



History of the Long Beach City Charter

October 10, 2023

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Incorporation of Long Beach

1888

Long Beach incorporates for the first time with 106 votes cast; five Trustees elected.



1896

Long Beach disincorporates



1897

Long Beach incorporates and elects a Board of Trustees



History of the Long Beach City Charter*

In 1907

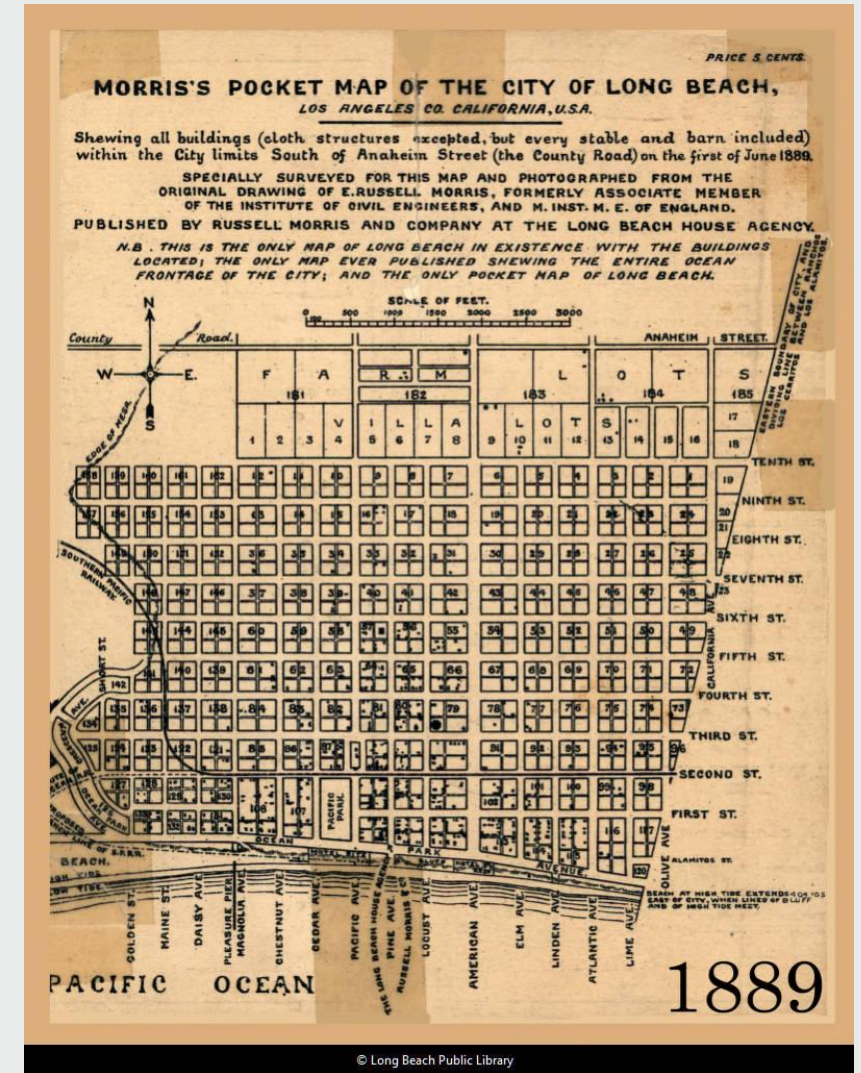
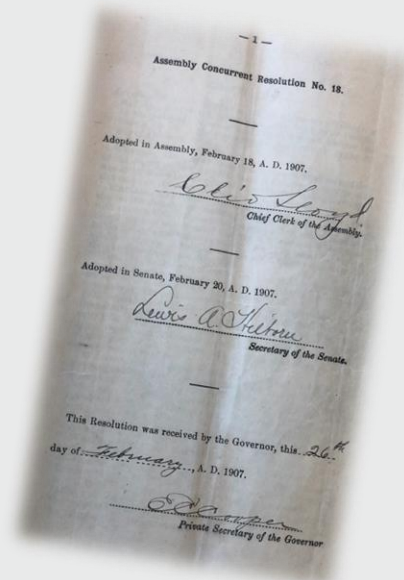
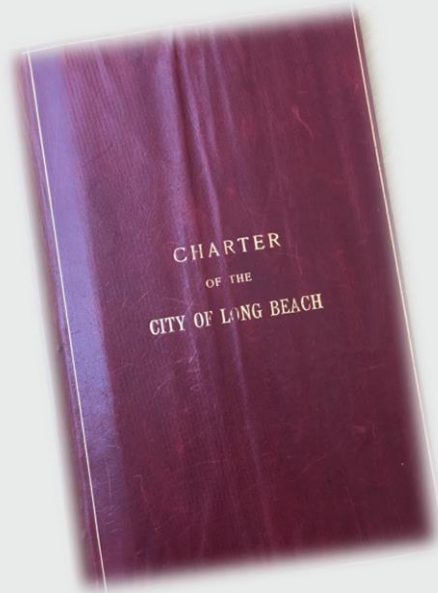
Residents adopt a City Charter establishing:

City Council members and Mayor

Seven Wards

Offices of City Attorney and City Auditor

Civil Service Commission



* This is not an exhaustive history of the Long Beach Charter

History of the Long Beach City Charter

1911

The State of California grants tidelands areas to the City of Long Beach and the Port of Long Beach was established



1921

Fifteen Freeholders frame a new Charter proposing a City-Manager form of government



History of Long Beach



1923

- Annexation of North Long Beach
- Annexation of Alamitos Bay
- Bond to establish Recreation Park
- Founding of St. Mary's Hospital
- Airport established



History of the Long Beach City Charter

1929

Nine councilmanic districts were created

Office of City Prosecutor established



1931

Harbor Department established



History of the Long Beach City Charter

1933

Water Department Established



1964

Department of Oil Properties Established



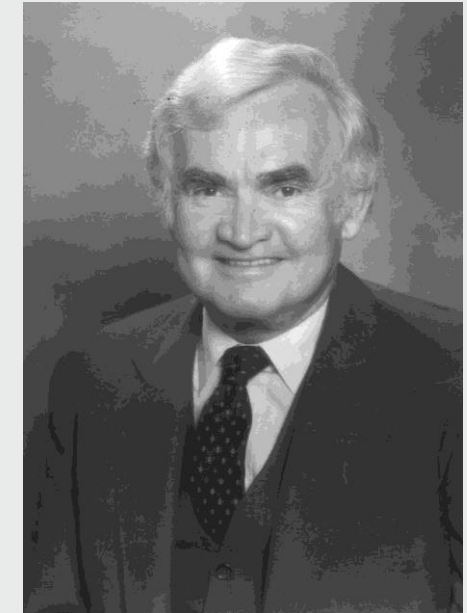
1976

City Council members elected by voters of their district



1986

Full-time Mayor elected by the voters of the entire City



History of the Long Beach City Charter

1990

Citizens Police Complaint Commission Established

2002

Parks and Recreation Commission Established

2010

Preference for veterans added to Civil Service Process

2018

Independent Redistricting Commission Established

Ethics Commission Established

Council and Mayor now limited to 3 terms

2022

Consolidated Utility Department

Police Oversight Director and Commission Established

City and School District elections aligned with State schedule



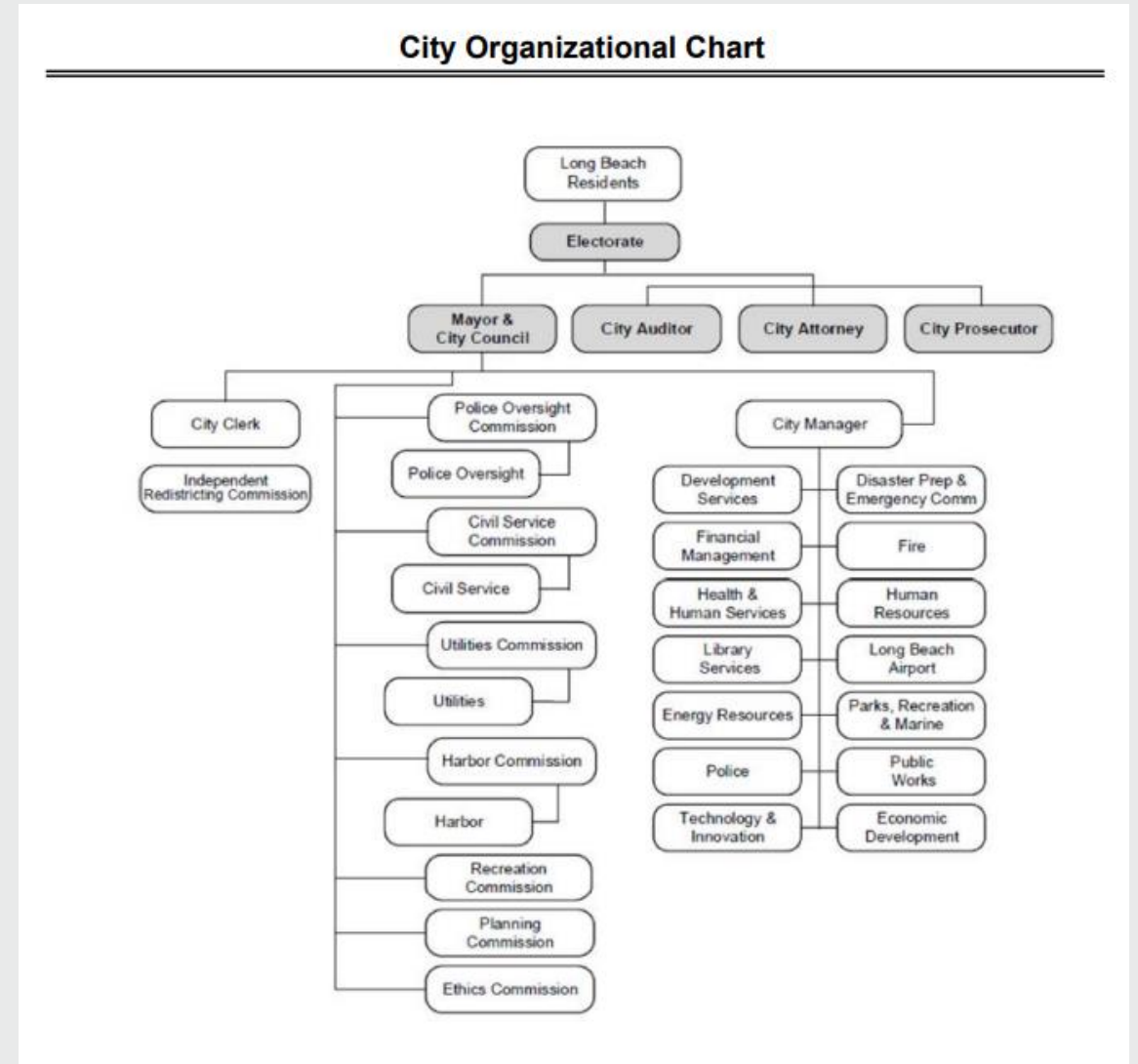
Council-Manager Form of Government

- Pursuant to Charter Section 102, the City's operates under a Council-Manager (also known as a city-manager) form of government.
- Combines the political leadership of elected officials in the form of a council or other governing body, with the managerial experience of an appointed local government manager.
- In this form of government, the elected body establishes policy, which is carried out by an appointed city manager and administrative staff. The city manager also runs the daily operations of the city.



City Structure

- Long Beach residents elect:
 - Mayor
 - City Council
 - City Attorney
 - City Prosecutor
 - City Auditor
- Mayor and Council appoint:
 - City Manager
 - City Clerk
 - Police Oversight Director
 - Commissioners for 28 Commissions
- City Manager oversees 14 City Manager Departments and appoints Directors to lead these critical departments
- Commissions who oversee and govern departments include:
 - Civil Service Commission
 - Harbor Commission
 - Utilities Commission



Roles and Authority of the City Manager

- Chief administrative officer of the City
- Responsible for administration of all Departments except: City Attorney, City Auditor, City Prosecutor, City Clerk, Civil Service Department, Legislative Department, Harbor Department, Public Utilities Department
- Appointed by the City Council for an indefinite period of time
- May appoint an Assistant City Manager subject to veto of the Mayor and override of 2/3 of the Council
- Appoints, suspends and removes City Manager employees in both the classified and unclassified service
- Ensures that all laws, ordinances, orders, resolutions, contracts and franchises are enforced and executed
- Attends City Council meetings
- Prepares and submits the annual budget and keeps the City Council fully advised as to the financial condition and needs of the City
- Recommends to City Council the adoption of measures deemed advisable



Roles and Authority of the Mayor



- Chief legislative officer of the City
- Chief Administrative Officer of the Legislative Department including the Mayor, City Council, City Clerk, and all employees that serve these individuals
- Head of the City for all ceremonial purposes and by the governor for purposes of military law
- Represents the City at large
- Provides community leadership
- Office is a focal point for the articulation of city-wide perspectives on municipal issues
- Chair of City Council meetings (may participate in deliberations and proceedings but cannot vote)
- On or before January 15th of each year, present the State of the City
- Present the budget to City Council with comments and recommendations no later than 60 days prior to the beginning of the fiscal year
- Line item veto power of any expenditure in a budget amended and adopted by the City Council
- Veto power of any ordinance, emergency ordinance, resolution, or order of the Council.
- May not direct or attempt to direct who the City Manager hires or appoints to any position
- May not publicly or privately direct any City employee of the City Manager

Roles and Authority of the City Council



- Except as otherwise provided by the Charter, all powers of the City are vested in the City Council
- Makes and enforces within its limits all local, police, sanitary and other ordinances and regulations not in conflict with general laws (commonly known as “police power”)
- Authority is limited to protecting the public health, safety, and welfare of City residents
- Provides policy direction as a body, not as individuals
- Adopts ordinances to enact laws, resolutions to formally adopt policy, and minute orders for less formal actions
- Adopts emergency ordinances which take effect immediately through a vote of at least 5 Councilmembers for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety
- Vice Mayor may exercise all powers of the Mayor (except vetoes) as prescribed by the Charter, by ordinance when the Mayor is absent, unable to perform their duties, or has vacated the office by reason of any cause and until a successor has been elected and taken office
- May vote to override a veto by the Mayor by 2/3 vote
- If any expenditure in an adopted budget is vetoed by the Mayor, the City Council has until the end of the fiscal year to override the action of the Mayor by a 2/3 vote
- May not direct or attempt to direct who the City Manager hires or appoints to any position
- May not publicly or privately direct any City employee of the City Manager

Terms of Mayor & City Council

- One term of office for the Mayor and Council is 4 years
- Mayor may not serve more than 3 terms
- Councilmembers may not serve more than 3 terms



Vacancies in Mayor's Office & City Council

Vacancy in Mayor's Office

- Vacancy can occur due to a variety of reasons, such as death, incapacity, or recall
- Recall requires a special election
- Special election must also be called to fill the seat unless the vacancy occurs within 88-120 days of a primary election for Mayor
- Any special election to fill a vacancy must be called within 60 days and held within 120 days of the vacancy
- Vice Mayor acts as Mayor until the seat is filled
- If a special election is required, then the Mayor elected will serve the remainder of the unexpired term

Vacancy in City Council Seat

- Vacancy can occur due to a variety of reasons, such as death, incapacity, recall, or 5 unexcused absences from regular Council meetings
- Recall requires a special election
- Special election must also be called to fill the seat
- Any special election to fill a vacancy must be called within 60 days and held within 120 days of the vacancy
- If a vacancy is declared within 120 days of a primary nominating election, Council may fill the vacancy by appointment
- If a Councilmember is recalled, they remain in their seat until successor is elected and qualified

How the Charter is Amended

REQUIRES VOTER APPROVAL

A city charter is adopted by submitting the proposed charter to the voters. Any amendment to a charter must also be submitted to the voters for approval at a statewide general election.

WHO CAN PROPOSE AN AMENDMENT?

City Council – Council, the Mayor, Charter Commissions, Council advisory commissions, independent departments, elected departments, or the City Manager may propose a Charter amendment to the City Council. The City Council decides whether to propose a Charter amendment to the voters after public hearings are held.

Voter Initiative - Amending the Charter is a right reserved exclusively to the electorate. Therefore, pursuant to Elections Code section 9255, someone other than the City Council may submit initiative petition to amend the Charter to the voters by a petition signed by 15% of the total number of registered voters in the City.

Council Initiated Charter Amendment Timeline

- Charter amendments must be submitted to the voters at a statewide general election
- If Council agrees to consider the Charter amendment, the item is referred to the Charter Amendment Committee, which is made up of the City Council and the Mayor
- The Charter Amendment Committee must hold two public hearings on the proposed amendment
- After two hearings, the City Council considers a resolution to put the Charter amendment on the ballot
- If Council adopts a resolution to place the Charter amendment on the ballot, the Mayor's Office selects argument writers for/against the Charter amendment and the City Attorney's Office drafts an impartial analysis for the amendment
- After initial arguments are submitted for/against the Charter amendment, the argument writers in favor of the amendment can submit a rebuttal to the argument opposing the amendment
- The public is permitted to inspect all arguments and rebuttals
- After this process is complete, the Charter amendment language is added to the ballot with the impartial analysis, arguments for/against the measure, and any rebuttals



A nighttime photograph of a city skyline reflected in water. The scene is illuminated by various lights, including streetlights and building lights, creating a vibrant and colorful reflection on the water's surface. The sky is dark, and the water is calm, providing a clear mirror for the city lights.

Thank you