

Changing Form of Government From Mayor-Council to Council-Manager Using the Citizen Petition Method

Overview

1. Most of the Legal authority, methods and requirements are found in various sections of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW 35A.01, 35A.02, 35A.06, and 35A.13). RCW's can be accessed via the Municipal Research and Service Center of Washington (MRSC) [here](#).
2. Petition must propose abandonment of the current plan of government and adoption of another form, specifying the form of government, in this case the Council-Manager form as provided in RCW 35A.13.
3. Petition must be signed by registered voters equal to not less than 10% of the votes cast in the last general municipal election held in November 2007. *Number of votes cast in that election per Kitsap County Auditor times 10% and rounded up is 967.*
4. Petitioners file petition with City Clerk. City Clerk files petition with Kitsap County Auditor. Auditor determines sufficiency of signatures by matching current voters to official registered voter list and by comparing each signature with the one they have on file for each voter. *Time for auditor to determine sufficiency of signatures is 'reasonable promptness' RCW 35A.01.040(4)*
5. If at least 967 signatures are certified as valid, the Auditor issues certificate of sufficiency to the City.
6. The City Council then passes a resolution to set the election. Must be at next general election "in accordance with RCW 29A.04.330." *There is no specific time within which the Council is required to act to set the election.*
7. Notice of a special election to be held in conjunction with the general election must be filed with the Auditor at least 84 days in advance of the election. (RCW 29A.04.330(3) In 2008, this would be August 12.
8. Ballot title for election is prepared by the City Attorney.
9. Election results are certified by the County Auditor.
10. If a majority of Bainbridge voters vote to change the form of government, upon certification by the County Auditor, the current Mayor immediately ceases to be mayor and becomes the eighth member of the City Council. She serves as a council member for the balance of what would have been her mayoral term. Existing Council members continue to serve out their current terms unchanged.