

Question 1: Should Term limits for the City Officials be change from a limit of two consecutive terms to three consecutive terms

Background:

In 1991 the citizens of Jacksonville approved a referendum that created a 2-consecutive term limit for local officials. The belief was that term limits would allow more citizens to participate in government and to limit the power of the incumbent.

Discussion:

Lori Boyer appeared before the full commission and sub-committee to speak about this topic. She brought up four points as to why she supported extending term limits.

1. Officials are able to fully execute a long-term vision for the city.
2. Longer terms will allow for continuity among officials in relation to city projects.
3. Other cities with long-term mayors have had tremendous growth.
4. Jacksonville lags behind other cities when it comes to statewide organizational leadership because city officials are not in office long enough to be elected into leadership positions. Examples are Florida Association of County Executives or Florida League of Cities.

Lori Boyer also stated that the Task Force on Consolidated Government decided to recommend city council term limits be extended to 3 consecutive terms while keeping the mayor at 2 consecutive terms. This was to keep continuity with different visions and keep city council involved on prior administration projects.

Jerry Holland appeared before the entire City Charter Revision Commission. He advocated for constitutional officers to have longer term limits. He cited Orange County's 4 consecutive 4-year term limits. Mr. Holland pointed out that these positions are administrative positions and would serve the people better if they were in place longer. He likened it to having a new CEO over 4 to 8 years. Just as the current official is getting the organization on a path he or she was aiming for they are term limited and a new head of the organization comes in. The staff underneath the constitutional officer has to "train" the new official on his or her job.

Mr. Holland said that if there is a change in term limits it should not apply to any officer that is in office when the vote is taken.

Glorious Johnson appeared before the full Charter Revision Commission, on this topic she feels that 8 years is enough. She stated that people should serve and then let someone else have a chance to serve. This allows new idea and fresh looks for city government.

Similar Cities and their structure

Atlanta, GA's Mayor has a 2 consecutive 4-year term limit, while its city council does not have a term limit.

Nashville, TN's Mayor and city council have a 2 consecutive 4-year term limit.

Orlando, FL's Mayor and City Council can serve for 4 4-year terms.

Recommendation

Extend City Council Term limits from 2 consecutive 4-year terms to 3 consecutive 4-year terms.

The new term limit would start with the officers who will be sworn into office in 2031. This is so no sitting officer's current terms would be extended by the change in term limits.

Keep the Mayor and Constitutional officers at the status quo.