Proposed Charter Revision Question on November Ballot

VOTERS WILL BE ASKED to decide the question - Shall the City of Auburn’s Charter adopted in 1973, be revised? The charter question will be on the November 8, 2011 ballot.

The City Charter defines the duties of city government and how that government should function. The current Charter is 38 years old and should be reviewed and updated to comply with today’s law. The City Charter is the key to having a streamlined and economically responsible government.

The Michigan Home Rule City Act (Act 279 of 1909, as amended) provides the general provisions required to be included in every charter. The majority of the work by the Charter Commission will be to review and update the language to current state law. There are 89 different sections, and the goal will be to provide the public with a Charter which is well organized and simple and clear in its language. In some instances, charter provisions may have outlived their usefulness, while in other areas technological progress may present opportunities for working smarter and more efficiently. Improving city government will be the Charter Commission’s sole purpose. The City Attorney will work closely with the charter commissioners to guide them through the process.

After the work of the City Charter Commission has been completed the proposed revised charter is submitted to the governor for approval. The attorney general reviews it and advises the governor regarding its legality. The governor signs the charter if approved; otherwise the charter is returned to the charter commission with a commentary of recommended corrections. If the charter is approved by the governor an approved charter is to be published in full. The adoption of the revised charter is then put to vote of the public.

The following people are running for the Charter Commission: Gary Black, Kay Bridenbaugh, Matthew Charbonneau, Janice Dzurka, Dale Grippentrog, Diane Heffron, Kathy Kilbourn, Betty Owen and Amy Reder. Nine persons must be selected through an election to form the charter commission.

Questions?
If you have questions, please contact City Hall at 662-6761.

COPIES OF THE CURRENT CHARTER can be obtained by visiting the City’s web site at www.auburn.org. The Bay County Library will also have a copy for patrons to view. Printed copies can be picked up at the City of Auburn, 113 E. Elm, during normal business hours.

21st Annual Christmas Decorating Contest and Santa Fest!
Tuesday, December 6, 2011

Be sure to mark your calendars for our annual Christmas decorating contest and Santa Fest sponsored by the Auburn Area Chamber of Commerce and Auburn Williams Lions Club. Enjoy photos with Santa, hot chocolate, cookies, games and crafts for all ages at the Williams Township Hall.

Once again, the City will be sponsoring a citywide decorating contest. Judging will take place between 6:30 pm and 8:30 pm on December 6th. Prizes will be given out in both residential and commercial categories based on creativity and overall appearance.

Prizes for the contest will be:

Commercial—1st ($100), 2nd ($50)
Residential—1st ($100), 2nd ($50)
3rd—6th ($25)

This is another one of our great traditions and marks the beginning of the Christmas Season.
**City Administrator's View**

The challenge for the City of Auburn is no different than the challenge of almost every other unit of government in Michigan—reduce expenses while not reducing the level of service or raising taxes. **Taxpayers expect and deserve** to have plowed streets with no potholes, clean attractive parks, safe drinking water (with enough pressure to run the dishwasher, clothes washer and take a shower), leaf and brush removal, curbside trash and recycling and police and fire protection with modern up-to-date equipment.

Last fiscal year the City Commission eliminated another mill off the City’s levy and continued to maintain a balanced budget. We continue to look for ways to decrease expenditures in all areas. The new leaf machine is an example of these changes. The new piece of equipment will allow for leaf collection with a more efficient means of collecting leaves saving overtime hours and equipment maintenance charges. You may have noticed the street lights all have the same high pressure sodium glow to them. Consumers Energy has completed changing the old mercury vapor lights to the more efficient high pressure sodium at no cost to the City. This changeover is expected to save the City over $9,000 annually in street lighting.

The City is fortunate to have personnel who are creative enough to adjust to the changes brought on by the new Michigan economy and humble enough to accept and even request ideas for improvement and efficiencies. During this Holiday Season it is especially appropriate for me to share my thanks for all of the City employees who make Auburn such a great place to work, play and live.

Happy Holidays!

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**Election Information**

The City of Auburn General Election will be held on Tuesday November 8, 2011. We will be electing the Mayor and three City Commission Members. Lee Kilbourn and Eric Larsen are running in the Mayoral race and we have six candidates for three (3) City Commission seats—they are: Ken Charbonneau, Susan Emerson, John D. McNally, Brian J. Raab, Barbara L. Reiss and Russell D. Williams.

You must be registered in order to vote in any election. To register to vote you must be: (1) a citizen of the U.S.; (2) at least 18 years of age on or before the next scheduled election; (3) a resident of Michigan and the city or township where you reside. You must register at least 30 days prior to the election. The last day to register to vote in the November election is October 11. You may register at the city or county clerk’s office, any Secretary of State Branch Office, or State Agencies such as Family Independence Agency, Department of Community Health, or Department of Career Development. If you move to a new city or township, you must re-register to vote; and if you move within the city you must update your address.

The polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on election days. If you are unable to vote at the polls you may qualify for an absent voter ballot if: (1) you are unable to attend the polls without assistance; (2) you are 60 years of age or older; (3) you expect to be absent from the city for the entire time the polls are open on election day; (4) you are in jail, awaiting arraignment or trial; (5) you are unable to attend the polls because of religious beliefs. If you would like a ballot mailed to you, your application must be received in the Clerk’s office by 2:00 p.m. the Saturday before the election; or you may pick
**Did You Know?**
Chemical bank located at 232 W. Midland Road accepts payment for current City water/sewer bills. If you receive a red notice or a shut-off billing on your water/sewer account, payment must be made at City Hall to avoid service disconnection. Tax bills are also accepted at Chemical Bank. City Hall has a drop box located next to the entrance for after hours use.

**Dog and Cat Licenses**
Dog and cat licenses are now sold year round at City Hall. Proof of rabies vaccination is required as is proof of neutering and the Bay County renewal form.

**City Park Building**
The park building is now available for rent all year long. It is a great place to have the family Thanksgiving dinner or Christmas party. The rental charge is $75.00 for City and Williams Township residents. There are several dates available in the fall and winter months. For available dates please go to the City’s website—www.auburnmi.org and click on the calendar and day for availability or call City Hall with any questions.

**Animals at the Park**
Citizens have complained about animal owners bringing their animals to the park and not cleaning up after them. Animals are welcome at the park; but they have to be on a leash and the custodian is responsible to clean up any solid waste from the animals. The City has installed two Doggie-Walk bag stations. They are located by the walking path near the middle of the north side of the pond and next to the first ball diamond.

**Board and Commission Applications Needed to Fill Vacancies**
Applications are accepted for all City Boards and Commissions at all times and will be kept on file for future vacancies. If you are interested in volunteering to serve on various boards and commissions please call City Hall and apply for any vacancies that match your interests and expertise.

**Holiday Schedule**
City Administrative Offices (City Hall) and the Department of Public Works (DPW) will be closed for the observance of the following holidays:

- **Thanksgiving Holiday** November 24-November 25
- **Christmas Holiday** December 23-December 26
- **New Year** December 30-January 2

A drop box is located on the first entrance door to City Hall on the south side.

Residents who need assistance with a Public Works emergency on these days should call 911 who will contact the Public Works on-call employee.

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**HALLOWEEN**

Trick or Treating will be held on Monday, October 31, 2011 between the hours of 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM.
**Fall Leaf Collection & Brush Pickup**

The City of Auburn’s Fall Leaf Collection Program has begun and will end on December 1st; Brush Pickup will end October 28th. Crews will complete a city-wide collection of leaves before starting another round. With the new leaf machine the DPW is requesting the leaves be raked into the street.

Please be attentive to the following:

- Do not block catch basins, which may cause flooding during a rainstorm, or park on top of piles of leaves, which could cause fire.
- Only leaves can be collected with the leaf collection equipment (no plastic bags of leaves, brush or branches)
- Please do not park in the street when leaf collection is in your area.

Your cooperation will insure a clean and efficient finale to our fall clean-up program.

Waste Management will suspend its yard waste collection program on Wednesday, November 30th, 2011. As always, until that time, yard waste will be picked up if it is placed in either recyclable bags or containers clearly marked “Yard Waste”.

**Christmas Tree Recycling**

Christmas trees are collected and recycled the first two weeks of the year. Place your tree out for collection on refuse day. Be sure to remove any plastic bags, decorations and the tree stand. If there is a question regarding pick-up or service—PLEASE call Waste Management directly at 800-796-9696 for specific service information.

**Snowplowing**

The City of Auburn Department of Public Works is dedicated to keeping your streets well maintained. Remember not to shovel or blow snow into the street or sidewalk. Please keep hydrants clear of snow. The DPW does not clear driveways and cannot avoid throwing snow back into your driveway when they are clearing streets. Thank you for your patience during our long hard winters.

**Winter Parking Rules**

The city has an ordinance against parking on any public street from 2:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. in order to facilitate snow removal during the winter months. This gives DPW workers adequate time to clear the streets for morning traffic after a night of snowfall. If your vehicle is left on a City street during the times above it may be ticketed.

**Mailboxes**

Please check your mailbox posts to insure that they are solid and sturdy in the ground. Once winter is upon us and the ground is frozen, it is almost impossible to make the needed repairs to sturdy your mailbox. This will ensure when heavy snow is plowed off the road, your mailbox will not be pushed over.

**Water Service Breaks**

The water service line carries water from the water main located in the right-of-way to the inside of your home. It is usually located in the front yard and should be about 6 feet underground. Water line leaks are not always evident. Some signs that a leak may exist include the presence of water in the yard or very low pressure. If you think you have a water service leak call the DPW. They will check your water service line.

**We’ll Leave the Light On For You**

If you have a street light in your neighborhood that is not working please note the address where the streetlight is located and call City Hall. We will turn all requests in to Consumers Energy for repair.
2011 Remaining Open Shooting Range Dates

October 15, 22, 29
November 5 and 12

From 9:00am until 4:00pm at the Auburn shooting range, located near the corner of Nine Mile and Wheeler. Look for Lagoon Drive. Please note that a daily release must be signed by the individual. The rifle range, pistol range and archery range will be open for use and there is no charge. Sponsored by the Auburn-Williams Recreation Board. For more information call Bill Warren at 989-385-0270.

Pickle Ball

People over the age of fifty are quickly becoming addicted to Pickleball and it is enjoyed and played by all age groups. It’s a fun game played on a badminton court with the net lowered to 34 inches at the center. If you played tennis or racketball, you’ll love Pickleball. Lightweight paddles and a plastic perforated ball (similar to a waffle ball) are all the equipment you need to start. Wear gym shoes and workout clothes, and don’t forget your water bottle!

A group meets every Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. at the City park to play during the spring, summer and fall. The court is located near the park building. During the winter it is played indoors at the First Baptist Church—4853 Garfield Road. There is no fee charged to play, just show up. For the first time player you can borrow a racket to try out the game. If you would like more information please call Neal DeShano at 989-205-6281.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Listed Below are simple steps that could save your life:

Install Smoke Detectors on Every Level of Your Home
Install at least one smoke detector on every level of your home, including the basement and family room and, most important, outside all bedrooms. Detectors should be mounted high on the walls (4-12” from the ceiling). Replace detectors every 10 years.

Change Your Smoke Detector Batteries
Fire experts nationwide encourage people to change smoke detector batteries at least annually. An easy way to remember to change your batteries is when you turn your clock back in the fall. Replace old batteries with fresh, high quality alkaline batteries.

Check Your Smoke Detectors
After inserting a fresh battery in your smoke detector, check to make sure the smoke detector itself is working by pushing the test button. Then test your smoke detector every month.

Change Your Flashlight Batteries
To make sure your emergency flashlights work when you need them, use high-quality alkaline batteries. NOTE: Keep a working flashlight near you bed, in the kitchen, basement and family room, and use it to signal for help in the event of a fire.
The DDA is again making improvements to Midland Road. The project just recently bid out will bring 31 new decorative street lights, landscaping, improved sidewalks, benches, trash cans and decorative piers with fencing and trees. The project will be from east city limits to Price Street.

The DDA is also looking into wayfinding signs with future plans to continue the streetscaping from Price Street to Mustang Lane.

**American Flag Etiquette.**

Federal law stipulates many aspects of flag etiquette.

♦ The flag should be lighted at all times, either by sunlight or by an appropriate light source.
♦ The flag should be flown in fair weather, unless the flag is designed for inclement weather use.
♦ The flag should never be dipped to any person or thing. It is flown upside down only as a distress signal.
♦ The flag should not be used for any decoration in general. Bunting of blue, white and red stripes is available for these purposes. The blue stripe of the bunting should be on the top.
♦ The flag should never be used for any advertising purpose. It should not be embroidered, printed or otherwise impressed on such articles as cushions, handkerchiefs, napkins, boxes, or anything intended to be discarded after temporary use. Advertising signs should not be attached to the staff or halyard.
♦ The flag should not be used as part of a costume or athletic uniform, except that a flag patch may be used on the uniform of military personnel, fireman, policeman and members of patriotic organizations.
♦ The flag should never have any mark, insignia, letter, word, number, figure, or drawing of any kind placed on it, or attached to it.
♦ The flag should never be used for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.
♦ When the flag is lowered, no part of it should touch the ground or any other object; it should be received by waiting hands and arms. To store the flag it should be folded neatly and ceremoniously.
♦ The flag should be cleaned and mended when necessary.
♦ When a flag is so worn it is no longer fit to serve as a symbol of our country, it should be destroyed by burning in a dignified manner.

**Veterans Memorial Dedicated**

Dale Gripentorg’s dream of Veterans memorial at the City Park came true. Dale wanted to build a memorial that could be dedicated to all veterans for their service in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and provide a place where they could come and spend some quiet time. The memorial wall displays the names of service men and women of the Auburn area who perished as a result of injuries sustained in the service.

Brick pavers can be purchased for a loved one who served in the Armed Forces. Forms are available at City Hall or on the website at: auburnmi.org

Pictured at the memorial is Edward Packard a city resident and WWII veteran.
ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH—GET OUT AND VOTE!

BAY Alerts Emergency Notification

Bay County has implemented an emergency mass notification system that is used to contact County residents via phone message, text messages and/or e-mail messages in case of emergency. The system, call BAY Alert, will be used by Bay County 9-1-1 to notify residents of emergencies or critical situations and provide information regarding necessary actions, such as evacuation and shelter-in-place.

Currently, all available Bay County land-line telephone numbers are entered into the system. Bay County residents wishing to receive emergency alerts via cell phone and/or email must register for BAY Alerts.

Registering a cell phone for BAY Alerts is quick and easy. Just long onto: www.baycounty-mi.gov/bayalerts.aspx and follow the instruction provided on the web page.