



City of Columbus

Office of City Clerk
90 West Broad Street
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columbuscitycouncil.org

Legislation Text

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This ordinance provides for procedures to govern the filling of vacancies created on City Council if a member dies, resigns, is removed from office, ceases to hold any qualification for office, or the office is otherwise vacated during the term of office as required under Section 5 of the Charter of the City of Columbus.

Based upon recommendations of the 2016 Charter Review Commission, council adopted Ordinance 0650-2018 which proposed charter amendments increasing the total number of members from seven to nine, changing the form of council from “at-large” to “at-large, by place”, requiring council to hold, at a minimum, one public hearing prior to the appointment of an individual to a vacant seat on council and extending the time period for filling a vacancy from thirty days to forty-five days. The charter amendments were approved by voters in May 2018.

The new law details the process for the accepting of applications for appointment, allows for a review of the applications by the City Clerk to determine that all qualifications are met, and requires a public hearing on the appointment of candidates to be held prior to appointment.

To enact section 111.35 of the Columbus City Code to govern the procedure for filling vacancies on Columbus City Council.

WHEREAS, for various reasons, vacancies arise on Columbus City Council; and,

WHEREAS, Section 5 of the Columbus City Charter requires that Columbus City Council appoint a successor when a vacancy occurs on the Council; and,

WHEREAS, the 2016 Charter Review Commission recommended that the process for appointments to vacancies on City Council include a public hearing; and,

WHEREAS, Columbus citizens, in May 2018, adopted changes to the Columbus City Charter specifying that City Council hold, at a minimum, one public hearing prior to appointing a new member to City Council, among other changes;
NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

Section 1. That new section 111.35 of the Columbus City Code is hereby enacted, reading as follows:

111.35 - Procedure to fill vacancy on city council.

(a) Applications. If a vacancy occurs on city council, the council shall accept applications to fill the vacancy. Applications shall be filed with the city clerk in a form prescribed by the clerk. After determining whether applicants meet the

eligibility requirements for office under Section 6 of the Columbus City Charter, the clerk shall publish a list of qualified applicants to fill the vacancy.

(b) Interviews. Members of city council may, at their discretion and individually, interview any of the applicants qualified under division (a) of this section.

(c) Finalists. After any interviews performed by individual members of city council, each member of city council shall forward up to three names to the city clerk as finalists for appointment. The clerk shall compile a list of the names of the finalists and publish the same.

(d) Public Hearing. Council shall hold, at a minimum, one public hearing at which a quorum of members must be present and at which public comment on candidates shall be accepted. Testimony shall be limited to the qualifications of, and support or opposition to, candidates for the vacancy and shall comply with the requirements of Section 111.12.

(e) Appointment. Subsequent to the public hearing required in division (d) of this section, city council shall vote to fill the vacancy.

(f) Multiple vacancies. Should more than one vacancy occur on the council, the council may follow the procedures herein to fill all vacancies, subject to a separate public hearing under division (d) for each appointment, or may follow the procedures herein for each separate vacancy.

Section 2. That this ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.