

**CITIZEN SUMMIT ON THE CHARTER
CITY OF JOHNS CREEK
MARCH 2012**

SUMMARY REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Citizen Summit on the Charter	
A. Agenda	Page 3
B. Participants	Page 6
Round 1	
Question 1: Common Themes	Page 7
Overall Comments	Page 7
Question 2: Common Themes	Page 10
Overall Comments	Page 10
Round 2	
Question 3: Common Themes	Page 13
Overall Comments	Page 13
Question 4: Common Themes	Page 16
Overall Comments	Page 16
Question 5: Common Themes	Page 19
Overall Comments	Page 19
Round 3	
Question 6: Common Themes	Page 21
Overall Comments	Page 21
Question 7: Common Themes	Page 24
Overall Comments	Page 24
Appendix	
A. Messages from Citizens	Page 27
B. Email Responses	Page 31
C. Participant Teams	Page 40
D. Potential Expectations of Johns Creek Government	Page 41
E. Service Expectations of Johns Creek Government	Page 42

CITIZEN SUMMIT 2012: JOHNS CREEK CHARTER

AGENDA

1. Citizen Summit 2012: Purposes and Process

A. Purposes

- > increase residents' understanding of the Charter Review process
- > conduct an open and transparent Charter Review process
- > seek residents' input on issues or topics that should be addressed during the Charter Review process
- > identify topics that shape the legal frame-the Charter-that will help the Mayor/City Council and city management effectiveness

B. Rules

- > Listen to others before making a judgment
- > Record all ideas
- > Vote to determine the "most important" to our team-star the items getting a majority vote
- > Charter Review Commissioners are to listen: big "ears" and "small mouths"

2. City Government: Overview

- A. Typology: Strong Mayor-Council; City Commission; Council-City Manager
- B. Challenges to City Governments
- C. New Realities for City Governments

3. Charter Review Commission: Overview

A. Purposes

- > review the Charter during the six month process
- > identify and discuss major Charter issues focusing on the legal framework
- > make recommended Charter changes to the state legislature

B. Process

- > Phase 1: Gather input from others-Mayor and City Council, residents
- > Phase 2: Discussion of critical issues
- > Phase 3: Prepare initial Charter draft
- > Phase 4: Conduct public hearings on the Charter
- > Phase 5: Finalize recommended Charter changes

4. ROUND 1: JOHNS CREEK CITY GOVERNMENT

Question 1: What are the primary reason that you make the choice to live in Johns Creek-a great place to live?

Question 2: What do you expect of Johns Creek city government?

5. ROUND 2: REPRESENTATION AND ELECTIONS

Question 3: What are the pros/cons of terms limits for Mayor and City Council?

Question 4: What are the pros/cons of council elections by district versus at large?

Question 5: What constitutes "winning" an election- majority of those voting or a simple plurality?

6. ROUND 3:

Question 6: What are the most important service responsibilities of Johns Creek city government?

Question 7: What services should the city evaluate:

a) for alteration/elimination?

b) for new or additional services and you are willing to pay for?

7. MESSAGE TO CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

8. FINAL COMMENTS - THANK YOU!

PARTICIPANTS

Anne Thompson

Bill Lane

Bill Pitroff

Bob Stevens

Don Freud

Don Mairose

Duane Armstrong

Ed Pearlman

Evan Vayhinger

Fred Court

Gerry Lewis

Jack Dubs

Jack Loftus

Karen Reetz

Kevin Brown

Kim Painter

Madelein Rivera

Major Thompson

Mark Browning

Mark Endres

Marvin Hoeflinger

Mary Brent Buckett

Merv Brown

Michael Pelot-Hobbs

Michael Pickford

Mike Hausmann

Rhonda Wilson

Rob Snyder

Sam Klein

Shirlee McKinnon

Skip Rolquin

Stephanie Endres

Steve Broadbent

Swapna Bhave

ROUND ONE: JOHNS CREEK CITY GOVERNMENT

Common Themes

Question #1. Why did you choose to live in the City of Johns Creek?

- Public Safety (5)
 - Schools (4)
 - More responsive city government (2)
 - Traffic (2)
 - Parks & Rec (2)
-
- Local Government
 - Government recognizes limited role
 - Convenient location
 - Consistency of original land use plan by homeowners (land use, zoning control)
 - Consistent property values
 - Protected millage rate
 - Local control
 - Clean and well-maintained
 - Hospital and medical community
 - No services from Fulton County
 - Pleased public services
 - Opportunity to have a voice
 - Rural culture and environment

Overall Comments

TEAM #1

Economy

*Consistent property value

Lower cost of property (than Buckhead)

*Schools better than other parts of county (City v. County)

*Protected millage rate (rare occasion to control own taxes)

Quality of highways/road maintenance

-ability to repair/maintain

-local control

*Local control

Initially district representation

Access to political base

*Public safety

TEAM #2

Balance between residential and commercial as is

Consistency of original Lead Use Plan by homeowners (received 4 check marks)

Demographics as they are

Beautification projects

Zoning as it is now balanced

TEAM #3

Schools

Access to recreation facilities (parks/trails)

Consideration for business (i.e. green) type

Unincorporated

- Less gov. before Johns Creek

Services for special needs (Atlanta area)

Convenient location to work

Neighborhood (suburban)

Public Safety (fire/police)

(-) Streets

(-) Schools

Quality of Life (safety, parks, traffic)

TEAM #4

Schools

Traffic

Like-minded people (share values)

Closeness to City government (lots of opportunity to influence – understand)

Safety

Clean

Parks & Recreation

Affordability

Convenience (location)

Access to services, retail, shopping, restaurants and recreation

Arts community

AAC

TEAM #5

Rural culture/environment

Opportunity to have a voice

“Small Town” feel

Schools

Opportunity to volunteer and participate in City

Home values

*Safety/security

Near river/creek

TEAM #6

Why did Council members have an input to the Commission separate from typical citizen?

Would not move to an incorporated area

Pleased with police response

Generally pleased with public services; reservations about what it could evolve into

TEAM #7

Stuck here originally, but tax rate and no services from Fulton County

School system

Convenience to amenities

Image upscale

Clean and well manicured

Hospital and overall medical community

Local cultural facilities

Choice of churches

Close to neighboring facilities

Responsiveness of the government

Other Issues:

- Millage rate stay as is. Why? It was written that way
 - A stay at home vote is a no vote
- How to raise revenue?
 - Encourage business to come
 - Fees

TEAM #8

*Local government

*More responsive government

New, well-preserved area (homes)

Public safety

Best schools

Well-run cities

Convenience (stores, restaurants)

Upscale community

Getting out of Fulton County

*Government that recognizes limit of role

Question #2. What are your expectations of the Johns Creek City government?

Common Themes

- Traffic management / road maintenance (3)
 - Open transparent government (3)
 - Advocacy for Johns Creek (3)
 - City acting in a most cost effective manner – efficient use of tax dollars (3)
 - Road repair / maintenance (2)
 - Police (2)
 - Fire (2)
 - Economic development / encouragement of small business (2)
 - Partner with other governments for service coordination and delivery (2)
-
- Government by residents, not politicians
 - Fair and impartial delivery of city services
 - City acting in an ethical manner - above question
 - Local control of city government
 - Strong working relationship with neighborhoods, HOAs, neighborhood associations
 - Maintain quality infrastructure
 - Policies to maintain and enhance property values
 - Provide basic services at the lowest tax rate
 - Least amount of regulation as necessary
 - Not use police department as source of revenue
 - Voters must approve any change to millage rate
 - Appropriate zoning decisions
 - Communication with citizens
 - Be positively responsive
 - Clear vision / mission / plan for 10 years
 - Manage growth of the city
 - Priority to police / fire / roads / schools

Overall Comments

TEAM #1

*Safety

*Traffic/road management

*Road repair/maintenance

Maintain parks – not necessarily new parks

*Appropriate zoning decisions

*More communication with citizens – HOAs

*Partner/coordinating with other government

Cost effective delivery (12)

Most effective delivery (12)

Strong Mayor

Fix traffic

Build reserve (for fixes)
No surplus

TEAM #2

A government by residence and NOT politicians (2)
Advocacy to protect the interests of Johns Creek (1)
Opportunities for resident input and engagement
Continue operating in a structure as is now
Ethical
Responsible
Transparent
*10-18 inclusive – except 11 (private City services no) (4)
Do what is necessary to deliver services (2)
Maintain environment

TEAM #3

Budget: efficient use of tax dollars
Stay with City Plan for development – watch growth
Accountability to citizens of Johns Creek: government ability to act on citizen concerns
Government should provide for infrastructure: Fire/Police/roads
City government should be actually involved in recruiting business and industry
City government should create clear vision/mission/plan for next 10 years

TEAM #4

***Provide basic services at lowest tax rate
*Provide expanded services (Parks & Rec) and arts
****Lease amount of regulation necessary – consistent with running an efficient government
***Not use police department as source of revenue
***Open and transparent government
*Local control
*Strong relationships with HOAs and neighborhoods
Advocacy to protect community interests
Privatization of services to maximize value for cost
***Voters must approve any change to millage rate (in favor of current language in Charter now)
*Do everything possible to create Milton County
Mass transit – explore

TEAM #5

*****Financially efficient use of money
**No borrowing
***Invest in capital improvements as required. Road/parks and buying assets
**Prioritize budget to improve roads
****Effectively manage growth of City
*Continue improvement of safety to citizens
**Conformance to Comprehensive Plan – long-term focus
*****Priority to Police, Fire, roads, schools

- *Protect green space
- Residents should have non-profit to buy parks
- *Place 3% per year cap on appraisal increases for City portion
- *Bring school system into City control
- *Focus on long-term view of City
- *Zoning to consider potential for “slums”

TEAM #6

- Roads, Police, Fire (2)
- Do not involve zoning to pick and choose winners of business development (1)
- City needs to develop commercial/industry tax revenue (3)
- CZIM restricts development
- Council selectively uses public input to support or reject their agenda

TEAM #7

- Open and transparent government (#13 on list) (5)
- Maintain flexibility; i.e., Milton County (4)
- Maintain infrastructure quality (5)
- Only policies to maintain and enhance property values (5)

TEAM #8

- *Be positively responsive
- *Do primary function (Police, Fire, safety)
- Most economical way
- Deliver services on consistent basis
- Adhering to comprehensive use plan
- *Maintain roads, long-term plan
- Treated with respect, even if ornery
- Provide amenities (park)
- *Economic encouragement for small businesses
- Maintain minimum regulation
- Good fire and police (5)
- Good government responses (5)
- Resident involvement (#2 on the list) (2)
- Strong working relationship (#17 on the list) (3)
- Advocate and protect interest (#18 on the list) (5)
- Local control of City government (#15 on the list) (5)
- City services (#12 A on the list) (5)
- City ethics (#12 B on the list) (5)

ROUND TWO: REPRESENTATION AND ELECTIONS

Common Themes

Question #3. What are the pros/cons of term limits for mayor and city council?

PROS

- Fresh faces / new ideas (4)
- Favor two term limit
- Prevents entrenchment of elected officials
- Keeps community involved
- New approach and vision
- More community involvement
- Forces succession planning
- More accountability
- Get rid of bad people quickly
- New members of community have chance to serve
- Term: 1+1 or 3

CONS

- Loss of educated experienced people (3)
- Prevent continuity and working being performed (2)
- Creating an issue
- Might not have enough people
- Loss of high quality leadership

Overall Comments

TEAM #1

Council needs 12 years limit

Lose experience with limits

If limited, voters lose choice

*Get fresh faces and ideas with limits

*Favor two-term limit (Mayor and Council) (4 years term)

At large balances term limit

*Can go from Council to Mayor? Sit out one term

TEAM #2

Small enough to vote out if unhappy (con)

*Prevent continuity in work being performed (con)

*Term limit would cause you to lose educated/experienced people (con)

Lack of voters could result in inability to replace

*Term limits not issue now but could become issue

Limit on money spent on election

Fair and equitable leadership without political agendas

TEAM #3

Pro

- *Fresh blood
- *Not institutional
- **Limits cronyism
- *Helps if not excluded from serving on City-funded committees

Con

- **Lose experience
- *Lose momentum
- *Learning curve
- *Bureaucracy becomes subject matter Cost

Commitment for long term

TEAM #4

Pro

- **Will allow for new ideas/people
- ****Prevents entrenchment of elected officials
- Prevents accumulation of power over time
- ***Keeps community involved

Con

- *Learning curve of new member(s):
Less efficient
- Additional cost of elections
- **4+ years too long

TEAM #5

Pro

- ****New approach/vision
- *Less entrenched
- Less potential dishonesty
- ***More community involvement
- ***More people willing to take leap and run
- **Can cost less to run for vacant seat
- ***Forces secession planning
- Makes City run more like business
- ***More accountability
- ***New ideas (prevents stagnation)

Con

- ***Lack of experience
- *Might not have enough people
- ****Lack of continuity
- ***Accountability

**Could have term limits and be able to return after a break

TEAM #6

Pro (3 votes)

- 2 terms x 4 years
- Reduce terms to 2 years

Con (0 votes)

Other Limits: Mayor and Council cannot serve where there is conflict, i.e., \$ to board from City; ethics
Veto to stay line item and no adjustment to Charter

TEAM #7

Get rid of bad people quickly (1)
Get rid of good people
People can vote to choose good/bad
Limit candidate spending on election. Limit signs
New members of community have chance to serve (1)
Term 1 + 1 or 3 (3)

TEAM #8

Pro

Fresh ideas and attitude
Ongoing education through new people

Con

Loss of high quality leadership
Lose continuity
Increases cost of getting elected
Entrenchment of Council member
Discourage quality people from running

Question #4: What are the pros/cons of council elections by district versus at large?

Common Themes

AT LARGE

- Community wide view
- Avoid services to buy votes
- Elected officials knowing the entire city and issues
- Appeal to everyone equally
- Less political
- Less potential fiefdoms
- Keep it the way it is now
- Responsive to entire city

DISTRICT

- Keeps candidates closer to the peoples
- Candidates live in the district / local representation (2)
- Candidates from various parts of the community (3)
- People have a person to go to
- Council members will in the same conditions as the people as they represent
- 4 district, 2 at large, mayor: good balance (2)
- Easy for people to campaign
- Know the neighborhood
- Cheaper campaign / lower cost (2)
- Potential direct communications
- Balanced representation

Overall Comments

TEAM #1

District, keeps candidate close to people

Candidate should live in district

Could have all candidates from one area under present – bad!

People have person to go to

Council member lives in same conditions as people he represents

TEAM #2

Desire – 5 districts (posts)

1 At Large

Mayor

-Like Fulton County model

-Desire district based seats on boards

-Greater control to people in district

Potential problems/conflicts of interest/self-interest with districts

*Look at 4D/2AL/Mayor

-good balance

Johns Creek has consistent community
Possible Justice Department issue with district

TEAM #3

At Large

Pro

Appeal to everyone equally

Con

Cost to candidates

*Potential lack of representation if not living in the area

No obvious preference

Districts

Pro

*Local council representation
Some at large, some district

Con

Bring services to buy votes

TEAM #4

District

Pro

*District – easier for people to campaign

*District – knowledge of community
**Less expensive to run District Campaign

Con

District – knowledge limited to other parts
Of City

At Large

**Elected official would need to know the entire
City (issues)

****At Large – elected official could come
from same area (neighborhood)
Could overlook need of a community

TEAM #5

District

Pro

**Know the neighborhood
*Accountability

Easier to influence Council members
**Cheaper campaign
Voter turnout small count still influence

Con

****Create fiefdoms
Strength of council member (lack of
Effectiveness)
***Creates more “politics”
Council in-fighting
May not get enough candidates to fill
vacancies
*Voter turnout could be so small – could be
Influenced by small number of
uninformed

*Could have mixture (4 districts) (2 at large)

**What’s wrong with keeping it the way it is now (all at large)?

TEAM #6

Pros of District: Know your council person

Proposal: Elect at large, but District A (Post) candidates must live in District A
3 districts in City so that election every 2 years

TEAM #7

Should Individual be from district but elected at large?

4 Districts and 2 at large (4)

Geographic division of districts (1)

TEAM #8

Pro (At Large/Con District)

Responsive to entire City

More people voting

Voters pay more attention to the City
and issues

Con (At Large/Pro District)

More familiar with area

Lower cost of election

More direct communication

Avoid imbalance of representation

Question #5: What constitutes “winning” an election – majority of those voting or simple plurality?

Common Themes

- Majority wins 50 plus one (6)
- Plurality wins most (3)
- Voting Majority: never get a majority of eligible voters
- Majority only for elected officials

Overall Comments

TEAM #1

*Majority wins 50% +1

*Plurality wins (most)

Plurality \geq 40%

Majority is expensive

Majority gives most vetted candidate

TEAM #2

Plurality – most votes

Plurality w/ minimum %

*Majority – more common

-More costly

-Not occurring always

-Democratic process – representation

Willing to \$ for runoff

Concern to get voters

*-Never get majority of eligible voters

TEAM #3

*Majority 50% +1 – runoffs

Only for elected officials

TEAM #4

****Plurality saves money

****Plurality captures greatest number of votes

Majority will produce “runoffs”

District – Plurality recommendation

At Large – Majority recommendation

****Combination of At Large and District elections

TEAM #5

Plurality could be cheaper

*****Majority

TEAM #6

3 votes: 50 +1 is way to go. No plurality.

TEAM #7

***Plurality

*Majority

*Plurality but must achieve a minimum percentage

TEAM #8

Majority

Pro

Better candidates

Better vetting process

Con

Higher cost to City and candidates

Plurality

Pro

Lower cost

Con

Lower quality candidates

ROUND THREE: JOHNS CREEK CITY SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES

Common Themes

Question #6. What are the most important service responsibilities of Johns Creek city government?

- Fire (8)
 - Police (8)
 - Roads (8)
 - Planning for future growth and development (5)
 - Economic development and growth (2)
 - Open and green spaces (2)
 - Preservation of natural resources (2)
-
- Traffic flow
 - Schools (city responsibility)
 - Quality of look
 - Building codes: maintenance and enforcement
 - Infrastructure
 - Parks

Overall Comments

TEAM #1

4- Police and Fire

4- Traffic Flow

4- Quality of roads

4 – Schools (make a function of the City)

4 – Quality “look” of the City

1- Other: Need to have head of Public Safety

TEAM #2

*Safety, safe community

*Emergency services, rapid

*Natural resources

Planning for growth (not like Roswell Rd)

*Maintain and design roads

Protection of property values

Pursue grants/external funding

Beautiful and well-maintained streetscape, signage

*Encourage economic growth without enlarging the commercial footprint

TEAM #3

**Roads/maintenance

**Public safety

**Planning for future growth

Quality buildings #5

*Preservation of natural resources

Recreation/leisure programs

*Public/alternate transportation

Protection of property values

TEAM #4

*Safe community (1)

Stimulate business (8)

Emergency response (2)

Planning and development (3)

*Maintain roads (10)

Beautification (12)

Storm water management (11)

Sidewalks/Trails (14)

Response to open records request (18)

TEAM #5

***Fire and Police (laws

Security

***Infrastructure

**Schools

**Roads (potholes)

Comp. Plan

Zoning (Planning and enforcement)

Strong Planning Commission

*Building codes

Enforcement/ordinance

*Parks and green space management

Public Works

Senior Center (i.e., Park Place)

Community involvement and safety programs

*Traffic management

Pursue grants and external funding sources

Courts/Judges

TEAM #6

Provide roads, fire, police protection considering cost v. benefit

Planning for future growth and development

-attract commercial and technology companies

Quality buildings and developments

Requirement for balanced budget

Charter: establish “needs” v. “wants”

i.e., “roads” v. parks/community events

TEAM #7

**Public Works – roads

***Police

***Fire

***Building code – maintain and enforce

****Planning for future growth and development

-encourage growth

-business

-retail

*Municipal Court – especially teenagers

***Attention to push down from State/Courts

-traffic management coordination

***Protection of natural resources

TEAM #8

6. (2, 10, 15) (6, 8, 18, 2, 10) (1, 2, 8) (2, 6, 13)

Question #7: What services should the city evaluate?

Common Themes

A. For alteration / elimination?

- Trash collection (3)
 - Grants and sponsorships (3)
 - Trails / walking-paths (2)
 - Public transportation (2)
 - Road maintenance/pavement (2)
 - None (2)
-
- Business friendly
 - Swimming pools
 - Tennis courts
 - City staff reductions
 - Recreation and leisure programs
 - Flooding and rainwater program
 - Alter ethic language – no elected officials serving on boards receiving city funds
 - Senior center

B: for new or additional services and you are willing to pay for?

-
- Parks
 - City center
 - Roads
 - Public transportation
 - No – less is more
 - Outside revenue generation: grants and sponsorships

Overall Comments

TEAM #1

A: Alteration/Evaluation

- Not spending money on walking paths (3)
- Not building big swimming pools and tennis courts (4)
- Number of parks or green space – no more (3)
- Be more business friendly (4)
- Trash collection – leave it alone; let households choose (4)
- Insure highest quality of Fire and Police (4)

B: For New or Additional Services You Are Willing to Pay For

- No – less is more (4)

TEAM #2

- a) Recreation and leisure programs, reduce investment
Reduce trails/paths, etc., as budget item
Trash collection – evaluation; impact on roads
Flooding and rain water program – needed?
- b) Add trash collection

TEAM #3

- a) *Stop giving grants to not for profits
*Stop funding Senior Center for couple percentage points of population
*Work with other cities to decrease \$ of trash charge
Stop regulating trash pick up
 - b) No
- ****Roads paved
*Restrict amount in retirement for City employees to mirror private industry
**City Center

TEAM #4

- A) *20 – alternative transportation – No
- *4 – Sponsor parades – No
14 – sidewalks – trails – Limit
*8 – stimulate business – belongs to Chamber
*Minimize government building footprint
- B) New/Additional
- 15 – Consolidate waste haulers
*6 – More parks
Performing Arts Center for revenue
***Road maintenance

TEAM #5

- A) *Elimination of waste management service
*Rec – leisure programs for all generations (eliminate)
*Sponsorship of common activities (unfunded mandates)
*Evaluate reducing funding to Rec. and move to streets and infrastructure
*Reduce City staff
 - B) (-) City Center
- Enhance City and Parks Department
*Hire revenue generation position (grants and sponsors)

TEAM #6

Alteration

- Compensate private property owners if use of property is restricted by zoning
***Alter ethics language – no elected official can serve on board of commissions that receives City funds
*Keep veto and strong Mayor

Elimination

*Public transportation (strike from Charter)

Solid waste disposal

Regulation of business types as “desirable/undesirable”

TEAM #7

New/Additional Services

Small community signs – slow process

Other Undesirables

Billboards (City/County issue)

TEAM #8

Fulton County to Johns Creek transfer:

- Road maintenance 1st
- Establishment of Milton County

Charter Commission Citizen Summit March 13, 2012

Messages

To Charter Commission...

Michael Pelot-Hobbs
Prestwick Club Subdivision Board

- Need Roads repaved – we're a 12 and "good" condition is 70 rating
 - Favor ability for city charter to allow bonds for streets
-

- Condition of Roads – Repair/Reconstruct
 - Volume of 3 to 7 PM traffic on Old Alabama Road
-

Thank you for putting the Citizen Summit together and for allowing citizen input.

On a personal note – I would like to see funding for a performing arts center that would be a multi-use building that would generate money for the City. The building could be used for concerts, conferences and rented out for public and private events. Thanks again. Kevin Brown

Do No Harm! Government should...Keep it clean, Keep it safe, fix the roads and get out of our way! Mike Hausmann

Cautious spending at all times

Skip Rolquin

Don't take on functions that the community should do, ie. Churches, schools, service orgs, non-profits.

Keep City working on primary functions: police, fire, laws/ordinances, infrastructure.

Community should rise up to do any additional services.

Suggest term limits for Mayor 2 4 year terms. Council 2 4 year terms. Able to run again after off year.

Emmett Shaffer did a fabulous job.

Please focus on the traffic issues in JC and analyze the traffic lights to match traffic patterns.

Please hold additional public info sessions like the one held Mar 13. Critical to get more input.

Please continue to protect, enhance green space in Johns Creek.

Please focus on zoning issues for the benefit of the entire city, not just the immediate surroundings.

Please develop a City Center – mixed use – government, residential, park, amphitheater, arts

Do not raise millage rate. Bring in more service business.

“Allow” City to borrow for capital improvement and long-term assets.

Do away with State requirement to have a garbage dept.

We need to change bond etc. approval to majority of those voting. Majority of eligible voters is stupid! Ed Pearlman

Do not make it easier to raise the millage rate.

Change Article 1.12-B39A to majority of voters voting on the issue. Have 5 council posts defined by geographical area and one post-at large and the mayor post.

Many thanks for your dedication, analysis, your time and effort. Mary Brent Buckett

I want to see a change to enable approval of a millage rate increase by a majority of participating voters rather than eligible voters.

1. Expectations – I would like to see more plans for alternative transportation, continued development of bike trails and lanes.
2. A vision for a city that models contemporary thoughts on transportation, environment and environmental responsibility. Accessibility and planning for human scale development and current practices.
3. Vision – progressive thought.
4. Built environment/living environment

Shirlee McKinnon

1. Yes, there should be a cap on the ability to raise tax – that was the incentive to develop Johns Creek.
 2. Yes, there should definitely be a cap on the term limits of 2 terms for Mayor and City Council.
-

Decide on elections. I would like it to be a district election.

Our city is a dark city on certain roads. Would like to see more lighting.

I am in favor of a strong mayor form of government. It makes more sense to have a strong leader. I have experienced this as I was a strong mayor in Michigan and was a fulltime job, on-call 24-7. The strong mayor has a greater vision for the city.
Mayor Hoeflinger

We need to constrain spending. If millage rate is no longer capped, I would want to see a mechanism to limit spending.

1. Language in charter to restrict the amount of city employees can receive in retirement contributions to mirror private industry average.
2. DO NOT change language in the charter for registered majority to impact/vote on tax law change.
3. NO Districts for precinct voting; only at large.
4. Implement 2 term limits for Mayor & City Council members.
5. Insert language restricting Mayor & Council members from serving on committees or organizations that receive financial benefit from the city.
6. Remove language for providing public transportation.
7. Remove restrictions for trash dealers.

8. City should address priority for city purpose road maintenance and safety first and add language these are needs. Wants like pocket parks should be secondary to needs.
-

Email Responses

Justin Kirouac

From: Mark Endres [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 13, 2012 11:10 PM
To: Justin Kirouac
Subject: Items for the city charter commission to be entered into the public record

Mr. Kirouac,

In lieu of filling out the 3"x 5" cards this evening at the city charter commission meeting I was told that I could send my concerns to you to be given to the commission for review. Thank you for your time in this matter. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me via e-mail.

Items of concern to be addressed by the City of Johns Creek Charter Commission:

1. Article 6 Section 6.11 (b) I would like no change in the wording of this item of the charter. The millage rate cap of 4.713 was sold to the citizens of the city as a way to control taxes and more importantly to limit the growth of the city government. It was specifically worded this way to make it next to impossible to raise the millage rate and that is the way it should remain.
2. Article 1 Section 1.12 (b) the wording on this item should be changed to "The powers of this city shall not be construed liberally in favor of the city but rather in favor of the citizen. The specific mention or failure to mention particular powers shall be construed as limiting the powers of this city."
3. Article 1 Section 1.12 (b) (31) Public Transportation should be removed from the charter all together. Transportation should be handled by the private sector.
4. Article 1 Section 1.12 (b) (34) Retirement should be changed to state that any retirement plan established by the city shall not exceed the average private sector employee retirement compensation for a similar type job in the private sector. In other words if the private sector is averaging a 3% match for an employee to a retirement plan than the city cannot exceed 3% for retirement for an employee in a similar type role that works for the city.
5. Article 1 Section 1.12 (b) (37) Special areas of public regulation. I would like to see this item removed entirely. It is not the role of the city to pick winners and losers in the private sector.
6. Article 2 Section 2.1 (b). Please add term limits to the mayor and council members that they can serve no more than 2 terms total in any council position including mayor.
7. Article 2 Section 2.14 Compensation and expenses. Please leave this item as is if in the future it is found the compensation needs to be addressed it can be resolved by a future charter commission.
8. Article 2 Section 2.15 Prohibitions. I would like to see an item added that would not allow a council member or mayor to serve on any board or commission of any organization that receives any city funding.
9. Article 3 Section 3.21 items (b thru e). Please leave all these items in place as is.
10. Article 3 section 3.22 item (b) (7) Powers and Duties of the Mayor. Please keep this item in place in conjunction with keeping Article 6 section 6.21 Loans in place as is.
11. Article 6 Section 6.23 Budget Ordinance. I would like to see a balanced budget requirement inserted into the item.

12. Article 7 Section 7.18 Please amend that a charter commission shall be seated on every five year increment from the date of the city's founding to be conducted in the same manner as currently stated by the existing charter.

13. Where ever it falls in the charter I would like to see something added to the charter the expressly forbids use of "Home Rule" to change the charter. All charter changes must go through a Charter Commission.

Sincerely,
Mark Endres

Justin Kirouac

From: Royce Reinecke [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 04, 2012 9:33 AM
To: Justin Kirouac
Subject: Comments on Charter

>
>> here are some of my thoughts on necessary changes to the charter:
>>
>> 1- Strong council - weak mayor form of government
>>
>> The strong council/weak mayor form of city government is the most popular form of city government in the United States. The council has started to proceed down this road through the charter changes already made stating that the city lawyer and the city manager serve at the discretion of the council and not the mayor. I believe that Johns Creek should complete the transition to the strong council/weak mayor form of government and remove any remaining unique powers assigned to the mayor. As I see it, all members of the council are elected at large, not just the mayor, and a deliberate decision process involving several individuals is preferable to assigning powers to one individual. I believe the position of mayor should be ceremonial and rotate between city council positions instead of being an elected post. Each member of city council should serve as Mayor Pro Tem, and as Mayor for a period in his or her term. If we have seven city council members elected at large to serve for 48 months, each city council member should serve $48/7=7$ months as Mayor Pro Tem and then seven months as Mayor. This approach would have the benefit of allowing city members to be equally responsible in the running of the city and provide some variety for the benefit of the city.
>>
>> 2- Term Limits
>>
>> I believe that city council members should be limited to two terms or eight years of service. I am concerned that we are ending up with entrenched members who are unwilling to give others the opportunity to participate in city government. The only elections we have held where the public has had the opportunity to listen to varying views and different candidates has been when Liz Hausman and Dan McCabe stepped down. I have asked members of the community why they do not offer themselves as candidates for city council and the response is that they do not want to be "opposition" candidates. Term limits will offer the benefit of greater involvement of members of the community without having to run "against" a sitting council member who they do not necessarily oppose. There is no reason why city council members should remain in office for more than eight years and deny others the opportunity to serve the community.
>>
>> 3- Pay for Performance/Meeting Attendance
>>
>> I believe that City Council members should attend every public meeting, and I am very disappointed when they are not present at city council meetings. I believe that to discourage City Council members from skipping council meetings, their pay should be tied to attendance at the regularly scheduled public city council meetings. If City council holds two public meetings a month, or 24 public meetings per year, then their meeting pay should be 1/24 of their current annual pay. Council members would not be paid for attendance at meetings closed to the public, or for other activities. It could be possible to pay the council members some small base retainer, but the bulk of their compensation should be for their participation in the public meetings. If they do not attend the public meetings, they are not providing value to the community. I believe that city council members should also not be eligible for retirement plans, health plans or any other form of compensation in addition to their meeting pay. Council members should not be treated as city employees with perks. They should be compensated as a board of directors with pay tied to meeting attendance and participation
>>

>> 4- Voter turnout requirements for millage cap changes and charter changes

>>

>> This has been a hot topic of discussion and I am sure it still is. The current city charter requires that 50% of registered voters approve a millage cap change. Proposals have been made to require that only a majority of voters in an election be required to approve a millage change. I believe that requiring some minimum level of participation by the community in a charter change and/or a millage cap change is an important protection to the community. Maybe a 50% of registered voters requirement is too much, but a majority of voters in any election is too lax when voter turnout is very low. At a minimum, the charter should require that elections to change the charter or millage cap be held during a statewide or federal election when voter turnout is higher. We should definitely not allow referenda to change the charter or millage cap during spring or summer special elections and primaries when voter turnout is known to be low. Decisions made to change the millage cap that involve just a few voters do not serve to successfully demonstrate wide support in the community for the changes.

>>

>> We know we have a history of politicians scheduling SPLOST votes and transportation tax votes when turnout is low so that a few activist voters can achieve their desired outcome. This is not a good practice. If we cannot require that millage cap votes be held only during November statewide or federal elections, then we should require that at least 10% of registered voters support the change in addition to a majority of those voting. Such a percentage is achievable in our community and would at least demonstrate some level of community support to the change. Allowing a millage cap to pass with the support of only 1.5% of voters in an election when there is only 3% voter turnout should not be acceptable

>>

>> 5- Limits on bypassing the millage cap restriction

>>

>> The city council has a history of working around the millage cap, such as when it passed the franchise fee. A tax by any other name (franchise fee) is still a tax and should be subject to a cap controlled by the voters. There has been talk in the past of "bond taxes" not being subject to the millage cap. There is also talk of neighborhood "fees" to pay for road improvements. If there is any such possible valid argument for the city council to somehow bypass a vote by the citizens of Johns Creek, the charter should be amended to close those loopholes.

>>

>>

>>

>> Sincerely,

>>

>> Royce Reinecke

>

Subject: Thoughts to contribute
From: Lisa Muzi [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, March 13, 2012 5:17 PM

-One of the reasons I chose to live in Johns Creek was because the schools are ranked the top in the state of GA.

-Rural property appeal within a city (aka...rogers circle area)

-The properties held their values

-Green spaces, small business opportunities (I owned a business for the past 15 years in the area).

-I believe the city government should focus on customer service to the residents of Johns Creek.

Please don't create too much red tape for approvals. To have the residents involved in decisions and rule making that affects us as well as communicate the decisions being made and work with us to do what's best for the people who live here. As a resident, I'd like to feel that the city government departments and it's employees are there to help me through a process; not make a process so difficult or time consuming for me to figure out just to enhance my property. Recently, we did walk through a process that took 3 department approvals and normally requires 7-10 days to achieve this for property enhancement. The women at the front desk were exceptional and understood my needs in helping me expedite the process along with the other folks who provided the approvals. I would just like to see the process explained and made easier along with the city inspector being someone who would offer his help and guidance as to bringing us into the city process requirements. Instead we received a big red sign stopping our progress without explanation, had to try and find out on the web what to do which was self explanatory. JC City please don't assume we all know all the rules, we don't and we need your help as tax payers and residents to know what you can do to make this easy for us. We ended up paying double the permit fee because we didn't know that a deck permit was required...We weren't alone, many of our neighbors had no idea either.

-Somehow we need a better communication plan (digital?) that helps residence to know when the city is proposing change other than a white sign posted in a space...home improvement requirements, etc...It takes more than one vehicle and many communications to clearly get a message out...A more customer friendly process...explaining what the process is and how it works.

-Pros for Term Limits-You can limit their ability to create biased relationships with contractors, suppliers, influential people in the community.

-You can vote out an ineffective council or Mayor.

-Cons for Term Limits-They might not have enough time to accomplish what they're trying to do that greatly benefits the community.

-Pros for District- Easier to build name recognition and get votes

-Con for District- An influential family might always get elected or so influential they run unopposed

-Pro for At Large-You have to be committed to the process...costs more, takes more time to create awareness to get elected.

Cons for At Large-Affordability might deter quality folks from running...more time consuming

Constitutes Winning an election- A majority of votes should win.

[REDACTED]

3/14/2012

Most Impt Service responsibilities-

The list of services are all important. **Has this list of services been reviewed to determine it's effectiveness delivering on it's promise or adding value to us as citizens? Has any of them ever been shut down or do we keep adding?**

We should evaluate what we have and it's effectiveness before we add new ones. How are departments measured for success? Important to have a measurement for the process. The council should be the stewards of the citizens reviewing the departments to determine which departments are servicing the citizens and which ones are not.

**Thank you,
Greg and Lisa Muzi**

Cell 404-610-7863

"I pray above all things that you may prosper and be in good health, even as your soul prospers." III John 1:2



3/14/2012

Charter revision suggestions

Article 1

Section 1.12- Municipal Powers

B5 How are you able to condemn property outside city limits?

B8 How do you determine & proclaim emergencies outside city limits?

B39A- needs to be changed to majority of voters voting on the issue

Article 2-Elections

Have 5 council post be a defined geographical and that post be elected by voters in that area. Have the mayor and one post be "at large" posts and be elected by the entire city.

The various board members (BZA,Planning etc.) each be appointed by the defined council post and each "at large" post would nominate a board member.

This will give people more input in the area they live.

Amend Article 4-Section 4.11 (Boards) to reflect this

Section 2.10

B What is the definition of the territory? Use the language that is in 2.11a (territory or of said city)

Section 2.11

D Eliminate

E Rewrite so as to eliminate references to first mayor etc.

Article 3

Section 3.20

c- add all ordinances and amendments to be added to the website.

Section 3.21 What is the minimum number to override a veto?

Section 3.27 Rewrite

Article 6-finance

Section 6.11 Millage

b-change majority of the eligible voters of the city to majority of voters voting in the referendum

Section 6.26

States that the city shall levy by ordinance such taxes as are necessary. Under the current ordinance they are limited by the millage rate which will never get changed as long as it takes a majority of the eligible voters.

Section 6.34b vs Section 6.35b

Does Section 6.35b modify Section 6.34b?

Article 7

Section 7.14 Eliminate

Section 7.15 Rewrite

Section 7.16 Eliminate

Section 7.17 Eliminate

Section 7.18 Eliminate or state a date in the future for another review.

Respectfully submitted,



Justin Kirouac

From: vijay phagura [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 05, 2012 9:21 AM
To: CharterCommission
Subject: meeting

I would have love to attend the charter mtg but cannot because of conflict. Secondly, I do not know what type of comments you are looking for.

Anyways here are mine on improving the city:

- We need better/more roads or flyovers to reduce congestion, maybe help from the fed
- More police patrols to reduce crimes in public areas and comunitees

Vijay

Citizen Summit 2012 Participant Teams

TEAM 1

Fred Court
Mike Hausmann
Jack Loftus
Rhonda Wilson

TEAM 2

Don Mairose
Don Freud
Bob Stevens
Mary Brent Buckett

TEAM 3

Michael Pelot-Hobbs
Swapna Bhave
Shirlee McKinnon
Stephanie Endres

TEAM 4

Sam Klein
Michael Pickford
Bill Pitroff
Kevin Brown

TEAM 5

Gerry Lewis
Ed Pearlman
Karen Reetz
Major Thompson
Skip Rolquin

TEAM 6

Merv Brown
Kim Painter
Mark Endres

TEAM 7

Marvin Hoeflinger
Madelein Rivera
Rob Snyder
Evan Vayhinger
Duane Armstrong

TEAM 8

Bill Lane
Anne Thompson
Jack Dubs
Steve Broadbent
Mark Browning

POTENTIAL EXPECTATIONS OF JOHNS CREEK CITY GOVERNMENT

1. Opportunities for resident input and engagement
2. Resident involvement in the governance process through boards, commissions, task forces, committees
3. Professional city management without involvement in politics
4. City executives and management based on politics and special interests
5. Mayor as the head of the executive functions and supervision of departments; City Council as the legislative body
6. Mayor and City Council setting the policy-the direction, determining city revenues, defining services and service level
7. Mayor and City Council as the board of directors and hire the City Manager who serves as the CEO
8. Council being responsible for supervising the department operations
9. Departments buffered from politics and individual agendas
10. Fair and impartial delivery of city services
11. City services delivered by the private companies
12. City services delivered in the most cost effective manner
12. City acting in an ethical manner - above question
13. Open and transparent city government
14. City government taking responsibility and being accountable
15. Local control of city government: policies, taxation and fees, services and service levels
16. Partner with other governments for services coordination and delivery: Fulton County, other cities
17. Strong working relations with neighborhoods, HOAs and Neighborhood Associations
18. Advocacy to protect the interests of the Johns Creek community

SERVICE EXPECTATIONS FROM CITY GOVERNMENT

1. Safe community through enforcement of laws and ordinance
2. Timely response to an emergency call for service: fire, EMS, criminal activity
3. Planning for future growth and development
4. Sponsorship of community events and festivals
5. Quality buildings and developments through regulation and community standards
6. Preservation of natural resources and open space and environmental protection
7. Recreational and leisure programs and activities for all generations
8. Facilitating/stimulating economic development and business growth
9. Well maintained parks with a variety of amenities
10. Well designed and maintained roads with predictable travel times
11. Protection from flooding through effective storm water management regulations
12. Beautiful and well maintained streetscapes, medians and entrance
13. Protection of property values and quality of life through maintenance and building codes and enforcement
14. Trails/paths/pedestrian amenities throughout the city
15. Regulation of solid waste haulers and recycling programs
16. Community involvement in community safety programs
17. Municipal court operations
18. Public communications and response to open record requests
19. Pursuit of grants/external funding sources
20. Plan/encourage public or alternative transportation options