



September 27, 2011

Mayor Sam Kooiker
City of Rapid City
300 Sixth Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

Dear Mayor Kooiker:

The purpose of this letter is to convey the recommendation of the Rapid City Chamber of Commerce that the terms of offices of Mayor and Alderman be lengthened by City ordinance.

At a regular meeting of the Chamber's Board of Directors, we once again discussed the benefits of these longer terms of office. At the directive of the Board, the Chamber surveyed its 1300 members as well as hosted two public forums on Aug. 22 to receive public opinion. The cumulative effect of our discussions, the survey and the public forum convinced us that longer terms of office will better serve Rapid City's citizens, businesses, Mayor and Aldermen.

As an organization, we strongly believe the lengthened terms of office will contribute to the best interest of better government. This will afford our elected officials the opportunities to more methodically and programmatically analyze their decisions and the direction of government operations without the challenges of campaigning every two years.

We believe longer terms of office should occur by the passage of a City ordinance establishing the terms of office of Mayor and Alderman effective with candidates elected in 2012 and 2013. There have been many suggested term lengths brought forth by the community, Chamber members as well as members of the Council. We believe that members of the City Council are engaged and researching this issue and have developed options for lengthened terms that would greatly improve the consistency of our local government structure. Therefore, we have not proposed a set length and ask that you and members of the City Council continue to develop and implement a change in term lengths that will benefit the entire community.

The Rapid City Area Chamber of Commerce is a membership organization, separate from the City, which advocates for a thriving economic environment on behalf of our members. As our City has grown and the complexities of governing have become ever more challenging, we believe that lengthening the terms of office will provide our City's elected officials with a better foundation on which to govern.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Benson", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Scott Benson
Board Chair
Rapid City Area Chamber of Commerce

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Rabe", written in a cursive style.

Linda Rabe, CCE & IOM
President and CEO
Rapid City Area Chamber of Commerce

Term Length Q & A

For the past few years the Rapid City Area Chamber of Commerce has actively advocated for the lengthening of municipal terms. We have actively sought input from our members and the community through surveys, public hearings and numerous discussions with different organizations throughout the area. We feel it is time, once again, to raise the issue of the inadequacies of two year terms for our elected officials. We rely on input and feedback from our members, so please contact us with your opinions on the length of terms for city elected officials.

We have put together some questions and answers to clear up some of the confusion surrounding term length extensions.

Q: Why now?

A: The request to lengthen terms for our city elected officials is not a response to the last election. The Chamber of Commerce has addressed this issue many times throughout the years. The most recent discussion was held in 2009 with a request to the City Council to lengthen terms by ordinance.

Q: If you are lengthening terms in order to increase continuity, why don't just go to a city manager form of government?

A: That is a great idea! However, in order to enact a City Manager form of government there must first be an initiative by the people of Rapid City to enact Home Rule Charter and change the form of government.






Q: Will the City Council be voting longer terms for themselves?

A: An ordinance to lengthen terms for Mayor and City Council would not go into effect for the currently elected officials; all of the current elected officials would serve the term for which they were elected. The extended terms would then go into effect after the next election.

Q: If we extend the length of terms, don't we run the risk of getting stuck with an ineffective leader for longer?

A: A four year term for Mayor and three year term for City Council would increase the effectiveness of our elected officials. We feel that lengthened terms would better create a long term, predictable environment that is best for Rapid City businesses and citizens.

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			11	5.5 %
Agree			20	10.0 %
Nuetral			19	9.5 %
Disagree			91	45.5 %
Strongly Disagree			61	30.5 %
Totals			200	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			159	79.1 %
No			25	12.4 %
Other			12	5.9 %
No Response(s)			5	2.4 %
Totals			201	100%

TextBlock:

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

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

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Improved			175	87.5 %
Unaffected			22	11.0 %
Hindered			5	2.5 %
Totals			200	100%

B. Leadership development and staff management would be

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Improved			164	81.5 %
Unaffected			30	14.9 %
Hindered			3	1.4 %
No Response(s)			4	1.9 %
Totals			201	100%

C. Long term planning for Rapid City would be

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Improved			172	85.5 %
Unaffected			25	12.4 %
Hindered			3	1.4 %
No Response(s)			1	<1 %
Totals			201	100%



Constant Contact Survey Results

Survey Name: Municipal Term Lengths

Response Status: Partial & Completed

Filter: None

9/27/2011 10:01 PM 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			47	23.3 %
Informed			84	41.7 %
Somewhat informed			52	25.8 %
Not informed			17	8.4 %
No Response(s)			1	<1 %
Totals			201	100%

Survey Optional Comment Responses

You believe the current term length of 2 years for Mayor and 2 years for City Council is effective?

Longer terms for elected officials would allow for a more effective strategic plan for Rapid City.

We should simply make the Mayor's term 4 years as of the next election cycle. Whoever wins gets 4 years. That simple.

It has been working but that doesn't mean that longer terms wouldn't work better.

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

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.

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.

Seems they spend more time pandering than doing what they should be doing...building a great community.

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.

Would like to see 4 years

With a total turn over in 12 monts of every single council person we can't have an overly effective situation currently.

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

I would like to see a four year mayoral term and a three year term.

i think it is more important for Mayor...i'm neutral on city council

Just barely getting started, plus have to worry about re-election for at least 25% of your time, if not more.

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.

Mayor should be four years. City council could be 2 or four.

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.

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.

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. 4 year terms would reduce the amount of time they spend campaigning and completing projects.

The Mayor's term needs to be four years, and the council at least three.

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.

It feels like the candidates are always campaigning. It takes too much time to bring new people up to speed.

I as an individual, not as a county commissioner would support increasing terms of office.

Ken Davis

Reduce # of Alderpersons to 7 (one from each ward, and 2 at large with 4 year terms

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.

Ineffectiveness has institutionalized itself in the office of mayor and city council. Longer terms will not change that.

I have never thought two years was enough time to establish continuity after first getting a crash course in on the job training.

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 cities finances.

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.

I would like to see the Mayor's term extended, but have not been convinced that lengthening Council terms is appropriate.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

Too much time is spent campaigning rather than leading

If they would happen not to perform we are stuck with them for additional years, if they are performing to the voters satisfaction, than they would be re-elected if they chose to run.

We should not stop with just lengthening terms but we should also consider reducing the number of Council members to about five.

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-election, 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 re-election" mode. I would assume a 3-4 year term would help.

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."

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.

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.

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.

Two years isn't enough time to correct mistakes or enact change in government. Two year terms lead people to be concerned more about personal opinions and popular agendas than effective leadership. Elections are hard work and expensive to run.

4 year terms for Mayor

3 year terms for Council

Would you support, upon the next elections, the lengthening of terms for those elected to 4 years for Mayor and 3 years for City Council?
Yes, PLEASE! Let's get this done and get Rapid City moving even better! Thanks. D. Hanna.
I think you should work with former council people who went to the league of city conventions
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.
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 stagger 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.
I would like the council to lead this charge and change this current form in form of an ordinance. Jeff Carsrud Rapid City Winnelson
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.

get mayor passed to 4 years first then move to city council. Don't try to change both at once.
It should be staggered to minimize loss of continuity. Perhaps three at a time and every third year four up for election.
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.
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.
The city council terms need to be 4 years.
I also like the idea of a city manager vs mayor.
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 factionalization.
Hope to see them split on the ballot.
Leadership development, staff management and long range planning could be improved w/longer terms if the elected officials were effective in their roles.
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 homerule. The Chamber should lead this effort NOW!
Maybe we should have fewer council people.
Only support for the Mayor term as I feel council members have a sufficient term. Need to look at the mayor term first then focus on the City Council.
Yes, Depending on who was elected Mayor
I will not support a term of Mayor to be 4 years.

as long it is not the current Mayor and council

Although it depends upon who the elected officials are.

for a community of our size it makes sense

I'd prefer a 4 year term for the council as well, so every ward would have 1 alderman open every election.

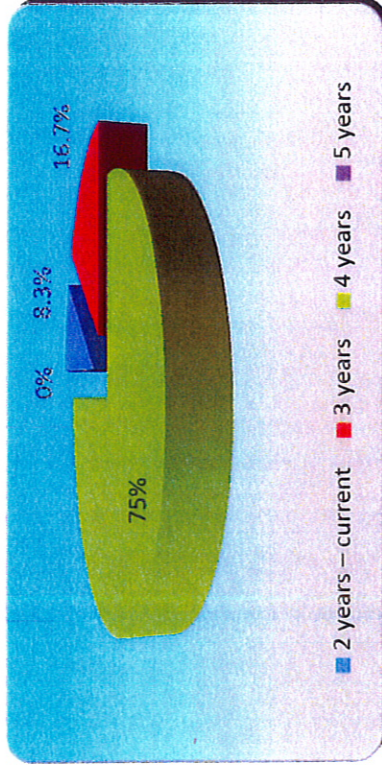
Turning Graphical Results by Question

Session Name: Term Length Forum 8-22-2011 12:57 PM

Created: 8/22/2011 12:58 PM

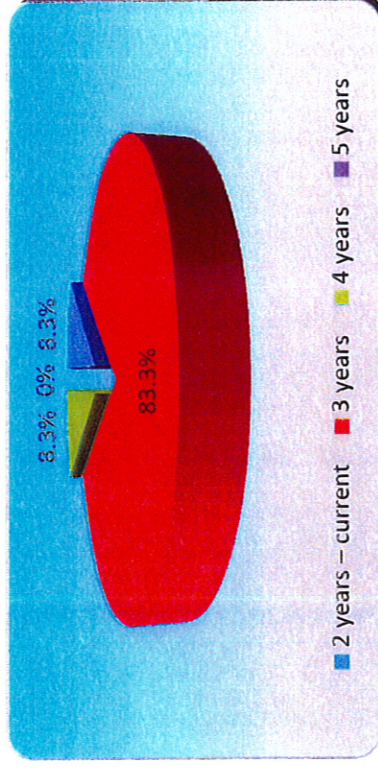
1.) Would you prefer to see the Mayor term length as:

	Responses
2 years – current	1 8.33%
3 years	2 16.67%
4 years	9 75%
5 years	0 0%
Totals	12 100%



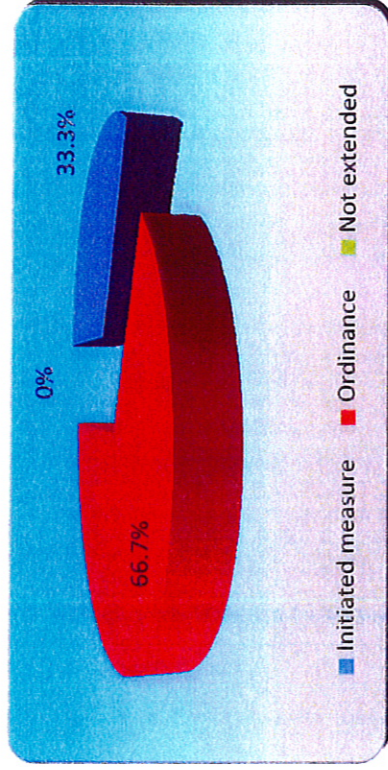
2.) Would you prefer to see the Alderman term length as:

	Responses
2 years – current	1 8.33%
3 years	10 83.33%
4 years	1 8.33%
5 years	0 0%
Totals	12 100%



3.) Would you like to see term lengths extended through:
(multiple choice)

	Responses
Initiated measure	4 33.33%
Ordinance	8 66.67%
Not extended	0 0%
Totals	12 100%



Turning Results by Question

Session Name: Term Length Forum 8-22-2011 12:57 PM

Created: 8/22/2011 12:58 PM

1.) Would you prefer to see the Mayor term length as: (multiple choice)

- 2 years – current
- 3 years
- 4 years
- 5 years

	Responses (percent) (count)	
	8.33%	1
	16.67%	2
	75%	9
	0%	0
Totals	100%	12

2.) Would you prefer to see the Alderman term length as: (multiple choice)

- 2 years – current
- 3 years
- 4 years
- 5 years

	Responses (percent) (count)	
	8.33%	1
	83.33%	10
	8.33%	1
	0%	0
Totals	100%	12

3.) Would you like to see term lengths extended through: (multiple choice)

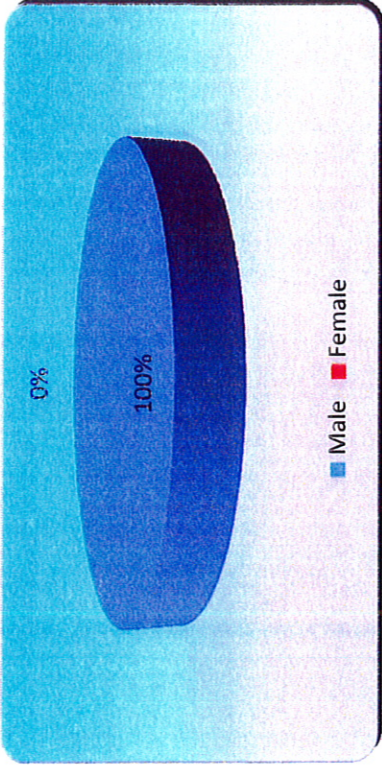
- Initiated measure
- Ordinance
- Not extended

	Responses (percent) (count)	
	33.33%	4
	66.67%	8
	0%	0
Totals	100%	12

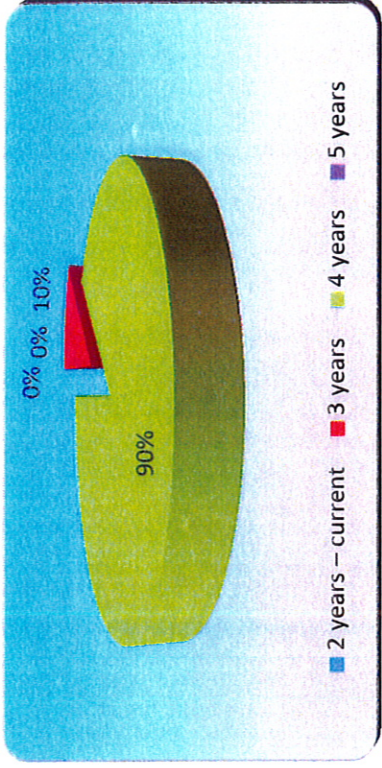
Turning Graphical Results by Question

Session Name: Term length forum 8-22-2011 6-43 PM
 Created: 8/22/2011 6:44 PM

1.) Are you Male or Female? (multiple choice)		Responses
Male	10	100%
Female	0	0%
Totals	10	100%

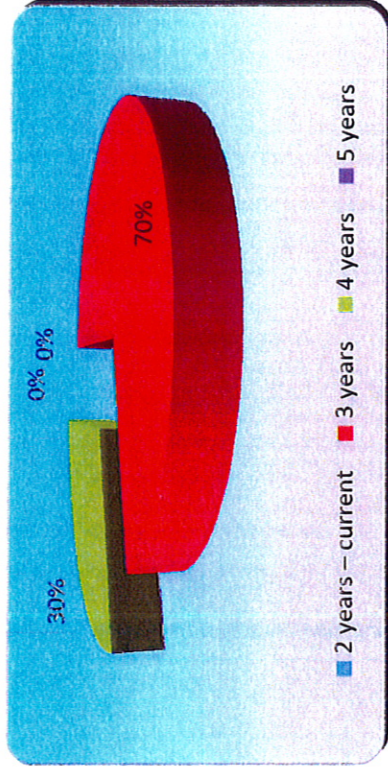


2.) Would you prefer to see the Mayor term length as: (multiple choice)		Responses
2 years – current	0	0%
3 years	1	10%
4 years	9	90%
5 years	0	0%
Totals	10	100%



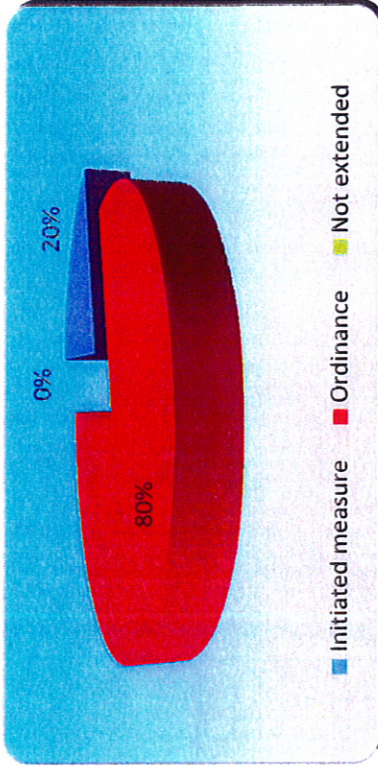
3.) Would you prefer to see the Alderman term length as:
(multiple choice)

	Responses
2 years – current	0
3 years	7
4 years	3
5 years	0
Totals	10



4.) Would you like to see term lengths extended through:
(multiple choice)

	Responses
Initiated measure	2
Ordinance	8
Not extended	0
Totals	10



Turning Results by Question

Session Name: Term length forum 8-22-2011 6-43 PM

Created: 8/22/2011 6:44 PM

1.) Are you Male or Female? (multiple choice)

Male
Female

		Responses	
		(percent)	(count)
Male		100%	10
Female		0%	0
Totals		100%	10

2.) Would you prefer to see the Mayor term length as: (multiple choice)

2 years – current
3 years
4 years
5 years

		Responses	
		(percent)	(count)
2 years – current		0%	0
3 years		10%	1
4 years		90%	9
5 years		0%	0
Totals		100%	10

3.) Would you prefer to see the Alderman term length as: (multiple choice)

2 years – current
3 years
4 years
5 years

		Responses	
		(percent)	(count)
2 years – current		0%	0
3 years		70%	7
4 years		30%	3
5 years		0%	0
Totals		100%	10

4.) Would you like to see term lengths extended through: (multiple choice)

Initiated measure
Ordinance
Not extended

		Responses	
		(percent)	(count)
Initiated measure		20%	2
Ordinance		80%	8
Not extended		0%	0
Totals		100%	10

RAPID CITY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

PUBLIC FORUM

EXTENDING LENGTH OF TERM FOR RAPID CITY MAYOR AND ALDERMAN

Monday, August 22, 2011
Noon – 12:40 p.m.

South Dakota School of Mines & Technology
New Classroom Building

Lia Green, Board Chair extended a welcome to those attending the forum and explained that the Rapid City Chamber has been a proponent of the issue of extending the length of term for Rapid City's mayor and alderman. In 2009 the Chamber's Senior Advisory Council brought this issue forward and the Board of Directors and the Chamber's membership overwhelmingly offered their support of lengthening the term that the City's mayor and aldermen serve. She explained that this forum is brought forward to allow the public to voice their opinions. Lia recognized Joel Landeen, Assistant City Attorney for the City of Rapid City.

Joe Landeen, Assistant City Attorney commented that he had been asked to come and talk about the process of amending a City ordinance and an initiated ordinance. He explained that by State law a City's governing body can enact laws by adopting ordinances. He offered the definition of a resolution, which is a direction a governing body will follow to carry out its administrative duties under the laws and ordinances governing the city. He outlined two options for an ordinance adoption, explaining that ordinances can be adopted by the City's governing body; or an ordinance can be adopted by the registered voters of a city through the initiative process. The process of adopting an ordinance begins with the title of an ordinance being introduced and read, which is known as "First Reading"; and the proposed language of the ordinance is included. The City's governing body can move its adoption without changes and forward for a second reading at a subsequent meeting. If approved "First" and "Second" readings, the ordinance must be published twice and 20 days later becomes law. Landeen pointed out that the mayor can veto an ordinance, but the veto must be in writing to the City Finance Officer within ten days after its passage. He explained that most ordinances approved by the City's governing body may be referred to the voters. To refer an ordinance, a referendum petition must be signed by no fewer than five percent of the registered voters in the municipality. There are 42,344 registered voters within the boundaries of the City of Rapid City, which means 2,118 voters registered within the municipality must sign the petition. The referendum petition must be filed with the City Finance Office within twenty days after the ordinance has been published. If referred, it is up for vote in the next municipal or general election; but the City's governing body can expedite an election by ordering an election within ten days of receiving the petition. A special election should be held on a Tuesday not less than thirty days from the date of the governing body's order. He explained that if an ordinance is approved by a majority of the votes cast, the ordinance becomes effective after the canvass of the election; and no referred ordinance can be voted on again for one year from the date of the election, but the City's governing body can amend the ordinance within the one year.

Landeen covered the process for adopting an ordinance through an initiated measure, which allows registered voters to propose a change by an ordinance or resolution. An initiated ordinance is proposed by filing a petition, which contains the ordinance in its proper form, with the City Finance Office. The petition must be signed by no fewer than five percent of the registered voters in the City. The City Finance Officer must bring the filed petition to the City's governing body at its first ensuing regular or special meeting. The governing body must submit an initiated ordinance to the voters at the next municipal or general election; but the City's governing body can expedite an election by ordering an election within ten days of receiving the petition. A special election should be held on a Tuesday not less than thirty days from the date of the governing body's order. If an initiated ordinance is approved by the majority of the votes cast, it becomes effective upon canvassing of the votes. No initiated ordinance may be amended or repealed by the governing body until at least one year has passed from its effective date.

Greta Chapman asked whether there was anything that could not be referred to a vote and if there was a limit on the number of years that would constitute a term.

Landeen indicated that there are few items that can be referred such as bonding issues; and if a change was proposed to lengthen a term to something like ten years, it would not be legal because of the State statute.

Rapid City Chamber of Commerce
Public Forum- Extending Length of Term

Gary Brown commented that he started pushing this issue. It has been tried in the past for an initiated measure. An organization must be able to take it on and they must have the money to do the advertising to push the election. We keep putting this off because each Council does not want to take it on because they want the new members who are running for election to be on board with the issue. With a turnover in leadership, it's difficult to accomplish anything. The first year, a member is getting to know their job and their next two year term they may accomplish something. I want to see the strength on the Council to get things done.

Dr. Helen Usera commented that this is not a new issue for the Chamber or the public. At this time Dr. Usera oversaw the Chamber's electronic survey.

Lia Green, Board Chair thanked the audience members for their attendance and participation in comment segment and electronic survey.

Monday, August 22, 2011
5:30 – 6:20 p.m.

Lia Green, Board Chair extended a welcome to those attending the forum and explained that the Rapid City Chamber has been a proponent of the issue of extending the length of term for Rapid City's mayor and alderman. In 2009 the Chamber's Senior Advisory Council brought this issue forward and the Board of Directors and the Chamber's membership overwhelmingly offered their support of lengthening the term that the City's mayor and aldermen serve. She explained that this forum is to allow the public to voice their opinions. Lia recognized Joel Landeen, Assistant City Attorney for the City of Rapid City.

Joe Landeen, Assistant City Attorney reviewed the process of amending a City ordinance and an initiated ordinance. He explained that by State law a City's governing body can enact laws by adopting ordinances. He offered the definition of a resolution, which is a direction a governing body will follow to carry out its administrative duties under the laws and ordinances governing the city. He outlined two options for an ordinance adoption, explaining that ordinances can be adopted by the City's governing body; or an ordinance can be adopted by the registered voters of a city through the initiative process. The process of adopting an ordinance begins with the title of an ordinance being introduced and read, which is known as "First Reading"; and the proposed language of the ordinance is included. The City's governing body can move its adoption without changes and forward for a second reading at a subsequent meeting. If approved "First" and "Second" readings, the ordinance must be published twice and 20 days later becomes law. Landeen said that the mayor can veto an ordinance, but the veto must be in writing to the City Finance Officer within ten days after its passage. A mayor's veto can be overridden by a two-thirds majority of the City's governing body. He explained that most ordinances approved by the City's governing body may be referred to the voters. To refer an ordinance, a referendum petition must be signed by no fewer than five percent of the registered voters in the municipality. There are 42,344 registered voters within the boundaries of the City of Rapid City, which means 2,118 voters registered within the municipality must sign the petition. The referendum petition must be filed with the City Finance Office within twenty days after the ordinance has been published. If referred, it is up for vote in the next municipal or general election; but the City's governing body can expedite an election by ordering an election within ten days of receiving the petition. A special election should be held on a Tuesday not less than thirty days from the date of the governing body's order. He explained that if an ordinance is approved by a majority of the votes cast, the ordinance becomes effective after the canvas of the election; and no referred ordinance can be voted on again for one year from the date of the election, but the City's governing body can amend the ordinance within the one year.

Landeen covered the process for adopting an ordinance through an initiated measure, which allows registered voters to propose a change by an ordinance or resolution. An initiated ordinance is proposed by filing a petition, which contains the ordinance in its proper form, with the City Finance Office. The petition must be signed by no fewer than five percent of the registered voters

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in the City. The City Finance Officer must bring the filed petition to the City's governing body at its first ensuing regular or special meeting. The governing body must submit an initiated ordinance to the voters at the next municipal or general election; but the City's governing body can expedite an election by ordering an election within ten days of receiving the petition. A special election should be held on a Tuesday not less than thirty days from the date of the governing body's order. If an initiated ordinance is approved by the majority of the votes cast, it becomes effective upon canvassing of the votes. No initiated ordinance may be amended or repealed by the governing body until at least one year has passed from its effective date.

Dr. Helen Usera explained that this is the time to receive public opinion about extending the length of term for the City's mayor and aldermen.

Linda Rabe said that we are looking for the reasons why we should extend the terms of the council and the mayor and how it should be approached.

Bill Duhamel commented that he thinks we should discuss the two things separately. A reason to extend the length of term is continuity, but a longer term may mean that they may be less responsive to the voters.

Merton Tice commented that if that is the theory, why not talk about a city manager. A city manager is more ideal and there would be more professionalism.

Dr. Helen Usera commented that in the review of the survey conducted by the Chamber, there was an interest in a change of government.

Ben Snow asked that we do not look at lengthening terms exclusively as a solution, but a step to move forward. This does not close the door on other possibilities.

Jeff Partridge spoke of his support to lengthen terms, but that there is a need to make a point that this is not about the number of terms that one can serve but only the years of a term. He commented that a city manager creates two bosses. He supported the mayoral government and liked extending council to three years and rotate and four years for the mayor.

Patrick Fink spoke of his support for 3 or 4 year terms and staggered leadership. He did not support a city manager position. Longer terms would mean continuity which would be good for vision and good for business. He hoped the council would vote to publicly stand together on this opportunity rather than putting the responsibility on the citizens to extend future terms.

Joe Dobbs commented that politics are an unnecessary evil and offered his support of continuity of the council. Need not support term limits but it could be important. For budget costs purposes support the extended length. He had an interest in knowing how many supported a change in the ordinance to extend length.

Gary Brown indicated his interest in extending the length of a term but by ordinance. He explained that he did not receive any No votes on his proposal. He commented that the Mayor supports an initiated measure. He also commented that continuity is important because half are new members coming on board and that means educating themselves on the issues before they are comfortable in voting on measures. Brown suggested that changing any form of government will require educating the public because a certain form of government is not always easy to define. He also suggested that it generally requires two terms of elected officials for the public to know whether they can continue to support the elected official.

Dr. Helen Usera asked what the best method to educate the public would be; and the overwhelming response was radio.

Ben Snow suggested that consideration be given to polling the citizens in public places such as the library and keeping the pole simple.

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Joe Dobbs believed that face to face is the best method and most effective polling, but recognized that this method is time intensive.

Linda Rabe suggested contacting services clubs to give presentations to their members, knowing that word of mouth would get the information out; and also suggested an e-blast to the membership and asking them to forward the information on to their employees.

Merton Tice suggested that an initiated measure is better. This would keep the people interested in their government. He indicated that there is a need to define terms limits verses length of term.

Patrick Fink pointed out that only thirty-four percent voted in the last election and that it's not the responsibility of the Chamber to change our government, it's the responsibility of the Council members.

Joe Dobbs suggested that the Aldermen go to their constituents in their respective Wards to poll them.

At this time Dr. Usera oversaw the Chamber's electronic survey.

Lia Green, Board Chair thanked the audience members for their attendance and participation in comment segment and electronic survey.

August 15, 2011

Ms. Lynn Kendall, Vice President
Rapid City Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 747
Rapid City, South Dakota 57701

Lynn:

RE: Letter for Public Forum Regarding Municipal Term Lengths

Since I will be out of town when the public forum will be held, I would like to submit the following letter for submission into the record.

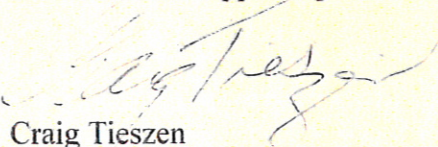
As a long-time city employee who served as a department head for seven years, I would like to offer my support for lengthening the terms of the mayor and city council. I believe the result would improve the quality of city government.

The mayor and council have complex and difficult jobs. They are required to understand and evaluate each of the many departments of city government. They have to evaluate their missions and effectiveness and they have to allocate resources accordingly. In addition, they must set the vision and goals of the city and make plans for its future. All of these responsibilities are made more difficult by our current two year terms of office. Many functions, most notably the budget, occur on an annual basis. With two year terms our elected officials barely become familiar with the process let alone the details required to make good fiscal decisions before the next election cycle.

As a department head, it always seemed a bit of a struggle to keep everybody 'up to speed' and, more importantly, to focus on a vision and long term plan for the city. Lengthening terms to four years for mayor and three years for council members would, in my opinion, improve the governing process. Sure, we could elect poor representatives and then be stuck with them for longer periods but I prefer to think positively and believe that what we will be doing is giving elected officials a better chance to learn their jobs and govern effectively. If they don't perform in three or four years we will know for sure, that they need to be replaced!

Finally, I believe the proper way to make this change is to have the mayor serve four years and the council members three years. It just makes sense that the mayor has a greater responsibility for long-term goals and planning for the city and should serve the longer term. Also, I believe the mayor and council have the responsibility to bring about this change. They understand best the positive results it will bring and it is their responsibility, not the community, to make this change. That is what we elected them to do.

Thanks for the opportunity to share my thoughts and thanks to the Chamber for hosting the forum and supporting this effort.



Craig Tieszen

OPTION I :: 4-year Mayor and Council Terms (4-year cycle)

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	Mayor				Mayor				Mayor				Mayor
	Council 1*		Council 1				Council 1				Council 1		
Council 2				Council 2				Council 2				Council 2	

PROS

- ~No election cost 25% of the time (1 of every 4 years)
- ~Increased continuity all around
- ~Level playing field :: everyone plays by the same rules

CONS

- ~* Adjustment phase for Council 1 to get off Mayoral cycle; 1 two-year term followed by four-year terms thereafter

OPTION II :: 3-year Mayor and Council Terms (3-year cycle)

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	Mayor			Mayor			Mayor			Mayor			Mayor
	Council 1				Council 1**			Council 1			Council 1		
Council 2			Council 2			Council 2			Council 2			Council 2	

PROS

- ~Increased continuity
- ~Level playing field :: everyone plays by the same rules

CONS

- ~**One special (4) year term would get Council 1 Alderman off Mayoral election cycle; three-year terms thereafter
- ~No election savings

OPTION III :: 4-year Council & 3-year Mayor Terms (12-year cycle)

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	Mayor			Mayor			Mayor			Mayor			Mayor
	Council 1				Council 1				Council 1				Council 1
Council 2				Council 2				Council 2				Council 2	

PROS

- ~No special term length required.
- ~No election 33% of the time (4 of every 12 years)
- ~Gives more continuity to the major power in an aldermanic gov't (city council)

CONS

- ~Inconsistency wrt level playing field. 17% of the time there are different rules.

OPTION IV :: 3-year Council & 4-year Mayor Terms (12-year terms)

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	Mayor				Mayor				Mayor				Mayor
	Council 1			Council 1			Council 1			Council 1			Council 1
Council 2			Council 2			Council 2			Council 2			Council 2	

PROS

- ~No election 25% of the time (6 of 24 years)

CONS

- ~Inconsistency wrt level playing field. 17% of the time there are different rules.
- ~Gives more continuity to the lesser power in an aldermanic form of gov't (mayor)

CURRENT :: 2-year Terms

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	Mayor		Mayor		Mayor		Mayor		Mayor		Mayor		
	Council 1		Council 1		Council 1		Council 1		Council 1		Council 1		
Council 2		Council 2		Council 2		Council 2		Council 2		Council 2		Council 2	

PROS

CONS

- ~No continuity
- ~Inconsistent playing field. 100% of the time there are two different sets of rules.
- ~No non-election years.

Notes:

Based on the Pros and Cons, I have rated each of these term-length options for each of the following categories: Fairness, Cost Savings, and Continuity. In options where the scrutinized category was a tie, the resultant rating was weighted based on other positive benefits of the option. They are rated against one another--in order of most benefit to least on a scale from 1 to 5

OPTION	FAIRNESS	COST SAVINGS	CONTINUITY
I	1	2	1
II	2	4	4
III	3	1	2
IV	4	3	3
CURRENT	5	5	5

~If you concur with this analysis, then it becomes clear that OPTIONS I and III result in the most benefits while OPTIONS II and IV provide the least, current term length notwithstanding. ~OPTION I provides a condition where all elected officials are playing by the same rules as well as provides increased continuity. There is a cost savings by reducing election years by 25%. ~OPTION III provides for a greater cost savings by reducing election years by 33%, provides some increased continuity but does not level the playing field.

Proposed Year by Year 4 Year Mayor and 3 Year Council

Election Cycle Analysis												
2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Mayor		Mayor				Mayor				Mayor		
Council 1		Council 1			Council 1			Council 1			Council 1	
	Council 2		Council 2			Council 2			Council 2			Council 2
2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
	Mayor				Mayor				Mayor			
	Council 1		Council 1				Council 1			Council 1		
		Council 2		Council 2				Council 2			Council 2	