

AN OVERVIEW OF ARVADA'S MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

A GUIDE FOR CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

I. INTRODUCTION

This is an overview of Arvada's City government. All of the information in this document is taken from the Charter, Ordinances, or other documents that are available to you. You are encouraged to direct any and all questions you may have to City staff. They are your best resource.

II. YOUR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY

As a City Council member, your job is to represent your constituents and make legislative and policy decisions for the good of the community.

Council is expressly prohibited by Charter from personnel management issues for employees, with the exception of those appointed directly by Council. The City Manager is the liaison between City Council and staff activity.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Arvada is a home rule city. This means that we as a community have adopted our own charter, rather than deferring to statutory state laws. Changes to the charter must be passed at election. The Charter is included at the front of the City Code book.

The chosen form of government is Council-Manager. The City Council is the legislative body that determines laws and policy for Arvada. The City Manager, along with staff, is charged with carrying out the decisions of City Council and for the administration and day-to-day decisions required in the operations of the City.

There are a total of six Council members and one Mayor. Each of Arvada's four districts has one Council representative, and two Council members represent the city at-large. The Mayor is also elected at-large. Four-year terms are staggered.

Arvada opted out of term limits by voter approval at the November, 1994 election. Council members and the Mayor may serve three consecutive terms in the same office.

IV. MEETINGS AND TIME COMMITMENTS

Meetings and work sessions.

City Council meetings are generally held on the first four Mondays of each month. The first and third Mondays are typically business meetings and the second and fourth Mondays are typically workshops. Council normally holds two or three retreats during the year to discuss long-range goals and budget needs. These are usually held during the day, may be two-day events, and could include a Saturday.

Other Time Commitments

City Council members are appointed to various boards, commissions, and committees that meet outside of City Council. Time commitments vary greatly with the specific needs of each group. The time you spend visiting with your constituents will vary, but you need to be willing to dedicate whatever time this takes. There are no “days off” from being an elected official.

V. DURING YOUR CAMPAIGN

This information will assist you, as a City Council candidate, to understand the protocol of City Council meetings and how to obtain answers to questions you may have during your campaign.

City Council candidates are invited to attend City Council meetings. Generally, they are held on the first four Monday evenings of each month. The first and third Mondays are for business items and the second and fourth Mondays are set-aside for workshops. If you plan to attend, please check with the City Clerk’s Office as to the schedule and time of each meeting.

- City Council chamber is set up so that the City Clerk, City Manager and City Attorney sit at the front staff table. Other designated staff members sit at the two tables behind the City Manager. There is a table reserved for the press along the east wall of the room. The public is invited to sit wherever they choose, except for the designated tables mentioned above.
- If you find you need information or would like to visit with certain city staff members to discuss issues of concern to you, please contact the City Manager with your request, or make an appointment with a department director. The City Manager can be reached by calling his Assistant, Michele Broski at 720-898-7502. She can also give you phone numbers for our department directors, or feel free to call Kristen Rush, the City Clerk at 720-898-7546. If you have general questions about the election, please call the City Clerk’s Office at 720-898-7550.

VI. OBTAINING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have additional questions about the election or any other city function, feel free to call Kristen Rush, City Clerk at 720-898-7546.