

# CITY of LA GRANDE

## City Council Work Session

Monday, April 15, 2024  
6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers  
La Grande City Hall  
1000 Adams Avenue  
La Grande, Oregon

You can view the Work Session on Facebook Live at the following link:  
[www.facebook.com/CityofLaGrande](http://www.facebook.com/CityofLaGrande)

## AGENDA

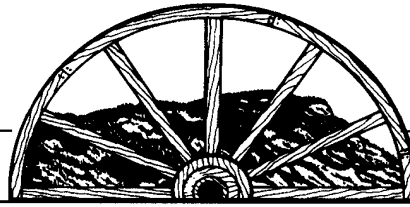
The purpose of a Work Session is to provide an opportunity to informally discuss topics of common concern and interest and to exchange ideas with Staff, not to make decisions or to direct Staff toward a specific action or conclusion beyond identifying additional information the Council would like to have presented at a later date. As no decisions are made, there will be no voting at the Work Session. The City Manager or members of the Staff may confirm any additional information required as part of any future discussions regarding the presented topic(s). If a Work Session topic subsequently requires official action, it will become an action (voting) item on a following Regular Session Agenda. In accordance with the Oregon Public Meetings Law, Council Work Sessions are open to the public; however, in order to make efficient use of time, public comments and questions generally are not entertained during the discussion segment of the Work Session. *Time will not be designated for public comments at the conclusion of the discussion.* Members of the public are routinely provided with an opportunity to address the Mayor and Council during the Public Comments portion of each Regular Session Agenda. *Per ORS 192.670(1), some Councilors may be participating in this Work Session by electronic communication.*

1. **CALL to ORDER** 6:00 p.m.  
~ Justin B. Rock, Mayor
2. **CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT DISCUSSION**  
~ Robert Strope, City Manager  
~ Stacey Stockhoff, City Recorder
3. **ADJOURN** 7:00 p.m.

---

Stacey M. Stockhoff  
City Recorder

*Persons requiring special accommodations who wish to participate in the Work Session are encouraged to make arrangements prior to the meeting by calling 541-962-1309. The City of La Grande does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities*



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Stacey Stockhoff, City Recorder

DATE: April 8, 2024

RE: City Charter Amendment

The City Council held a Work Session on Monday, September 11, 2023, to discuss some sections in the current City Charter that the Council was interested in amending. The City Council reached consensus on requesting voter approval to change the City's Charter at the General Election in November, 2024. The last time proposed amendments to the City Charter were placed on a ballot for all eligible voters of the City of La Grande was during a General Election held on November 3, 1998. The current version of the City Charter was adopted on November 3, 1998, and became effective on January 1, 1999, which is known as the *City of La Grande 1998 Amended Charter*.

City Staff, the County Clerk, and the City Attorney have reviewed the current City Charter and made recommended changes to language in the following chapters of the City Charter, per previous conversations held with the City Council. Included with this memo is a draft City Charter showing all revisions as explained below:

- **Chapter III – Form of Government:** Revised language to eliminate the position numbers for each of the seven positions.

The current system of candidates filing for individual positions, which are not tied to geographic areas in the City and are non-partisan, creates a potential for a candidate running for one position to be elected with fewer votes than a second candidate who was running opposed for another position. The intent is rather than candidates running for a specific position, all candidates would simply be running for City Council and the three candidates with the most votes are elected to the three vacant positions. Only the Mayor would be a separately elected position, and would remain a two-year term.

- **Chapter VI – Elections:** Eliminated the Biennial Primary Election and updated language to hold only a Biennial General Election for all vacated seats and added explanation to how the top vote getters would be elected. Updated language for how an incumbent's, mid-term resignation would be filled by appointment for the remainder of the term instead of placing the vacated seat on the General Election ballot, which would align with the language that was revised in **Chapter VII – Vacancies in Office.**

Candidates for the Mayor position and the non-Mayor positions would only be on the General Election ballot, eliminating the need for a Primary Election. Clear language reflects how all positions would be elected by the outcome of the majority of the votes counted.

- **Chapter VII – Vacancies in Office:** Eliminated language on how a vacancy would be filled by election when there is two or more years remaining. Revised language to fill all vacated seats by appointment by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Council regardless of how much time was remaining in that term. Language was also revised to reflect how a position would be filled in the case of a temporary disability or absence of any officer.

The intent for the section updates is to eliminate confusion on the ballot for the voters and to streamline the process to fulfill the remainder of a vacated term for an easier transition.

A draft of the ballot title from the City Attorney is included with this memo as an attachment, for your review. After tonight, the next step in the process would be for the City Council to adopt a Resolution to place a question on the ballot for the voters to decide if the City Charter should be amended with the proposed revisions. The proposed Resolution will come before the City Council for discussion at the June 5, 2024, City Council Regular Session Meeting, and if approved, the City Recorder/City Elections official will move forward with the final steps to place this in front of the voters at the November, 2024, General Election. We will also provide information to community members regarding the City Charter revisions via a press release to our local radio stations and newspaper, city website, and social media platforms. The intent would also be for the City Manager to present the information at local service club meetings and to include the legislative version of the proposed Charter amendment in the voter pamphlet the County produces for maximum transparency.

# CITY OF LA GRANDE

## CHARTER

TO PROVIDE FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CITY OF LA GRANDE, UNION COUNTY, OREGON; AND TO REPEAL ALL CHARTER PROVISIONS OF THE CITY ENACTED PRIOR TO THE TIME THAT THIS CHARTER TAKES EFFECT, EXCEPT THE CHARTER PROVISIONS AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF THOSE GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS STILL OUTSTANDING

BE IT ENACTED by the People of the City of La Grande, Union County, Oregon:

### CHAPTER I

#### NAME AND BOUNDARIES

**Section 1. CHARTER.** This Charter may be referred to as the ~~1998~~ 2024 Amended Charter.

**Section 2. NAME OF CITY.** The municipality of La Grande, Union County, Oregon, shall continue to be a municipal corporation with the name, City of —La Grande.

**Section 3. BOUNDARIES.** The City shall include all territory encompassed by its boundaries as they now exist or hereafter are modified by voters, by the Council or by any other agency with legal power to modify them. The Custodian of the City's Records shall keep an accurate, current description of the boundaries and make a copy of it available for public inspection in the City during regular City office hours.

### CHAPTER II

#### POWERS

**Section 4. POWERS OF THE CITY.** The City shall have all powers which the Constitutions, Statutes, and common law of the United States and of this State expressly or impliedly grant or allow municipalities, as fully as though this Charter specifically enumerated each of those powers.

**Section 5. CONSTRUCTION OF POWERS.** In this Charter, no mention of a particular power shall be construed to be exclusive or to restrict the scope of the powers which the City would have if the particular power were not mentioned. The Charter shall be liberally construed to the end that the City may have all powers necessary or convenient for the conduct of its municipal affairs, including all powers that cities may assume pursuant to State law and to the municipal home rule provisions of the State Constitution.

**Section 6. DISTRIBUTION OF POWERS.** Except as this Charter prescribes otherwise and as the Oregon Constitution reserves municipal legislative power to the voters of the City, all powers of the City are vested in the Council.

### CHAPTER III FORM OF GOVERNMENT

**Section 7. COUNCIL.** The Council shall be composed of seven (7) Councilors, including the Mayor, elected ~~by Position Number~~ from the City at large.

**Section 8. COUNCILORS.** The Councilors in office at the time this Charter is adopted shall continue in office, each until the end of their term of office, as fixed by the Charter of the City in effect at the time this Charter is adopted.

The Council position of ~~Position of~~ Mayor shall be a two- (2) year term ~~term and shall be assigned Position Number One (1)~~. Councilors ~~serv~~ing shall be four- (4) year terms. ~~shall be assigned Position Numbers Two (2), Three (3), Four (4), Five (5), Six (6), and Seven (7)~~. Candidates for Mayor and three Councilors ~~Position Numbers One (1), Two (2), and Three (3)~~, shall be nominated at the first Biennial Primary Election ~~after the amended Charter is adopted (November, 1988)~~. At shall be nominated at the first Biennial General Election (November, 2026) after the amended Charter is adopted (November, ~~1998~~2024), ~~and those~~ The candidates who receive the most a majority of the votes cast shall be elected and shall hold office until a qualified successor is elected or appointed.

At each subsequent Biennial ~~Primary and~~ General Election, the Mayor and the number of Councilors required to fill vacancies pursuant to Sections 28. and 29., of this Charter shall be nominated and/or elected, respectively and shall hold office until a qualified successor is elected or appointed.

~~Effective January 1, 1999, the Councilor Rotation is reflected in the following Table, for Election Years 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, and 2012. In the Year 2006, Position Numbers One (1), Five (5), Six (6), and Seven (7), shall be elected. In the Year 2008, Position Numbers One (1), Two (2), Three (3), and Four (4), shall be elected, and so on.~~

**Section 9. QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS.** No persons shall be eligible for an elective office of the City unless at the time of their election they are qualified electors within the meaning of the State Constitution and City Charter and have resided within in the City limits during the six (6) months immediately preceding the election.

**Section 10. MAYOR PRO TEM.** At its first meeting of each odd-numbered year, the Council shall elect from its membership a Mayor Pro Tem. The term of office for the Mayor Pro Tem shall be two (2) years. If a vacancy occurs in either the office of Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem, it shall be filled in accordance with ~~Section 32~~Section 31. of this Charter.

**Section 11. APPOINTIVE OFFICES.** Except for the Office of the City Manager, a majority of the Council may create, abolish, and combine appointive City offices.

**Section 12. COMPENSATION.** The compensation for the services of each City officer and employee shall be the amount fixed by the Council. No increase in compensation of Councilors, however, shall take effect until the first day of the odd-numbered year following the first Biennial General Election after the increase is ordered.

## CHAPTER IV COUNCIL

**Section 13. RULES.** The Council shall, by Resolution, prescribe *Rules* to govern its meetings and proceedings.

**Section 14. MEETINGS.** The Mayor may, upon his or her own Motion, or at the request of at least four (4) members of the Council, call a Special Meeting of the Council. The Council shall meet in the City regularly at least once a month at a time and place designated by Council's *Rules* and may meet at other times in accordance with the *Rules*. No special meeting shall be held without at least twenty-four (24) hours' notice to the members of the Council then in the City and the general public. In case of an actual emergency, a Special Meeting may be held upon such public notice as is appropriate to the circumstances.

**Section 15. QUORUM.** Four (4) members of the Council shall constitute a quorum for its business, but a smaller number may meet and compel attendance of absent members in a manner provided by Ordinance.

**Section 16. RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.** A record of Council proceedings shall be kept and authenticated in a manner prescribed by the Council.

**Section 17. PROCEEDINGS TO BE PUBLIC.** No action by the Council shall have legal effect unless the Motion or the action and the vote by which it is disposed of takes place at proceedings open to the public.

**Section 18. MAYOR'S FUNCTIONS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS.** The Mayor shall be Chair of the Council and preside over its deliberations. The Mayor shall have a vote on all questions before the Council. The Mayor shall have authority to preserve order, enforce the *Rules of the Council*, and determine the order of business under the *Rules of the Council*. In the Mayor's absence from a Council meeting, the Mayor Pro Tem shall preside.

**Section 19. VOTE REQUIRED.** Except as this Charter otherwise provides, the concurrence of a majority of the members of the Council present at a Council meeting *and voting* shall be necessary to decide any question before the Council.

**Section 20. INTERFERENCE IN ADMINISTRATION.** Except in Council meeting, no Councilor may directly or indirectly, by suggestion or otherwise, attempt to influence the Manager or a candidate for the office of Manager in the appointment, discipline, or removal of personnel or in decisions regarding City property or contracts. A violator of this prohibition may be removed from office by a court of competent jurisdiction. In Council meeting, members of the Council may discuss with, or suggest to, the Manager anything pertinent to City affairs. Nothing in this Section shall be construed, however, as prohibiting the Council while in open

(Regular) Session or Executive Session from fully and freely discussing with or suggesting to the Manager anything pertaining to City affairs or the interests of the City.

## CHAPTER V POWERS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

**Section 21. MAYOR AND MAYOR PRO TEM.** The Mayor shall nominate the Council's Committee and Commission members, subject to a vote of the Council. The Mayor shall sign all records of proceedings approved by the Council. The Mayor shall have no veto power and shall sign all Ordinances adopted by the Council within three (3) days after their adoption. Whenever the Mayor is unable to perform the functions of that office, the Mayor Pro Tem shall act as Mayor.

**Section 22. CITY MANAGER. Appointment.**

- (1) The City Manager is the administrative head of the City government.
- (2) A majority of the Council shall appoint and may remove the Manager. The appointment shall be without regard to political considerations and solely on the basis of administrative qualifications.
- (3) The Manager need not reside in the City nor the State when appointed but promptly thereafter shall become and during the Manager's tenure remain a resident of the City.
- (4) Upon accepting the appointment, the Manager shall furnish the City a bond in an amount and with a surety approved by the Council. The City shall pay the bond premium.
- (5) The Manager may be appointed for a definite or an indefinite term and may be removed by the Council at its pleasure. Upon any vacancy occurring in the Office of Manager after the first appointment pursuant to this Charter, the Council at its next meeting shall adopt a Resolution of its intention to appoint another Manager. Within six (6) consecutive months after a vacancy occurs in the office, the Council shall fill the vacancy by appointment.
- (6) Whenever the Manager intends to be absent from the City for a period of ten (10) days or less, the Manager shall appoint a Department Director as Manager Pro Tem and shall notify the Council of that appointment.

**Section 23. CITY MANAGER. Powers and Duties.**

**The Manager shall:**

- (1) Devote his/her entire time to the discharge of official duties;
- (2) attend all Council meetings, unless excused by the Council or the Mayor, and take part in all Council discussions but may not vote on questions before it;
- (3) keep the Council advised at all times of the affairs and needs of the City;
- (4) make reports annually or more frequently, if requested by the Council, of all the affairs and departments of the City;

- (5) see that the provisions of all Ordinances are administered or enforced to the satisfaction of the Council;
- (6) see that all provisions of all terms of franchises, leases, contracts, permits, and privileges granted by the City are fulfilled;
- (7) appoint and remove appointive City officers and employees, except as this Charter otherwise provides, and have general supervision and control over them and their work, with power to transfer an employee from one department to another;
- (8) supervise the departments to the end of obtaining the utmost efficiency in each of them;
- (9) have general supervision and responsibility for all City purchases;
- (10) be responsible for preparing and submitting to the Budget Committee the annual Budget estimates and such reports as that body requests;
- (11) supervise the operation of all public utilities owned and operated by the City and have general supervision over all City property;
- (12) perform other duties as the Council prescribes consistent with this Charter.

**Section 24. CITY MANAGER. Limits on Authority.**

- (1) **The Manager may not control:**
  - (a) The Council;
  - (b) except as the Council authorizes, appointive personnel of the City whom the Manager does not appoint.
- (2) **Involvement in Elections**  
The Manager shall not take part in securing nor contributing any money for the nomination or election of any candidate for municipal office.
- (3) **Ineligible Persons**  
Neither the Manager's spouse nor any person related to the Manager or the Manager's spouse by consanguinity or affinity within the third degree may be appointed by the City Manager to any office within the City.

**Section 25. MANAGER PRO TEM.**

- (1) Whenever the Manager intends to be absent from the City for a period of ten (10) days or less, the Manager shall appoint a Department Director as Manager Pro Tem and shall notify the Council of that appointment.
- (2) Whenever the Manager is absent from the City for more than ten (10) days, is temporarily disabled from acting as Manager, or whenever the Office of Manager becomes vacant, the Council shall appoint a Manager Pro Tem, who shall assume the powers and duties of the Manager.
- (3) No person may be Manager Pro Tem more than six (6) consecutive months.



- (4) No Manager Pro Tem may appoint or remove a City officer or employee, except with the approval of four sevenths (4/7) of the members of the Council.

## CHAPTER VI ELECTIONS

**Section 26. STATE LAW.** Except as this Charter or a City Ordinance prescribes to the contrary, a City Election shall conform to State law applicable to the Election.

**Section 27. NONPARTISAN ELECTIONS.** All elections held under this Charter are to be nonpartisan. No Election Notice, Ballot or other election document shall indicate the party affiliation or party preference of a City officer or candidate for City office.

**Section 28. NOMINATIONS.** A qualified elector who has resided ~~within~~ within the City limits of La Grande during the six (6) months immediately preceding an Election may be nominated for an elective office to be filled at the Election. The nomination shall be by a Petition that specifies the office sought, ~~whether it be for a regular term or for a vacated term,~~ and shall be in a form prescribed by State law. The Petition shall be signed by not fewer than twenty (20) electors. No elector shall sign more than one Petition for each office-vacancy to be filled at the Election. All nomination papers comprising a Petition shall be assembled and filed with the Recording Officer of the City as one (1) instrument in compliance with filing deadlines established by the Recording Officer of the City and State Statute. The Recording Officer of the City shall notify an eligible person of nomination, and that person shall file with the Recording Officer written acceptance of nomination, in such form as the Council may require, within five (5) days of notification of nomination. Upon receipt of the acceptance of nomination, the Recording Officer shall cause the nominee's name to be printed on the ballots. Additional procedures pertaining to nominations shall be prescribed by General Ordinance, or to the extent not so governed, by the applicable election laws of the State.

~~—Section 29. BIENNIAL PRIMARY ELECTION. Candidates for Position Numbers One (1), Two (2), and Three (3), Mayor shall be elected at the first Biennial Primary Election after the amended Charter is adopted (November, 1998-2024). Candidates for Mayor and Councilor must file for office with the Recording Officer of the City, pursuant to Section 28. above, for a Biennial Primary Election held on the Third Tuesday in May. If at the Biennial Primary Election one candidate receives a majority of the votes cast (fifty percent [50%] plus one vote) for all candidates for a particular Position Number Mayor, that candidate shall be the only one whose name appears on the Ballot for the November Biennial General Election that year as a candidate for that Position Number Mayor. If at the Biennial Primary Election no such candidates receive such a majority, the two candidates receiving the two highest numbers of votes cast for a particular Position Number Mayor shall be the only ones whose names appear on the Ballot for the November Biennial General~~

~~Election that year as candidates for that Position Number. Mayor. In those instances where two or less candidates file for any Position Number Mayor prior to the filing deadline for the Biennial Primary Election, those candidates' names shall appear only on the November Biennial General Election Ballot. The candidate who receives a majority of the votes cast (fifty percent [50%]) at the November Biennial General Election that year as a candidate for a particular Position Number is elected Mayor, shall hold office until a qualified successor is elected or appointed to that Position Number and is entitled to a Certificate of Election.~~

~~Section 30. BIENNIAL GENERAL ELECTION—COUNCILORS. After the amended Charter is adopted (November, 2024), three Councilor candidates shall be elected at the 2026 Biennial General Election to fill the positions which shall become vacant on December 31, 2026. Candidates for these vacancies must file for office with the Recording Officer of the City, pursuant to Section 28. The three candidates who receive the three highest numbers of votes shall be deemed elected to serve a four-year term, shall hold office until a qualified successor is elected or appointed and are entitled to a Certificate of Election.~~

OR

Section 29. BIENNIAL GENERAL ELECTION. After the amended Charter is adopted (November, 2024), the Council position of the Mayor and three Councilors which shall become vacant on December 31, 2026, shall be elected at the 2026 Biennial General Election and at each subsequent Biennial General Election thereafter. Candidates for these offices must file for office with the Recording Officer of the City, pursuant to Section 28. The one candidate for Mayor who receives the majority of the votes cast shall be deemed elected as Mayor to serve a two-year term and the three Councilor candidates who receive the three highest number of votes shall each be deemed elected to serve a four-year term as City Councilor and all shall hold office until a qualified successor is elected or appointed. All are entitled to a Certificate of Election.

~~An incumbent, mid-term Councilor who desires to file for the Position of Mayor (Position Number One [1]) or any other expiring Council position shall do so twenty-one (21) days prior to the published deadline established in the preceding paragraph, to provide for the placement of the affected Position Number(s) on the subsequent Biennial Primary or Biennial General Election ballots, pursuant to the preceding paragraph. An incumbent, mid-term Councilor who desires to file for the Position of Mayor (Position Number One [1]) or any other expiring Council position shall be required to tender a resignation from the Council prior to filing for the Position of Mayor. The incumbent's resignation would become effective December 31, of that year, and the Councilor vacancy created shall be filled pursuant to Section 32.~~

**Section 30. OATH OF OFFICE.** Before entering upon the duties of office, each officer shall affirm support of the constitutions and laws of the United States and of Oregon and the faithful performance of the duties of office.

CHAPTER VII  
VACANCIES IN OFFICE

**Section 31. VACANCIES: OCCURRENCE.** The office of a member of the Council becomes vacant:

- (1) Upon the incumbent's:
  - (a) Death,
  - (b) adjudicated incompetence,
  - (c) recall from office; or
  
- (2) Upon declaration by the Council of the vacancy in case of the incumbent's:
  - (a) Failure, following election or appointment to the office, to qualify for the office within ten (10) days after the time for his or her term of office to begin,
  - (b) absence from all regular meetings of the Council within a forty-five (45) day period without the Council's consent,
  - (c) ceasing to reside in the City,
  - (d) ceasing to be a qualified elector under State law,
  - (e) conviction of a public offense punishable by loss of liberty, or,
  - (f) resignation from the office.

**Section 32. FILLING OF VACANCIES.** Vacant elective offices in the City shall be filled as follows:

- ~~a. Upon a vacancy occurring or being declared for any reason by the remaining members of the Council under Section 31., above, and there are two (2) or more years remaining in the affected Position Number's term, the subject Position shall be filled by election in compliance with State Statutes governing local elections.~~
  
- ~~ba.~~ ba. Upon a vacancy occurring or being declared for any reason by the remaining members of the Council under Section 31., above, ~~and there are less than two (2) years remaining in the affected Position Number's term,~~ the subject vacancy ~~Position~~ shall be filled by appointment by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Council.
  
- ~~bc.~~ bc. The term of the new member, whether elected or appointed, shall begin immediately upon being elected or appointed and shall continue for the remainder of the term ~~for the vacant position which was filled.~~ and shall hold office until a qualified successor is elected or appointed.
  
- ~~cd.~~ cd. During the temporary disability of any officer or during a temporary absence from the city for any cause, the office may be filled Pro Tem in the manner provided for filling vacancies in section 32.b.

~~During the temporary disability of any officer or during any officer's absence temporarily from the City, for any cause, or during the time period a vacant office is waiting to be filled by Special Election, that office may be filled Pro Tem by appointment by the majority vote of the remaining members of the Council.~~

CHAPTER VIII  
ORDINANCES

**Section 33. ENACTING CLAUSE.** The enacting clause of all Ordinances hereinafter enacted shall be: "The City of La Grande Ordains as follows:"

**Section 34. MODE OF ENACTMENT.**

- (1) Except as the second and third paragraphs of this Section provide to the contrary, every Ordinance of the Council shall, before being put upon its final passage, be read fully and distinctly in open Council meeting on two (2) different days.
- (2) Except as the third paragraph of this Section provides to the contrary, an Ordinance may be enacted at a single meeting of the Council by unanimous vote of all Councilors present, upon being read first in full and then by title.
- (3) Any of the readings may be by title only if no Councilors present at the meeting request to have the Ordinance read in full and when a copy of the Ordinance is provided for each Councilor and three (3) copies are provided for public inspection in the City offices not later than one (1) week before the first reading of the Ordinance and if notice of their availability is given forthwith upon the filing, by written notice posted at the City offices and by advertisement in a newspaper of general circulation in the City.
- (4) An Ordinance read by title only has no legal effect if it differs substantially from its terms as it was filed prior to the reading, unless each section so differing is read fully and distinctly in open Council meeting before the Council adopts the Ordinance.

**Section 35. WHEN ORDINANCES TAKE EFFECT.** An Ordinance enacted by the Council shall take effect upon the thirtieth (30th) day after its enactment. When the Council deems it advisable, however, an Ordinance may provide a later time for it to take effect, and in case of an emergency, it may take effect immediately.

CHAPTER IX  
PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

**Section 36. CONDEMNATION.** Any necessity of taking property for the City by condemnation shall be determined by the Council and declared by a Resolution of the Council describing the property and stating the uses to which it shall be devoted.

**Section 37. IMPROVEMENTS.**

- (1) **Procedures**  
The procedure for making, altering, vacating, or abandoning a public improvement shall be governed by general Ordinance or, to the extent not so governed, by the applicable general laws of the State. Action on any proposed public improvement, except an improvement unanimously

declared by the Council to be needed at once because of an emergency, shall be suspended for six (6) months upon a remonstrance thereto by the owners of two-thirds (2/3) of the land to be specially assessed therefor. A second such remonstrance suspends the action only with the consent of the Council.

(2) **Definition of Owner**

In this Section, "owner" means the record holder of legal title or, as to land being purchased under a land-sale contract that is recorded or verified in writing by the record holder of legal title, the purchaser.

**Section 38. SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS.** The procedures for levying, collecting and enforcing the payment of special assessments for public improvements or other services to be charged against real property shall be governed by general Ordinance.

## CHAPTER X

### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Section 39. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING.** The City Council of the City of La Grande, Oregon, or its agents, is hereby directed to enter into a collective bargaining process and bilateral negotiations with certified bargaining units, under appropriate provisions of State law.

## CHAPTER XI

### MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

**Section 40. DEBT LIMIT.** The City's indebtedness may not exceed debt limits imposed by State law. A City officer or employee who creates or officially approves indebtedness in excess of this limitation is jointly and severally liable for the excess. A Charter amendment is not required to authorize City indebtedness.

**Section 41. EXISTING ORDINANCES CONTINUED.** All Ordinances of the City consistent with this Charter and in force when it takes effect shall remain in effect until amended or repealed.

**Section 42. REPEAL OF PREVIOUSLY ENACTED PROVISIONS.** All Charter provisions of the City enacted prior to the time this Charter takes effect are hereby repealed.

**Section 43. SEVERABILITY.** The terms of this Charter are severable. If a part of the Charter is held invalid, that invalidity does not affect another part of the Charter, except as the logical relation between the two parts requires.

**Section 44. AVAILABILITY OF CHARTER.** The Custodian of the City's Records shall make a copy of the Charter available for public inspection during regular City office hours.

**Section 45. TIME OF EFFECT OF CHARTER.** This Charter shall take effect January 1, ~~1999~~2025; except that ~~that~~ portion of Section 32., ~~Pages 7 and 8, a. through c.~~, governing the Filling of Vacancies, shall become effective immediately.

ADOPTED: November 2024

DRAFT

## **BALLOT TITLE FOR REFERRAL**

**CAPTION:** Amendment of City of La Grande Charter.

**QUESTION:** Shall La Grande voters amend the existing Charter to modify the election process for councilors and Mayor?

**SUMMARY:** This measure amends the City Charter to remove position numbers for City Councilors and allow the candidates who receive the most votes to be elected to the council.

The measure further eliminates the primary election for the Mayor position and Councilor positions and clarifies the way in which vacancies are filled which will be through appointment by the council for the remainder of the vacant positions term.

DRAFT