

CITY OF COLUMBIA CITY

CITY CHARTER

Effective July 1, 2014

PREAMBLE

We, the voters of Columbia City, Oregon exercise our power to the fullest extent possible under the Oregon Constitution and laws of the state, and enact this Home Rule Charter.

Chapter I

NAMES AND BOUNDARIES

Section 1. Title. This charter may be referred to as the 2014 City of Columbia City Charter.

Section 2. Name. The City of Columbia City, Oregon, continues as a municipal corporation with the name City of Columbia City (City).

Section 3. Boundaries. The City includes all territory within its boundaries as they now exist or are legally modified. The City will maintain as a public record an accurate and current description of the boundaries.

Chapter II

POWERS

Section 4. Powers. The City has all powers that the constitutions, statutes and common law of the United States and Oregon expressly or impliedly grant or allow the City, as fully as though this charter specifically enumerated each of those powers.

Section 5. Construction. The charter will be liberally construed so that the City may exercise fully all powers possible under this charter and under United States and Oregon law.

Section 6. Distribution. The Oregon Constitution reserves initiative and referendum powers as to all municipal legislation to City voters. This charter vests all other City powers in the Council except as the charter otherwise provides. The Council has legislative, administrative and quasi-judicial authority. The Council exercises legislative authority by ordinance, administrative authority by resolution, and quasi-judicial authority by order. The Council may not delegate its authority to adopt ordinances.

Chapter III

COUNCIL

Section 7. Council. The Council consists of a Mayor and four City Councilors nominated and elected from the City at large .

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Section 8. Mayor. The Mayor presides over and facilitates Council meetings, preserves order, enforces Council rules, and determines the order of business under Council rules. The Mayor is a voting member of the Council and has no veto authority. With the consent of Council, the Mayor appoints members of commissions and committees established by ordinance or resolution.

The Mayor must sign all records of Council decisions. The Mayor serves as the political head of the City government.

Section 9. Council President. At its first meeting each year, the Council must elect a president from its membership. The president presides in the absence of the Mayor and acts as Mayor when the Mayor is unable to perform duties.

Section 10. Rules. The Council must by resolution adopt rules to govern its meetings.

Section 11. Meetings. The Council must meet at least once each month at a time and place designated by its rules, and may meet at other times in accordance with the rules.

Section 12. Quorum. A majority of the Council members is a quorum to conduct business, but a smaller number may meet and compel attendance of absent members as prescribed by Council rules.

Section 13. Vote Required. The express approval of a majority of a quorum of the Council is necessary for any Council decision, except when this charter requires approval by a majority of the Council.

Section 14. Record. A record of Council meetings must be kept in a manner prescribed by the Council rules.

Chapter IV

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 15. Ordinances. The Council will exercise its legislative authority by adopting ordinances. The enacting clause for all ordinances must state "The City of Columbia City ordains as follows:".

Section 16. Ordinance Adoption.

(a) Except as Subsections (b) and (c) of this Section provide to the contrary, every ordinance of the Council shall, before being put upon its final passage, be read fully and distinctly in open Council meeting on two different days.

(b) Except as Subsection (c) of this Section provides to the contrary, an ordinance

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may be enacted at a single meeting of the Council under an emergency declaration and by unanimous vote of all Councilors present, upon being read first in full and then by title.

(c) Any of the readings may be by title only if no Councilor present at the meeting requests to have the ordinance read in full or if a copy of the ordinance is provided for each Councilor and the proposed ordinance is available in writing to the public at least one week before the meeting.

(d) Any substantive amendment to a proposed ordinance must be read aloud or made available in writing to the public before the Council adopts the ordinance.

(e) Adoption of an ordinance requires approval by a majority of the Council.

(f) After the adoption of an ordinance, the vote of each member must be entered into the Council minutes.

(g) Upon the enactment of an ordinance the City Recorder shall sign it with the date of its passage, the Recorder's printed name and title, and within three days thereafter the Mayor shall sign it with the Mayor's printed name and title.

Section 17. Effective Date of Ordinances. Ordinances normally take effect on the 30th day after adoption, or on a later day provided in the ordinance. An ordinance may take effect as soon as adopted or other date less than 30 days after adoption if it contains an emergency clause.

Chapter V

ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 18. Resolutions. The Council will normally exercise its administrative authority through the use of resolutions.

Section 19. Resolution Approval.

(a) Approval of a resolution or any other Council administrative decision requires approval by the Council at one meeting.

(b) Any substantive amendment to a proposed resolution must be read aloud or made available in writing to the public before the Council adopts the resolution at that meeting.

(c) After approval of a resolution or other administrative decision, the vote of each member must be entered into the Council minutes.

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- (d) After approval of a resolution, the City Recorder shall sign it with the date of its approval, the Recorder's printed name and title, and within three days thereafter the Mayor shall sign it with the Mayor's printed name and title.

Section 20. Effective Date of Resolutions. Resolutions and other administrative decisions take effect on the date of approval, or on a later day provided in the resolution.

Chapter VI

QUASI-JUDICIAL AUTHORITY

Section 21. Orders. The Council will normally exercise its quasi-judicial authority by through the use of orders.

Section 22. Order Approval.

- (a) Approval of an order or any other Council quasi-judicial decision requires approval by the Council at one meeting.
- (b) Any substantive amendment to a proposed order must be read aloud or made available in writing to the public at the meeting before the Council adopts the order.
- (c) After approval of an order or other Council quasi-judicial decision, the vote of each member must be entered in the Council minutes.
- (d) After approval of an order, the City Recorder shall sign it with the date of its approval, the Recorder's printed name and title, and within three days thereafter the Mayor shall sign it with the Mayor's printed name and title.

Section 23. Effective Date of Orders. Orders and other quasi-judicial decisions take effect on the date of final approval, or on a later day provided in the order.

Chapter VII

ELECTIONS

Section 24. Councilors. The term of a Councilor in office when this charter is adopted is the term for which the Councilor was elected. As each Councilors term expires, Councilors will be elected for four year terms.

Section 25. Mayor. The term of the Mayor in office when this charter is adopted continues until the existing term expires. At the next general election, a Mayor will be elected for a four year term.

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Section 26. State Law. City elections must conform to state law. However, by charter or ordinances the City may impose additional requirements provided they are not in conflict with state law. All elections for City offices must be nonpartisan.

Section 27. Qualifications.

- (a) The Mayor and each Councilor must be a qualified elector under state law, and reside within the City for at least one year immediately before election or appointment to office.
- (b) No person may be a candidate at a single election for more than one City office.
- (c) Neither the Mayor nor a Councilor may be employed by the City.
- (d) The Council is the final judge of the election and qualifications of its members.

Section 28. Nominations. The Council must adopt an ordinance prescribing the manner for a person to be nominated to run for Mayor or a City Councilor position.

Section 29. Terms. The term of an officer elected at a general election begins at the first Council meeting of the year immediately after the election, and continues until the successor qualifies and assumes the office.

Section 30. Oath. The Mayor and each Councilor must swear or affirm to faithfully perform the duties of the office and support the constitutions and laws of the United States and the State of Oregon and the laws and ordinances of the City of Columbia City.

Section 31. Vacancies. The Mayor or a Council office becomes vacant:

- (a) Upon the incumbent's:
 - (1) Death,
 - (2) Adjudicated incompetence, or
 - (3) Recall from the office.
- (b) Upon declaration by the Council after the incumbent's:
 - (1) Failure to qualify for the office within 10 days of the time the term of office is to begin,
 - (2) Absence from the City for 30 days without Council consent, or from all Council meetings within a 60-day period,
 - (3) Ceasing to reside in the City,

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- (4) Ceasing to be a qualified elector under state law,
- (5) Conviction of a public offense punishable by loss of liberty,
- (6) Resignation from the office, or
- (7) Removal under Section 33(h).

Section 32. Filling Vacancies. A Mayor or Councilor vacancy will be filled by appointment by a majority of the remaining Council members. The appointee's term of office runs from appointment until the next general election.

Chapter VIII

APPOINTIVE OFFICERS

Section 33. City Administrator.

- (a) The position of City Administrator is established as the administrative head of the City government. The City Administrator is responsible to the Mayor and Council for the proper administration of all City business. The City Administrator will assist the Mayor and Council in the development of City policies and carry out policies established by ordinance and resolutions.
- (b) A majority of the Council must appoint and may remove the City Administrator. The appointment must be made without regard to political considerations and solely on the basis of education and experience in competencies and practices of local government management.
- (c) The City Administrator may be appointed for a definite or an indefinite term, and may be removed with or without cause at any time by a majority vote of the Council. The Council must fill the office by appointment as soon as practicable after the vacancy occurs.
- (d) The City Administrator must:
 - (1) Attend all Council meetings unless excused by the Mayor or Council;
 - (2) Make reports and recommendations to the Mayor and Council about the needs of the City;
 - (3) Administer and enforce all City ordinances, resolutions, franchise, leases, contracts, permits and other City decisions;
 - (4) Appoint, supervise and remove City employees;

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- (5) Organize City departments and administrative structure;
 - (6) Prepare and administer the annual City budget;
 - (7) Administer City utilities and property;
 - (8) Encourage and support regional and intergovernmental cooperation;
 - (9) Promote cooperation among the Council, staff and citizens in developing City policies, and building a sense of community;
 - (10) Perform all of the duties of the City Recorder unless the office of City Recorder is separately appointed by the City Council;
 - (11) Perform other duties as directed by the Council;
 - (12) Delegate duties, but remain responsible for acts of all subordinates.
- (e) The City Administrator has no authority over the Council or over the judicial functions of the Municipal Judge.
- (f) The City Administrator and other employees designated by the Council may sit at Council Meetings but have no vote. The City Administrator may take part in all Council discussions.
- (g) When the City Administrator is temporarily disabled from acting as City Administrator or when the office of City Administrator becomes vacant, the Council must appoint a City Administrator pro tem. The City Administrator pro tem has the authority and duties of City Administrator, except that a pro tem City Administrator may appoint or remove employees only with Council approval.
- (h) No Council Member may directly or indirectly attempt to coerce the City Administrator or a candidate for the office of City Administrator in the appointment or removal of any City employee, or in administrative decisions regarding City property or contracts. Violation of this prohibition is grounds for removal from office by a majority of the Council after a public hearing. In Council meetings, Councilors may discuss or suggest anything with the individual in the position relating to City business.

Section 34. City Attorney. The office of City Attorney is established as the chief legal officer of the City government. The City Attorney must be a member in good standing of the Oregon State Bar. A majority of the Council must appoint and may remove the Attorney with or without cause.

Section 35. Municipal Court and Judge.

- (a) A majority of the Council may appoint and remove a Municipal Judge with or

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without cause. The Municipal Judge must be a member in good standing of the Oregon State Bar. A Municipal Judge will hold court in the City at such place as the Council directs. The court will be known as the Municipal Court.

(b) All proceedings of this court will conform to state laws governing justices of the peace and justice courts.

(c) All areas within the City and areas outside the City as permitted by state law are within the territorial jurisdiction of the court.

(e) The Municipal Court has jurisdiction over every offense created by City ordinance. The court may enforce forfeitures and other penalties created by such ordinances. The court also has jurisdiction under state law unless limited by City ordinance.

(f) The Municipal Judge may:

(1) Render judgments and impose sanctions on persons and property;

(2) Order the arrest of anyone accused of an offense against the City;

(3) Commit to jail or admit to bail anyone accused of a City offense;

(4) Issue and compel obedience to subpoenas;

(5) Compel witnesses to appear and testify and jurors to serve for trials before the court;

(6) Penalize contempt of court;

(7) Issue processes necessary to enforce judgments and orders of the court;

(8) Issue search warrants; and

(9) Perform other judicial and quasi-judicial functions assigned by ordinance.

(g) The Council may appoint and may remove Municipal Judges pro tem.

(h) The Council may transfer some or all of the functions of the Municipal Court to an appropriate state court.

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Chapter IX

PERSONNEL

Section 36. Compensation. The Council must authorize the compensation of City officers and employees as part of its approval of the annual City budget.

Chapter X

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

Section 37. Procedure. The Council may by ordinance provide for procedures governing the making, altering, vacating, or abandoning of a public improvement. A proposed public improvement may be suspended for six months upon remonstrance by owners of the real property to be specially assessed for the improvement. The number of owners necessary to suspend the action will be determined by ordinance.

Section 38. Special Assessments. The procedure for levying, collecting and enforcing special assessments for public improvements or other services charged against real property will be governed by ordinance.

Chapter XI

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section 39. Debt. City indebtedness may not exceed debt limits imposed by state law. A charter amendment is not required to authorize City indebtedness.

Section 40. Ordinance Continuation. All ordinances consistent with this charter in force when it takes effect remain in effect until amended or repealed.

Section 41. Repeal. All charter provisions adopted before this charter takes effect are repealed.

Section 42. Severability. The terms of this charter are severable. If any provision is held invalid by a court, the invalidity does not affect any other part of the charter.

Section 43. Time of Effect. This charter takes effect July 1, 2014.