Constant Contact Survey Results

Survey Name: Municipal Term Lengths

Response Status: Partial & Completed

Filter: None

7/27/2011 9:26 AM MDT

TextBlock:

For the past few years the Rapid City Area Chamber of Commerce has actively advocated for an ordinance to lengthen municipal terms. The term length increase would not effect the currently elected officials. We feel it is time, once again, to raise the issue of the of two year terms for our municipal offices. As a member based organization, we represent the 1300 businesses and individuals that have joined the Chamber team to advocate for business and the community at the local, state and national levels. Your answers to the below survey will help determine the Chamber's future role in this issue. Thank you in advance for taking the answer these few questions.

Over the last few years, the Chamber of Commerce has addressed various issues surrounding municipal length of terms. What has been your level of awareness regarding this issue?

Answer	0% ... 100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Very informed		43	22.7 %
Informed		82	43.3 %
Somewhat informed		48	25.3 %
Not informed		15	7.9 %
No Response(s)		1	<1 %
	Totals	**189**	**100%**

How would lengthening the terms of Rapid City Mayor and City Council affect the following:A. Continuity would be

Answer	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Improved	166	87.8 %
Unaffected	20	10.5 %
Hindered	5	2.6 %
Totals	**189**	**100%**

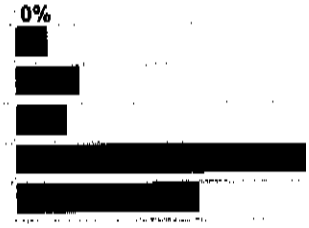
B. Leadership development and staff management would be

Answer	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Improved	156	82.5 %
Unaffected	27	14.2 %
Hindered	3	1.5 %
No Response(s)	3	1.5 %
Totals	**189**	**100%**

C. Long term planning for Rapid City would be

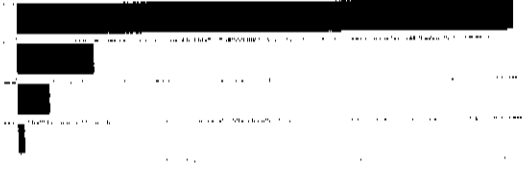
Answer	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Improved	163	86.2 %
Unaffected	23	12.1 %
Hindered	3	1.5 %
No Response(s)	0	0.0 %
Totals	**189**	**100%**

You believe the current length of two years for Mayor and two years for City Council is effective.



Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Strongly Agree			10	5.2 %
Agree			20	10.5 %
Nuetral			17	8.9 %
Disagree			88	46.5 %
Strongly Disagree			56	29.6 %
		Totals	189	100%

Would you support, upon next election, the lengthening of terms for those elected to four years for Mayor and three years for City Council?



Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes			151	79.8 %
No			24	12.6 %
Other			11	5.8 %
No Response(s)			3	1.5 %
		Totals	189	100%

TextBlock:

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Lynn Kendall at 718-8480.

You believe the current length of two years for Mayor and two years for City Council is effective.

Overall results:
Strongly Agree – 5.2%
Agree – 10.5%
Neutral – 8.9%
Disagree – 46.5%
Strongly Disagree - 29.6%

COMMENTS

1. We should simply make the Mayor's term 4 years as of the next election cycle. Whoever wins gets 4 years. That simple.
2. It has been working but that doesn't mean that longer terms wouldn't work better.
3. I also think there should be fewer council members. Sioux Falls has 1 from each district and 3 elected at large - 8 total. Meetings should also be once a week. good luck. I'll collect signatures
4. Two year terms have allowed voters to remove ineffective officials much quicker which has been a good thing in certain situations. However, I believe several officials have been unfairly judged as being ineffective because of the very short two-year terms. Longer terms especially for Mayor would allow for more continuity and give them more time to actually implement a plan fully before they are being elected again.
5. It takes the first year to know what you're doing, then in the second year you have to start campaigning again. Four year Mayor term and maybe 3-4 years on the Council?? However, there would have to be a way to remove if necessary.
6. Seems they spend more time pandering than doing what they should be doing...building a great community.
7. Possibly 4 years for Mayor and 2 for Council. Even with the past dramatic turnover, I think the city can adjust. What just happened was an anomaly. It will self-correct. Anyone wringing their hands about change in the recent election must think individual council members actually make a difference! They don't! The general populace has the final say--as you just witnessed. The pendulum swung too far in one direction and now will do the same in the other. Voters will again correct.
8. Would like to see 4 years
9. With a total turnover in 12 months of every single council person we can't have an overly effective situation currently.
10. I recommend a 4 yr term for above reasons. Wouldn't the candidate better service the area by not having to spend so much time campaigning? Campaigns & the voting process are expensive
11. I would like to see a four year mayoral term and a three year term.
12. i think it is more important for Mayor...i'm neutral on city council

13. Just barely getting started, plus have to worry about re-election for at least 25% of your time, if not more.
14. There are advantages and disadvantages to both shorter and longer terms.

    Advantage - new and fresh ideas

    disadvantage- reinventing the wheel while you are learning a new position. It takes several months to get to know staff, issues, community needs etc. if there are new people every two years, it could really slow processes down.

15. Mayor should be four years. City council could be 2 or four.
16. It is not only ineffective, it costs businesses and donors more and more every election cycle, dollars that would be better spent in the community and our businesses.
17. I do worry about the longer terms reducing the accountability of the City Council. I do think the censure of Sam Kooiker did cause the massive turnover in the Council. A longer term could result in even more disconnect from the voters.
    Also, I believe the City Manager should be reconsidered from the disaster of the 50s.
18. Two year terms is too short for the mayor to be effective. Four year terms is better, but there should be the term limits. City Council should be three-year term and be replaced every three years. 1/3 of council every year.
19. 4 year terms would reduce the amount of time they spend campaigning and completing projects.
20. The Mayor's term needs to be four years, and the council at least three.
21. I would rather see four years for council and three years for Mayor. A bad Mayor can do more damage in a short period of time than one bad voice out of ten.
22. It feels like the candidates are always campaigning. It takes too much time to bring new people up to speed.
23. I as an individual, not as a county commissioner would support increasing terms of office.
24. Reduce # of Alderpersons to 7 (one from each ward, and 2at large with 4 year terms
25. I strongly believe these election cycle changes would make Rapid City's governing body and mayor more effective. I also believe the City Council members should vote this in without going to a public initiative and vote on the issue.
26. Ineffectiveness has institutionalized itself in the office of mayor and city council. Longer terms will not change that.

27. I have never thought two years was enough time to establish continuity after first getting a crash course in on the job training.
28. I think it would save tax payers money for elections if they would change the current length from a 2 yr term to a 4yr term. Sometimes it takes a couple years to see the results on changes made within the city's finances.
29. If anyone one person hold a position for too long they become comfortable and less effective if we switch it up a person comes in fresh and eager to make changes and to get things done that he/she has been hearing about in the streets.
30. I would like to see the Mayor's term extended, but have not been convinced that lengthening Council terms is appropriate.
31. I don't think the new mayor has enough time to put his team together and begin a true plan for the City before it is time to campaign again.
32. 2 year terms mean that half of the Council is always running for election. It insures that politics takes precedence over making difficult, but necessary decisions. It also creates an incentive for micromanagement by Aldermen, so they can point to some "accomplishment" in their personal campaigns. The public has no real idea what happens on a day to day basis in government (whether local or otherwise.) The only way an incumbent can create an impression of competence is by getting a headline
33. It is very ineffective. By the time you understand the process its time to run again. There needs to be staggered terms and all of the longer and maybe term limits, not that we'd have to worry about them. Possibly 20 years should be long enough.
34. I BELIEVE IT IS TIME TO MOVE TO A CITY MANAGER POSITION RATHER THAN ELECT A CITIZEN AT LARGE. HOW CAN WE GROW EFFICIENTLY WITH LEADERSHIP ELECTED BY POPULARITY AND NOT HIRED ON THEIR QUALIFICATIONS. IT JUST DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.
35. The term for the Mayor should be extended to four years and the terms for the city council can be left at two. Any change should take effect with the next election for term limits if they should be extended.
36. I believe four year terms for Mayor and three year terms for Council members with Council member elections would be better than everyone up for re-election every two years.
37. Too much time is spent campaigning rather than leading
38. If they would happen not to perform we are stuck with them for additional years, if they are preforming to the voters satisfaction, than they would be re-elected if they chose to run.
39. We should not stop with just lengthening terms but we should also consider reducing the number of Council members to about five.

40. It's difficult to assume that an elected person could grasp the job in two years. Just as soon as they might get it, the election happens again. If they are not then, in their current term, running for re-lection, it is a waste of time. They need to get re-elected in order to fulfill their promises. They are caught in a bad cycle by their continued "running for e-election" mode. I would assume a 3-4 year term would help.
41. I think the term for the mayor should be increased but not the city council. Those that have been reelected seem to be the ones that enjoy spending more money as time goes on so that they can "be informed."
42. I have no problem with 4 year terms as long as current Mayor and council do not benefit from the extra length of time. I do not feel we currently have a competent Mayor and council. So it goes.
43. Too much turnover. People constantly running for office aren't as free to make logical decisions. Constant elections are EXPENSIVE! Institutional knowledge is severely diminished.
44. They end up spending time campaigning, when they could be working. I would find it hard to get anything done in 2 years. Especially for someone who is new to the position.

Would you support, upon next election, the lengthening of terms for those elected to four years for Mayor and three years for City Council?

Survey Results
YES – 79.8%
NO – 12.6%
OTHER – 5.8%

COMMENTS

1. Yes, PLEASE! Let's get this done and get Rapid City moving even better!
2. I think you should work with former council people who went to the league of city conventions
3. WE NEED A CITY MANAGER...NOT AN ELECTED MAYOR. GET WITH THE TIMES PEOPLE. ANY COMMUNITY OVER 25K THAT DOESN'T HAVE ONE AND RELIES ON AN ELECTED OFFICIAL GETS WHAT WE HAVE. STAFF TURNOVER, LACK ON CONTINUITY, ETC. CITY MANAGER IS THE WAY TO GO. Home Rule baby!
4. Why doesn't the chamber worry about how Obamacare is going to affect small business or increased tax loads instead of fretting about "fluff" issues? Why doesn't the chamber take a position on Obamacare or did I miss it? PS- I would also support having only 5 council members.
5. The challenge is of course if you get people who lack the ability to perform you are stuck with them for much longer time. However it may encourage others to run who will be more capable.
6. In 2013 (when all seats are up)elect half the city council for 2 years and half for 4 years. Then in 2015, the 2 year candidates will be replaced by 4 yr candidates. The election then would still be every 2 years, but only half the seats would change over and every term would be 4 years. That would stager the terms so we never have all new people, half would be finishing their term and the remaining half would add some continuity to the newly seated council. It worked great for councils I sat on.
7. I would like the council to lead this charge and change this current form in form of an ordinance. Jeff Carsrud Rapid City Winnelson
8. I am more supportive of the mayor being elected for 4 years, and would not be supportive of city council going beyond 3 year terms.
9. get mayor passed to 4 years first then move to city council. Don't try to change both at once.
10. Hey, Lynn!! Didn't we all do this dance a couple years back? As I recall it was when Hamburg was Chair.
11. It should be staggered to minimize loss of continuity. Perhaps three at a time and every third year four up for election.
12. I think the terms need to be staggered, so that there isn't a complete turnover every 4 years.

    But that is something the city attorney's office may need to investigate, so that it

follows the letter of the law.

13. I would rather see four years for council and three years for Mayor. A bad Mayor can do more damage in a short period of time than one bad voice out of ten.
14. The city council terms need to be 4 years.

15. I would be satisfied with 3 year terms for both, too.

16. I also like the idea of a city manager vs mayor.
17. Equal term lengths for mayor and council makes the most sense from cost, continuity, effectiveness and leadership standpoints. Difficult to appreciate any substantive advantage to 3-year terms. Should stagger council elections every 2 years.
    Should also reduce the number of council members to no more than 7. RC is not large enough to justify 10 members; current number seems to lead to more confusion and fractionalization.

18. Hope to see them split on the ballot.
19. Leadership development, staff management and long range planning could be improved w/longer terms if the elected officials were effective in their roles.

20. Any additional term length is better than the current system. However, I believe that both the Mayor and Council should be 4 year terms. But this is really just a stop gap. Real improvement in effectiveness and efficiency will only be realized if the entire structure is changed. A Council of ten is simply too cumbersome. Six aldermen (3 ward alderman and 3 at large) + a mayor, with 4 year terms would be a great improvement. This mean home rule. The Chamber should lead this effort NOW!

21. Maybe we should have fewer council people.
22. Yes, Depending on who was elected Mayor
23. I will not support a term of Mayor to be 4 yeats.
24. as long it is not the current Mayor and council

25. Although it depends upon who the elected officials are.
26. for a community of our size it makes sense