



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – July 20, 2022 Agenda Item 8

Voting Session

Proposed Revisions to the Election Code (Title 5)

Recommended Council Action

Vote on the ordinance at first reading.

Context with Key Issues

The Takoma Park Board of Elections recommended certain revisions to the Elections Code to add clarity and provide for the improved conduct of elections. The City Attorney drafted an ordinance which was discussed by the Council at its work session on July 6.

Chapter 5.10 Candidate and Political Committee Registration and Campaign Finance Limitations.

The language of the chapter included the phrase “seek to influence an election,” which had caused confusion. The chapter now has separate sections for candidate registration and political committee registration. Only a registered political committee may accept contributions or make expenditures. This change, combined with the already existing definition of “political committee,” adds clarity for the reader. Sections 5.12.010 through 5.12.030 now apply to political committees as well as candidates.

Section 5.12.020 (D) related to what is to be done with anonymous contributions has been rephrased and moved to Section 5.12.020(E).

Section 5.12.020(D) prohibits contributions not only from anonymous contributors but also from corporations, political committees, and labor unions, from a person making a contribution in the name of another, and from certain foreign nationals (as required by federal law). *Individuals with permanent resident status are not considered foreign nationals.*

Section 5.12.022 Campaign finance reports is unchanged in the current version of the draft ordinance. It is highlighted in green because the City Council did not provide direction on the preference for report timing.

Sections 5.18.065 and 5.20.025 have been added to make it clear that no person may use an absentee or mail in ballot that was issued by the City for another person.

Council Priority

Engaged, Responsive, and Service-Oriented Government

Environmental Considerations

N/A

Fiscal Considerations

These code amendments will not add to the cost of the election.

Racial Equity Considerations

These recommended revisions are not expected to have a disproportionate impact on any members of our community.

Attachments and Links

Draft Ordinance