

REFERENDUM PETITION RE: ORDINANCE 7985
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

On August 29, 2022, the City of Amarillo received a referendum petition objecting to the issuance of tax notes and requesting repeal of Ordinance 7985.

Following a thorough evaluation of the petition based on rules set forth in the Texas Election Code and the Amarillo City Charter, the City Secretary concluded the petition does not meet the requirements set forth in the Amarillo City Charter and the Texas Election Code and she therefore is not authorized to submit it to City Council for action.

Following are answers to questions you may have.

1. What rules govern the City Secretary’s review of the petition?
 - a. The initiative and referendum petition process is outlined in the Amarillo City Charter and the Texas Election Code.
 - b. The City Secretary must follow a very strict process to evaluate the referendum petition to determine if it meets all requirements. **The City Secretary’s Office is not authorized to disregard those requirements.**

2. What was the petition for?
 - a. The petition was a referendum to repeal Ordinance 7985, which concerns issuing tax notes for the civic center project.
 - b. The petition was submitted by a group of community members objecting to the issuance of tax notes and requesting repeal of the ordinance.

3. Did the petition conform with the law?
 - a. No.
 - b. The Amarillo City Charter and Texas Election Code have strict requirements on what is required, and the petition did not meet those requirements.

4. What will the City Secretary do with the petition now?
 - a. The City Secretary is not authorized to take any further action.
 - b. Based on requirements set forth by the Texas Election Code and the Amarillo City Charter, the City Secretary is not authorized to submit the petition to Council for action.

5. How long did the City Secretary have to review the petition?

- a. The City Charter allows the City Secretary a period of 21 calendar days from the date of receipt to verify the petition.
 - b. The 21-day period ended on September 19, 2022.
6. Can the petition be supplemented or amended once it has been submitted?
 - a. No.
 - b. The Texas Election Code does not allow for supplementation or amendment of a petition once it is submitted.
7. Can the City Council ignore the legal deficiencies with the petition and still act on it?
 - a. No.
 - b. The City Secretary is not authorized to submit the petition to the City Council because the petition fails to conform to the requirements set forth in the referendum provisions of the City Charter and the Texas Election Code.
 - c. Given this, there is nothing for the City Council to act upon.
8. Is the City Council involved in the petition review process?
 - a. No.
 - b. Petitions are reviewed by the City Secretary.
9. When was the City Council notified of the official petition determination?
 - a. On September 19, 2002.
 - b. City Council members were copied on the letter that went out to the Referendum Committee members. See enclosed letter.
10. Where can people find information about the referendum petition process?
 - a. Chapter 277 of the Texas Election Code.
 - b. Article II, Section 23 of the City Charter.