4-year alderperson terms and, with that change, increasing the Common Council president and vice president terms to 2 years.
- B. Unanimous recommendations.
- C. May require additional ordinance tweaks or additions, such as providing for special elections if an alderperson resigns.

Recommendations NOT necessarily dependent on each other.

Taken together, TFOGS recommended moving to a full-time, 10-member Council elected to 4-year terms. However, these are not necessarily dependent on each other. The Council could:

1. Move to full-time with current 20 members.
2. Move to full-time with more or less members.
3. Transition to 4-year member terms.

Process for implementation

1. If the Council moves to full-time at 20 members, no ordinance change related to structure is needed. Other changes and action would be needed.
2. If Council reduces its size, will require a **charter ordinance** enacted by electorate in **binding referendum**.
3. If Council moves to 4-year terms, will require a **charter ordinance** by electorate in **binding referendum**.

Why a Charter Ordinance and Referendum is necessary for two of these changes.

To change the **size of the Council** or move to **4-year terms**, the City would need to amend M.G.O. Sec. 3.01, which provides:

“Organization Under Mayor Plan. The government of the City of Madison is organized and constituted under Wis. Stat. ch. 62 providing for the City Mayor and Aldermanic plan with a Common Council **composed of twenty (20) Alderpersons**, one (1) from each aldermanic district. The Mayor and alderpersons are to be elected for a term of **two (2) years**; provided, however, that beginning with the 1991 Spring Election, the Mayor shall be elected for a term of four (4) years.”

This section was reinstated as a Charter Ordinance pursuant to adoption by the electorate at the 1987 Spring Election. **Equal action required to amend this ordinance.**

Referendum Process

1. ACA Strange Memo re: Referendum Process. See [HERE](#)
2. Considerations:
 - Charter Ordinance vs. Resolution
 - Timing for Referendum
 - Interaction with redistricting in connection with 2020 Census.

Timeline For Council Decision

September 15	Introduction of Issue
October 8	Committee of the Whole Discussion
December 1ish	Introduction of Resolution or Charter Ordinance on issue of whether to send proposed changes to referendum.
January 26	Notice to Clerk
April 6	Spring Election

Questions?
