

Newton Charter Commission Term Limits Discussion Guide

In December, we adopted the following goals for our charter review:

- Greater public participation in government in Newton
As evidenced by voter turnout, number of contested elections
- Increased level of civic understanding by citizens of Newton
As evidenced by citizens knowing about our government structure, roles, responsibilities; may be achieved through improved ballot clarity and simplicity
- More effective and responsive government

We should remain cognizant of these overriding goals as we deliberate the concept of term limits (and more specifically whether there should be term limits for the city council, school committee and mayor).

On July 12th the commission will discuss term limits under the following construct:

- 1) How does the concept of term limits comport or conflict with our goals for Newton?
 - a) What issues or problems will term limits solve or address?
 - b) What are the downsides to term limits and what problems could they create?
- 2) Should term limits for the city council, school committee, and mayor be interrelated/aligned or should they be addressed individually?
 - a) What are the advantages/benefits of having an interrelated system of term limits (term limits same/aligned) for the city council, school committee and mayor?
 - b) What are the disadvantages/downsides to an interrelated system of term limits for the city council, school committee and mayor?
 - c) If term limits are equitable – must they be equal?
- 3) Addressing the term limits as separate entities.
 - a) What are the tradeoffs/downsides to addressing the term limits for the city council, school committee, and mayor as separate entities?
 - b) What are the advantages/benefits of addressing the term limits for the city council, school committee, and mayor as separate entities?
- 4) Term Limits for Mayor
- 5) Term Limits for School Committee
- 6) Term limits for City Council