

# 2021-2022 Johnson County Charter Commission

- Home Rule Charter adopted by voters in November 2000
  - At Large “District 7” Chair
  - Charter Commission review every 10 years
  - County Manager for day-to-day operations
- Charter Commission membership
  - 25 Johnson County citizens
  - Appointed by a variety of sources
    - Kansas House and Senate (6)
    - Board of County Commissioners (8)
    - Council of Mayors (3)
    - Chambers of Commerce (2)
    - Two Major Political Parties (4)
    - Johnson County Planning Commission - Unincorporated Representatives (2)

# 2021-2022 Johnson County Charter Commission

- Activities
  - Elected officers early April
  - Adopted Rules (First Reading, Second Reading, Timing)
  - April through August “County Government 101”
  - Public hearings on October 11 and 27 (over 50 speakers)
  - Public input through website (over 850 comments)
- Meetings (23 total @ 2 hours-plus each)
  - Second Monday and fourth Wednesday of each month
  - KU Edwards Campus and JoCo Administration Building
  - All had a streaming and virtual option
- Transparency
  - Website ([www.charter.jocogov.org](http://www.charter.jocogov.org))
  - Resources, meetings, comments, minutes, and videos

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- Commission Charge
  - “...conduct comprehensive studies of any or all phases of County government operations, including a review of the existing County Charter and major resolutions of the Commission as they affect the operation of Johnson County government.” Charter 6.04
- Commission Authority
  - Report to the BOCC that may include “suggested changes in the administration of the County government, programs, and activities”
  - Include proposed amendments to the Charter, which then must be placed on the ballot in the next general election
    - The BOCC may place proposed amendments on the ballot as well with a 4/5 vote (6 out of 7 BOCC members)
  - Include proposed recommendations (non-binding) to the BOCC
  - Formal action required 13 affirmative votes
- Commission Consideration
  - 15 proposed amendments (none received 13 votes)
  - 5 proposed recommendations (none received 13 votes)
    - Some recommendations were conceptually similar to amendments that didn’t receive 13 votes

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- Proposed Amendments
  - 1. Non-partisan election of sheriff (later withdrawn based on legal opinion)
  - 2. Create a public hearing and safety advisory board
  - 3. Change all county elections to non-partisan (effectively sheriff and D.A.)
  - 4. Fill any BOCC vacancy through a special election
  - 5. Directors of quasi-independent boards appointed by BOCC (withdrawn)
  - 6. Administrative “clean-up” of outdated Charter language (withdrawn)
  - 7. Non-partisan sheriff and specify sheriff’s budget authority
  - 8. Administrative “clean-up” of outdated Charter language (withdrawn)

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- Proposed Amendments (continued)
  - 9. Create a public health advisory council (combined with #2, above)
  - 10. Establish mechanism for automatic compensation increase for BOCC
  - 11. Revise election of county-wide chair to odd years or to 6-year term
  - 12. Require BOCC approval of department or division directors
  - 13. Return to elected positions for Clerk, Treasurer, and Register of Deeds
  - 14. Establish a new position/structure for unincorporated area infrastructure
  - 15. Change County Appraiser to an elected position (withdrawn)

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- Proposed Recommendations
  - 1. Reorganize quasi-independent boards and commissions to be under BOCC control
  - 2. Continue efforts on consolidation of rural fire districts
  - 3. Clarify budgetary process and authority between sheriff and BOCC
  - 4. Expand infrastructure process and funding for unincorporated areas
  - 5. Establish automatic compensation increase for BOCC members

# Gratitude Owed

- University of Kansas Edwards Campus
  - Hosted multiple meetings at no charge to taxpayers
- Olathe Embassy Suites
  - Hosted two public hearings
- County Staff
  - Lynda Sader, Deputy County Clerk
  - Cynthia Dunham, Deputy Director of Legal
  - Maury Thompson, Deputy County Manager
  - Bill Nixon (and team), Director Technology and Innovation
- Board of County Commissioners
  - Participation and support for the process

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**QUESTIONS?**