

Winston-Salem Local Governance Study Commission

Presentation on Process and Recommendations

JUNE 15, 2020

PROVIDED BY CITY STAFF

Background

- 11-member commission created by Mayor Joines and Members of NCGA
- Created after the filing of House Bill 519
- Diverse group of residents and business owners
 - 45% female
 - 45% African American
- Official charge:
 - Review governance structure and representation models
 - Be mindful of not diminishing minority representation
 - Take into account geographic representation

Information Gathering

Subject Matter Experts

- Bob Joyce, Professor of Public Law and Government (UNC School of Government)
- Allison Riggs, Chief Voting Rights Counsel (Southern Coalition for Social Justice)
- Jim Westmoreland, Former City Manager (Greensboro, NC)
- Roger Stancil, Former City Manager (Fayetteville, NC and Chapel Hill, NC)
- Bill Bell, Former Mayor (Durham, NC)
- Robbie Perkins, Former Mayor (Greensboro, NC)

Information Gathering

Information Review

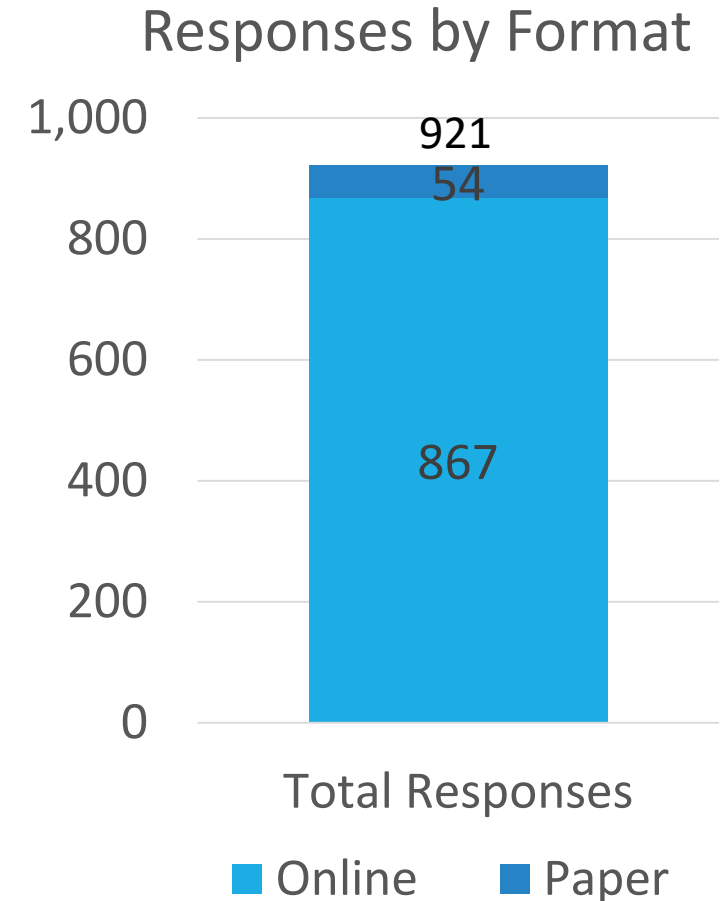
- Comparison of 11 largest cities in North Carolina
 - Council size
 - At-large representation
 - Population per district
 - Term length
 - Term staggering
 - Mayoral voting
 - Partisanship in elections
 - Election cycle
- Information on charter changes in other NC cities
- National League of Cities information on at-large v. district representation
- Elections and demographic information

Public Input Sessions

- Three public input sessions held – last week of January 2020
 - Carver High School
 - Easton Elementary
 - South Fork Elementary
- Estimated 25-50 participants per meeting
- Format included:
 - Video presentation
 - Information boards
 - Interaction with Commission Members and City staff

Public Input Survey

- Seven-question survey
 - All questions had only two or three response options
 - Response areas for narrative comments
- Non-random sample
 - Not statistically significant
 - Cannot be generalized to total population
 - Response bias – self selection
 - Possibility for non-unique responses
- 921 total responses
- Six of nine City elected officials responded
 - Separate version of the survey



Public Input Survey Results

- 57% responded there should be more at-large representation
 - 57% 8/2 split, 28% 5/3 split, 14% 6/2 split
- 72% responded in favor of four-year terms
- 59% responded in favor of staggered terms
- 76% responded in favor of even-year elections
- 60% responded in favor of partisan elections
- 66% responded in favor of the mayor only voting to break a tie
- 97% responded in favor of the mayor being elected by the voters

Recommendations

Only Item Recommended for Change to Current Structure:

- More at-large representation on City Council
- Recommended to add two additional seats to current structure

For all other items, votes were taken to recommend maintaining current structures

Questions???

Additional data and information can be found on the Commission's webpage:

<https://www.cityofws.org/2566/Local-Governance-Study-Commission>