

CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE January 4, 2017 3:30 P.M.

City Hall – Commission Chambers 228 S. Massachusetts Av.

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Call to Order – Chairman Joe Mawhinney

Approval of Minutes – December 07. 2016

Comments from the Public

Consent Agenda

All items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered routine by the Committee and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Committee member requests, in which event the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered in its normal sequence.

Sec. 3. - Municipal government created with perpetual succession. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

The said municipality, and all the inhabitants comprehended within the territorial limits hereinbefore described, shall be, and are hereby created and constituted a body corporate and politic under and by the name of the City of Lakeland, and by that name may have perpetual succession, may hold real estate, personal and mixed property, and dispose of the same for the benefit of the city; and may purchase, lease, receive, acquire by eminent domain and hold property, real and personal, within or beyond the

limits of the city to be used for the burial or cremation of the dead, the erection and maintenance of electrical generating facilities, power lines, waterworks, water lines, pumps and water systems, airports, neutralizing or otherwise destroying of sewage, garbage and refuse, to extend sewer and drainage pipes and water mains, and for any public municipal purpose that the city commission may deem proper; and may sell, lease or dispose of said property for the benefit of the city to the same intent that natural persons might do.

Sec. 6. - Vacancies; forfeiture of office; filling of vacancies. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

- (a) Vacancies. The office of a commissioner or that of mayor, shall become vacant upon his death, resignation, removal from office in any manner authorized by law or forfeiture of his office, such forfeiture to be declared by the remaining members of the commission.
- (b) Forfeiture of office. A commissioner or the mayor shall forfeit his office if he lacks at any time during his term of office any qualification for the office prescribed by this charter or bylaw.
- (c) Filling of vacancies. A vacancy of the commission or the office of mayor shall be filled in one of the following ways:
 - If there are less than six (6) months remaining in the unexpired term or if there are less than six
 (6) months before the next regular city election, the commission by a majority vote of the remaining members shall choose a successor to serve until the newly elected mayor or commissioner is qualified. If two (2) years remain in the term of the vacated seat at the time of the next regular election, that seat shall be filled by election for the remaining two (2) years;
 - (2) If there are more than six (6) months remaining in the unexpired term and no regular city election is scheduled within six (6) months, the commission shall fill the vacancy on an interim basis as provided in (1), and shall schedule a special election to be held not sooner than sixty (60) days, nor more than ninety (90) days following the occurrence of the vacancy, and if a runoff election is necessary, it shall be scheduled three (3) weeks after the special election.

Any vacancy occurring later than fourteen (14) days prior to the last day on which a candidate could qualify to fill such vacancy shall be filled by interim appointment and a special election shall be called as provided under (2) herein. Notwithstanding any quorum requirements established herein, if at any time the membership of the commission is reduced to less than a quorum, the remaining members may by majority vote, appoint additional members under either (1) or (2) above.

(d) Extraordinary vacancies. In the event that all members of the commission are removed by death, disability, law or forfeiture of office, the governor shall appoint an interim commission that shall call a special election as provided in (c) above.

Sec. 39. - City clerk. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

There <u>e city manager or his</u> or her designeeshall be a city clerk who shall be appointed according to law and who shall act under the supervision of the finance director. The finance director or the assistant finance director shall serve There shall be a city clerk and a deputy city clerk who shall act in the absence of the city clerk. The <u>city</u> clerk shall attend all meetings of the city commission and shall keep <u>minutesa journal</u> of its proceedings, which shall be certified to by the signature of the clerk and of the presiding officer of the city commission. The city clerk shall maintain a registry of all duly enacted ordinances and resolutions of the city commission and shall record and memorialize any official acts taken by the city commission in the performance of their official duties. The city clerk shall be the custodian of the seal of the city and of all contracts, records and papers of a general character pertaining to the affairs of the municipality and shall perform such

Sec. 47. - Special tax. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

The city commission may annually levy and collect a special tax for permanent improvements, and the adornment, paving and improvement of the streets and public grounds of the city, and the property of the city beyond the limits of the city, which levy shall not exceed one-quarter (0.25) of one percent of the assessed value of the taxable property of the city. The city commission shall also levy and collect annually upon its taxable property aforesaid such sums as may be necessary:

(1) To pay interest upon the indebtedness of the city, and for the maintenance and repairs of its properties and public works;

(2) To create a sinking fund for the payment of such indebtedness as may be incurred;

(3) And to pay the bonds of the city already issued, or any bonds which may be issued in accordance with law;

(4) To pay any judgment against the city, and any such sums as may be commanded to be levied by any mandamus legally issued against the city.

Reconsideration of:

Sec. 50 – Method of making special assessments.

Existing Text Recommended Changes

- (a) Special assessments upon the property deemed to be benefited by local improvements shall be <u>assessed upon the property specially benefitted in proportion of the benefit</u> <u>derived from the improvement</u>, by the front footage of the property abounding and abutting upon the improvements or other property deemed to be benefited by such improvements <u>inor by such other method as the city commission may</u> <u>determinemethodology that results in the legal and equitable apportionment of the costs</u> <u>of the improvements.</u>-
- (b) The city commission may, if it finds that any local improvement should not be borne entirely by the abounding and abutting property, pay for such portion of such improvement as may be deemed proper.
- (c) The methodology of making special assessments set forth in this Charter shall be deemed to provide a supplemental, additional and alternative method or procedure for the making of special assessments and shall not be deemed to exclude the use of other methods or procedures for the making of special assessments provided by law or otherwise authorized under the home rule powers of municipalities.

Sec. 51. - Resolution relative to special assessments. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

When the city commission may determine to make any local improvements and provide for the payment of the cost thereof, in whole or in part, by special assessment, declaration thereof shall be made by resolution stating the nature of the proposed improvement, designating the location of such improvement and what portion of the expense thereof is to be made by special assessment, the manner in which said assessment shall be made and when said assessment shall be paid, and what part shall be apportioned to be paid from the improvement fund of the city, if any; this provision, however, shall in no wise require the city to pay any portion of said improvements; said resolution shall also designate the lands upon which special assessments shall be levied and the amount thereof; said lands deemed to be specially benefited abutting upon and contiguous to the contemplated improvements shall be sufficiently described as "all lots and lands adjoining and contiguous or abounding and abutting upon such improvements or is deemed to be benefited thereby." Said resolution shall be published once in a local newspaper at least fifteen (15) days before said improvement is started.

Sec. 52. - Assessment liens. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

Special assessments for local improvements as herein described shall be payable by the owners of the property abutting upon said public ways assessed for said improvement at the time and in the manner stated in the resolution providing for said improvements, and said special assessments shall be and remain liens superior in dignity to all other liens, except liens for taxes, until paid from the date of the assessment upon the respective lots and parcels of land assessed and shall bear interest not to exceed the rate of eight (8) percent per annum and may be, by resolution aforesaid, made payable in not more than ten (10) equal yearly installments, as nearly as practicable with accrued interest on all deferred payments unless paid within thirty (30) days after said assessments, which assessments shall stand approved and confirmed as provided herein.

Sec. 53. - When annual installments due and payable; collection. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

Each annual installment provided for herein shall be paid upon the dates specified in said resolution, with interest upon all deferred payments until the entire amount of said assessment has been paid and upon failure of any property owner to pay any annual installment due, or any part thereof, or any annual interest upon deferred payments, the city commission shall cause to be brought the necessary legal proceedings to enforce payment with all accrued interest, together with all legal cost incurred, including a reasonable attorney's fee, to be assessed as part of the costs, and in the event of

default in the payment of any installment of an assessment or any accrued interest on said assessment, the whole assessment with interest thereon shall immediately become due and payable and subject to foreclosure. In the foreclosure of any special assessment, service of process against unknown or nonresident defendants may be had by publication as now approved by law in other chancery suits. The foreclosure proceedings shall be prosecuted to a sale and conveyance of the property involved in said proceedings as now provided by law in suits to foreclose mortgages.

Sec. 54. - Plans, specifications and estimated cost of proposed improvement.

Existing Text Recommended Changes

At the time of the adoption of the resolution provided for herein, there shall be on file with the director of public works, plans and specifications with the estimated cost of the proposed improvement, which plans and specifications and estimate shall be open to the inspection of the public.

Sec. 55. - City manager to cause improvement to be made. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

When the city commission shall have passed a resolution determining that an improvement be made, to be paid in whole or in part by special assessment, the city manager shall, as may be provided by resolution, either directly by the employment of labor, or by entering into a contract therefor, cause the improvement to be made.

Sec. 56. - Publication of assessment resolution. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

Upon the adoption of the resolution provided for herein, the resolution shall be published one time in a newspaper of general circulation in the city or in such other manner as provided by law.

Sec. 57. - Assessment roll. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

Upon the adoption of the resolution aforesaid, the city commission shall cause to be made an assessment roll in accordance with the method of assessment provided for in said resolution, which assessment roll shall be completed and filed with said city commission as promptly as possible; said assessment roll shall describe the lots and lands assessed, the amount of the assessment against each lot or parcel of land, and if said assessment is to be paid in installments, the number of annual installments in which the assessment is divided shall also be entered and shown upon said assessment roll.

Sec. 58. - Publication of assessment roll; notice to property owners of hearing.

Existing Text Recommended Changes

Upon the completion of said assessment roll, the city commission shall cause a copy thereof to be published two (2) times successfully, once each week, in a newspaper of general circulation, published in the city, and in the publication of said special assessment roll the said city commission shall cause to be attached to the copy of the assessment roll, a notice directed to all property owners interested in said assessments of the time and place where complaints will be heard with reference to said assessments and when said assessment roll will be finally approved and confirmed by the city commission sitting as an equalizing board.

Sec. 59. - Meeting of commission as equalizing board to hear complaints as to special assessments.

Existing Text Recommended Changes

At the time and place named in the notice provided for herein, the city commission shall meet as an equalizing board to hear and consider any and all complaints as to such special assessments, and shall adjust and equalize the said assessments on a basis of justice and right, and when so equalized and approved such assessment shall stand confirmed, and be and remain legal, valid and binding liens upon the property against which such assessments are made until paid in accordance with provisions of this act; provided, however, that upon the completion of the improvement, the city shall rebate to the owner of any property which shall have been specifically assessed for any improvement, the difference in the assessment as originally made, approved and confirmed, and the proportionate part of the actual cost of said improvement to be paid by special assessments as finally determined upon the completion of said improvement.

Sec. 60. - Authority of commission to make new assessments in certain instances.

Existing Text

Recommended Changes

If any special assessment made hereunder to defray the whole or any part of the expense of any street improvement shall be either in whole or in part annulled, vacated, or set aside, or if the city commission shall be satisfied that any such assessment is so irregular or defective that the same cannot be enforced or collected, or if the city commission shall have omitted to make such assessment when it might have done so, the city commission is hereby authorized and required to take all necessary steps to cause a new assessment to be made for the whole or any part of any improvement or against any property benefited by any improvement, following as nearly as may be the provisions hereof and in case such second assessments shall be annulled, the city

commission may obtain and make other assessments until a valid assessment shall be made.

Sec. 61. - Payment of costs out of general funds, etc. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

The city commission shall have the power to pay out of its general funds or out of any special fund that may be provided for that purpose such portion of the cost of any street or other public improvement as it may deem proper. All abstracting costs, engineering and inspection costs, including a proper proportion of the compensation, salaries and expenses of the engineering staff of the city properly chargeable to any improvement, shall be deemed and considered a part of the cost of the improvement.

Sec. 62. - Informalities and irregularities in connection with special assessments.

Existing Text Recommended Changes

Any informality or irregularity in the proceedings in connection with the levy of any special assessment hereunder shall not affect the validity of the same where the assessment roll has been confirmed by the city commission, and the assessment roll as finally approved and confirmed shall be competent and <u>efficient_substantial</u> evidence that the assessment was duly levied, that the assessment was duly made and adopted, and that all other proceedings adequate to the adoption of the said assessment rolls were duly had, taken and performed as required herein; and no variances from the directions hereunder shall be held material unless it be clearly shown that the party objecting was materially injured thereby.

Sec. 63. - Construction and repair generally; notice to owner, etc. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

The city commission may, by resolution, declare that certain specified sidewalks, curbing, gutters, drains, street paving, sanitary and storm sewers, shall be constructed or repaired. Upon the passing of such resolutions, the city manager shall cause written notice of the passage thereof to be mailed by first class U.S. mail to the owner of each parcel of land abutting upon such public improvement. Such notice shall be mailed to the owner as shown on the tax rolls of Polk County, Florida. The city manager shall also publish a copy of the resolution in a daily newspaper of general circulation in the city.

Sec. 64. - Method of procedure. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes If sidewalks, curbing, gutters, drains, street paving, sanitary and storm sewers be not constructed or repaired within sixty (60) days from the mailing of the notice provided for in the preceding section, the city manager may proceed by direct employment of labor, or by contract, to carry out such construction or repairs at the expense of the owner, as in the case of other improvements, and all such expenses shall be reported by the city manager to the city commission. The city commission shall thereupon assess the cost and expense thereof upon the owner or the owners of all property bounding or abutting thereupon. Notice and all procedures of assessment required by the preceding sections shall apply to this section.

Sec. 65. - Assessment bonds. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

The city commission may at any time borrow money, and authorize the issuance of notice to bond, and to bond therefor in anticipation of the collection of unpaid special assessments, levied for the purpose of paying the cost of constructing or repairing sidewalks, curbing, gutters, drains, street or alley paving, sanitary or storm sewers, which are to be or have been constructed by the city, because of the failure of the owners of the property to construct or repair the same pursuant to notice as hereinbefore provided for.

Sec. 66. - Assessment for removal of weeds, rubbish, etc. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

- (a) The city commission shall have power to provide by resolution for assessing against the abutting property, the cost of removing from vacant property and public ways all accumulations of weeds or rubbish, and for assessing against property the cost of cutting and removing therefrom obnoxious weeds or rubbish, including debris resulting from fires, storms, war, other calamities, or the demolition of buildings or other structures.
- (b) If the owner of property subject to an order of the city to clean, clear or remove overgrown vegetation, debris or other unsanitary condition from the property, or to demolish or repair a dilapidated, unsafe or illegal structure or structures on the property, fails to clean, clear or remove such overgrown vegetation, debris or other unsanitary condition, or repair or demolish the structure or structures subject to said order, within the time period given by the city to do so, if any, the city may clean, clear or remove the overgrown vegetation, debris or other unsanitary condition or cause the dilapidated, unsafe or illegal structure(s) to be demolished and removed from the property, as the case may be. Upon completion of the cleaning, clearing or removal of such overgrown vegetation, debris or other unsanitary condition and removal of the violative structure(s), by the city, the city shall mail an invoice to the property owner requesting payment to the city for the actual costs of the city's corrective actions, plus any related administrative costs. The property owner shall be required to pay the amount of the invoiced charges within 30 days of the invoice date.

- (c) If the property owner fails to pay the charges within 30 days, the city attorney shall cause a resolution to be prepared designating the name and address of the owner, a description of the lots or land and the charges to be assessed against such lots or land for the cleaning, clearing or removal of the overgrown vegetation, debris or other unsanitary condition, or the demolition and removal of the violative structure(s). The resolution shall be presented to the city commission by the city attorney and, upon approval of the resolution by the city commission, the city's costs shall be assessed against the property and shall be and remain a valid special assessment lien against such property prior to all other liens or interests, save and except taxes, and shall bear interest at a rate not to exceed eight percent per annum, from the date the resolution is approved by the city commission.
- (d) Before adoption of the resolution specified in subsection (c), the city commission shall cause to be published a notice directed to the owner(s) of the subject property, designating a time and place where complaints will be heard with reference to the proposed assessment and when such assessment will be finally approved and confirmed by the city commission. A copy of such notice shall be served upon the property owner(s) by first class U.S. mail at the owner's last known address as same appears on the records of the property appraiser of the county. The failure to mail such notice or notices shall not invalidate any of the proceedings under this division.
- (e) At the time and place designated in the notice provided in subsection (d), the city commission shall meet as an equalizing board to hear and consider any and all complaints as to such assessment and shall adjust and equalize the assessment, and when so equalized and approved and the resolution specified in subsection (c) adopted, such assessment shall stand confirmed and be and remain a legal, valid and binding special assessment lien upon the property against which such assessment is made until paid.

BONDS Sections 67-70 reviewed during the June 15, 2016 meeting.

Sec. 71. - Granting of franchises.

Existing Text

- A <u>Florida Power Corp vs. City of Winter Park, 887 So 2d 1237,</u> <u>FLA 2004</u>
- B <u>Amicus Brief Florida League of Cities</u>

Recommended Changes

The city commission may, by ordinance, grant permission to any individual, company or corporation to construct and operate a public utility in the streets and public grounds of the city, but no such grant or renewal thereof shall be made in violation of any of the limitations contained herein. The ordinance granting any such franchises or renewals thereof shall be subject to petition and referendum as specified herein. No ordinance granting a franchise shall be considered as an emergency measure.

Sec. 72. - Period of grants. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes No such grant or franchise shall be exclusive, nor shall it be made for a longer period than thirty (30) years. No such grant or franchise shall be renewed earlier than two (2) years prior to its expiration unless the city commission shall, by unanimous vote of its members, first declare by ordinance its intention of considering a renewal thereof. All grants or rights to make extensions of any public utility shall be subject, as far as practicable, to the terms of the original grant, and shall expire therewith.

Sec. 73. - Conditions. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

The city commission shall, in ordinances granting or renewing any franchise to construct or operate a public utility, prescribe the kind and quality of service or product to be furnished, and the manner in which the streets and public grounds shall be used and occupied, and other terms and conditions conducive to the public interest. All such grants and renewals thereof shall reserve to the city the right to terminate the same upon purchasing all the property and property rights of the utility, as well as extensions thereof within or without the city, used in or useful in or connected with such utility, and extension, as may be provided for in the ordinance making the grant or renewal, and including all contracts for service or motor power fairly and reasonably made in good faith by the utility at a price either fixed in the ordinance, or to be fixed in the manner provided by the ordinance making the granting or renewals of the grant, such contracts, if so purchased to be performed by the city. Nothing in such ordinance shall prevent the city from acquiring said property of any such utility by condemnation proceedings, or in any other lawful mode; and all such methods of acquisition shall be alternative to the power of purchase reserved in the grant or renewal, as hereby provided. In such event, however, said contracts of such utility shall be performed by the city. Upon the acquisition by the city of the property of any utility, by purchase, condemnation or otherwise, all grants or renewals shall at once terminate.

Sec. 74. - Assignment of grants. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

No such grant or franchise shall be leased, assigned, or otherwise alienated except with the express consent of the city commission.

Sec. 75. - Extensions by annexation. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

It shall be provided in every such grant that, upon the annexation of any territory to the city, the portion of any such utility that may be located within such annexed territory and upon the streets, alleys or public grounds thereof, shall thereafter be subject to all the terms of the grant as though it were an extension made thereunder.

Sec. 76. - Right of regulation, etc. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

All grants shall be subject to the right of the city, whether in terms reserved or not, to control at all times the distribution of space in, over or across or under all streets, alleys, or public grounds, occupied by public utility fixtures, and when in the opinion of the city commission, the public interest so requires, such fixtures may be caused to be reconstructed, relocated, altered or discontinued; and said city shall at all times have the power to pass all regulatory ordinances affecting such utilities which, in the opinion of the city commission, are required in the interest of the public health, safety or accommodation.

Sec. 77. - Forfeitures. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

If any action shall be instituted or prosecuted directly or indirectly by the grantee of any such grant, or by its stockholders or creditors, to set aside, or have declared void any of the terms of any such grant, the whole of such grant may be thereupon forfeited and annulled at the option of the city commission, to be expressed by ordinance. All such grants shall make provision for the declaration of a forfeiture by the city commission for the violation by the grantee of any of the terms thereof.

Sec. 78. - Accounts and reports required of public utilities. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

Every person or corporation operating a public utility within the city limits, whether under a grant heretofore or hereafter obtained, shall either keep and maintain at some place within the city suitable and complete books of account, showing in detail the assets, financial obligations, gross revenue, net profits, and all the operations of such utility which are usually shown by a complete system of bookkeeping, or furnish said information upon request of the city commission.

Each person or corporation, within sixty (60) days after the end of its fiscal year, unless the city commission shall extend the time, shall file with the city commission a report for the preceding fiscal year, showing the gross revenue, the net profits, expenses of repairs, betterments and additions, amount paid for salaries, amount paid for interest, and discount, other expenses of operation, and such other information, if any, as the city commission from time to time may prescribe. If the city commission shall prescribe the form for such reports then such reports shall be made in the form from time to time prescribed by such commission.

It shall be the duty of each such person or corporation to furnish the city commission such supplementary or special information about its affairs as the city commission may demand; and the city commission or its authorized representative shall at any and all reasonable times have access to all the books, records and papers of each and every such person or corporation, with privilege of taking copies of same or any part thereof.

The duties herein prescribed may be specifically enforced by appropriate legal proceedings, and, in addition, each such person or corporation for failure to comply with the provisions of this section, shall be liable in damages to the City of Lakeland, Florida, to be recovered in a civil action in the name of the city.

The provisions of this section do not apply to any utility extending in its operations to other communities not properly suburban to the City of Lakeland, Florida; but the city commission, by ordinance, may make the same or any part thereof applicable to the portion of any such utility operated within the limits of the city and the suburban area adjacent thereto and served by said utility.

Sec. 79. - Revocable permits for laying spur tracks not considered grants.

Existing Text Recommended Changes

Revocable permits for laying spur tracks across or along streets, alleys or public grounds, to connect a steam or electric railroad with any property in need of switching facilities, shall not be regarded as a grant within the meaning herein, but may be permitted in accordance with such terms and conditions as the city commission may by ordinance prescribe.

Sec. 80. - Powers of city commission not limited. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

Nothing herein contained shall operate in any way, except as herein specifically stated, to limit the city commission in the exercise of any of its lawful powers respecting public utilities, or to prohibit the city commission from imposing in any such grant such further restrictions and provisions as it may deem to be in the public interest, provided only that the same are not inconsistent with the provisions hereof or the constitution <u>or laws</u> of the state.

ELECTIONS

Sec. 81. - Elections; time and method of holding. <u>Existing Text</u> Recommended Changes

(a) An election for the offices of city commission and mayor of the City of Lakeland shall be held every odd-numbered year on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November and, if applicable, to coincide with any regular or special federal, state, or county election to be held in the city, provided two (2) or more candidates have become

qualified for the office of mayor and one or more positions on the commission to be filled as herein provided. Should any candidate receive a clear majority of all votes cast, he shall be declared regularly elected. If no candidate receives a clear majority of all votes cast, the two (2) candidates for each place to be filled who received the highest number of votes in said election shall be certified as the candidates at a runoff election.

(b) The runoff election, if necessary, shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of December following the election specified in Section (a) and, if applicable, to coincide with any regular or special federal, state, or county election to be held in the city unless all candidates shall have received a clear majority of all votes cast, or were unopposed in the election, shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie between two (2) candidates, one shall be elected as provided by ordinance.

(c) The qualifications of all candidates shall be in accordance with the provisions of this charter. All candidates shall be voted on at large throughout the city.

(d) Candidates for the city commission, when qualifying, shall designate the district in which they are candidates, whether at large, or from one of the four (4) districts established herein. Candidates shall be grouped by district on the ballot at the election and any runoff election.

(e) Any matters which, by the terms of this charter, may be submitted to the electors of the city at any special election, may be submitted at any election herein provided for.

Sec. 82. - Elections scheduled to coincide with national, state or county elections.

Existing Text Recommended Changes

The city commission may, by resolution, schedule any municipal election, on dates which coincide with national, state or county elections, even though such date or dates may be on a date other than as prescribed in section 81 of this charter.

Adjourn