

LWV Presentation Outline Re: Charter

Charter is the local government “constitution”.

All Cities are incorporated by charter; Corvallis incorporated January 28, 1857.

Charters are enacted and/or amended only by a vote of the electorate.

Some Counties have charter others are “general law”. Special Districts (including school districts) do not have charters, but are established based on state law.

Cities and counties with charters are “home rule”. They can enact by ordinance anything not prohibited by the state constitution or previous state law. “Home rule” was established by State Constitutional amendment in 1906.

Special districts and general law counties can do only what is specifically allowed by state law. State law gives general law counties ordinance making authority, districts do not have such authority.

Initiative and referendum powers only apply to ordinances and charters; not to other local government actions. Initiative and referendum included in Corvallis charter in 1907.

Initiative requires registered voters signatures of at least 15% of number of people who voted in the latest Mayoral election (referendum 10%).

Corvallis charter amendments:

(See separate page for list and timeline)

Some things that are not in Charter:

Advisory Boards and Commissions

Administrative structure, Depts., etc.

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