



**April 2, 2019 Election**

<b>Ballot Issue: City Fort Collins Charter</b>	<b>Citizen Initiated Charter Amendment No 1 Fort Collins Full-Time Council</b>
<b>Ballot Language</b>	<p>Shall Section 3 of Article II of the City of Fort Collins Charter be repealed and replaced with a new Section 3 offering the Mayor and all Councilmembers compensation equal to the Fort Collins Area Median Household Income, in accordance with the U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates, plus benefits afforded to full-time, exempt city employees; allowing the Mayor or any Councilmember to decline or accept reduced compensation; and requiring them to publicly report their Council-related activities, commencing on April 2, 2019?</p> <p>_____ Yes/For _____ No/Against</p>
<b>Change in Charter Language</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">ARTICLE II CITY COUNCIL</p> <p><b>Section 3. Compensation [and reporting requirements].</b></p> <p>Commencing on April 2, 2019 compensation shall be offered to all Councilmembers and the Mayor equal to the Fort Collins Area Median Household Income, in accordance with the U.S. Census ACS five-year estimates plus benefits afforded to full-time, exempt city employees. The Mayor or any Councilmember may decline or accept reduced compensation. Each Councilmember and the Mayor shall publicly report their council related activities.</p>
<b>Chamber Position</b>	Vote No.

## The Basics

On December 7, 2018, the Fort Collins City Clerk's Office received a petition to amend the City Charter relating to Councilmember compensation.

Creator of the petition and the person responsible for leading the effort to collect names is Fred Kirsch, Fort Collins District 1 City Council candidate and Director of the Fort Collins advocacy group Community for Sustainable Energy. Kirsch also leads Fort Collins Full-Time Council (FTCFCTC), a registered issue committee formed to pass the City Charter amendment.

The petition submitted by FTCFCTC was determined to contain a sufficient number of signatures to place the citizen-initiated measure on the regular municipal election ballot in April 2019.

The number of signatures required on an initiative petition depends on the type of election requested. If the petition representatives are willing to have the initiative placed on a regularly-scheduled election (held in April of odd-numbered years), the petition must contain valid signatures equal in number to 10% of the total ballots cast in the last regular city election. In this case approximately 8,000 signatures.

According to the FTCFCTC website [<https://ftcfctcblog.wordpress.com/>] Kirsch began surveying Fort Collins residents in mid-2017 asking approximately 500 people from "all over town" their opinions on three topics: How much should council be paid; should there be reporting requirements and; should councilmembers be allowed to have other jobs.

From the responses of those approximately 500 people Kirsch's group drafted charter amendment language as follows: Amend Article II, Section 3, *Compensation [and reporting requirements]* of the Fort Collins City Charter to read, "Commencing on April 2, 2019 compensation shall be offered to all Councilmembers and the Mayor equal to the Fort Collins Area Median Household Income, in accordance with the U.S. Census ACS five year estimates plus benefits afforded to full-time, exempt city employees. The Mayor or any Councilmember may decline or accept reduced compensation. Each Councilmember and the Mayor shall publicly report their council related activities."

Again according to the FTCFCTC website, Kirsch's group then canvassed door- to-door getting 1,230 responses to the question, Would you vote for this amendment to Article II of the City Charter? Sixty-one percent of respondents said yes they would vote for it. These same 1,230 respondents were then asked to read a one page argument for full-time city council and asked again if

they would vote for it. The number in support increased to 83%.

There was also a fundraising aspect to the door-to-door survey with the goal of raising \$10,000. While the FTCFTC website states that the fundraising effort was “To collect those signatures and pay for campaign materials...”, the receipts given to contributors identified Community for Sustainable Energy ID#: 20-8121550 as the funded organization.

Flier handed out to survey respondents at time of survey follows:

***Fort: Collins needs and deserves a  
Full-Time Paid City Council***

**In 2017 council pay was \$9,480 per year.** That pays for less than 10 hours of work per week but council is a 40-hour per week job. Half of the current council members have other jobs and can't give the necessary time to council. The council members who do give 40 hrs per week are paid less than \$5 an hour.

Council is responsible for:

- Approving and supervising a \$500 million per year budget
- Overseeing a 2,000 employee staff.
- Answering to 161,000 constituents.
- Making the decisions that shape Fort Collins

The Full-Time Council workweek looks something like:

- 15 hours - Researching topics from Advertising to Zoning.
- 15 hours - Official and community meetings.
- 5 hours - Meeting with individual constituents.
- 5 hours - Meeting with City staff leaders. )

The **Fort Collins Area Median Income (AMI) is about \$57,000/yr**, roughly the salary of a City bus driver, parks maintenance tech, police dispatcher, and librarian.

The money (~\$350k) will come from savings generated through better budgeting, **not a tax increase**. Council consistently over-funds projects without a thorough review of their performance or need.

Full-time pay will attract the best candidates and get the best  
work from our city council.

For more information visit: [www.FTCFTCblog.wordpress.com](http://www.FTCFTCblog.wordpress.com)

	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Receipt</p> <p>Date: _____ Amount: _____ Organizer: _____</p> <p>Contributions are tax deductible. ID #: 20-8121550. Thank you!</p> <p>Community for Sustainable Energy www.cforse.org</p> </div>
<p><b>Connection to Business</b></p>	<p>Who gets elected to City Council and their motives for running matters a great deal to business as many of the policy decisions council makes impact the business community both directly and indirectly. This charter amendment changes the basic governance structure in Fort Collins from the longstanding citizen-servant model to council members as full-time paid city employees.</p>
<p><b>Proponent Arguments FOR the Proposal</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-time pay will attract better candidates.</li> <li>• Full-time pay will get the best work from city council members – better decisions.</li> <li>• Half of the current council members have full-time jobs so cannot devote the necessary time to city council – the job is too big for a part-time council.</li> <li>• Current system deters people who can't afford to serve. Council members that do spend 40 hours per week working on city council are being compensated less than \$5.00 per hour.</li> <li>• Council is mostly wealthy retired people and to that extent do not represent the general public. A full-time paid council would encourage a council more representative of the general citizenry.</li> <li>• Tying the salary to Fort Collins area median income means no one is getting rich off of public service.</li> <li>• Mitigates the city-staff-as-gatekeeper affect by allowing council time to host their own stakeholder conversations. This puts more power into elected officials' (and therefore voters') hands.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Arguments AGAINST the Proposal</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work of a City Council Member in Fort Collins, Colorado is not a full-time job. In fact, a case can be made that they are already spending too much time.</li> <li>• Turning service on council into a job changes the motivation for the people who will run. It should be for love of community not love of money.</li> <li>• Having 7 politicians giving full-time attention to city government will</li> </ul>

	<p>dramatically increase the cost of government to citizens and businesses with new ordinances and regulations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This proposal is not about improving how local government operates. It is about making it possible for activists to get paid to lobby the government from the inside.</li> <li>• The claim that more time spent on government will lead to better decisions is fallacious. There is no evidence of that.</li> <li>• It would be self-serving for council to decide its own salary. (Cunniff)</li> <li>• The cost of City Council will increase significantly.</li> <li>• Money has not been budgeted in the 2019-20 city budgets and if passed by voters the new system would go into effect April 2, 2019.</li> <li>• Council will “micro-manage” and interfere with City staff.</li> <li>• Area Median Income is not enough to attract well paid professionals away from their job.</li> <li>• People who are not necessarily cooperation-minded can be elected creating chaos and disruption to city government if they have the power and time of a full-time position.</li> </ul>
<b>Questions to be answered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where is the fine line on oversight and governance and management?</li> <li>• What are the structural issues?</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<p><a href="https://citydocs.fcgov.com/?cmd=convert&amp;vid=72&amp;docid=3293916&amp;dt=AGENDA+ITEM&amp;doc_download_date=JAN-02-2019&amp;ITEM_NUMBER=02">https://citydocs.fcgov.com/?cmd=convert&amp;vid=72&amp;docid=3293916&amp;dt=AGENDA+ITEM&amp;doc_download_date=JAN-02-2019&amp;ITEM_NUMBER=02</a>  (Jan 2, 2019 City Council AIS 2<sup>nd</sup> reading ORD 173, 2018; Putting the issue on the ballot)</p> <p><a href="https://www.coloradoan.com/story/news/2018/12/18/fort-collins-city-council-members-and-mayor-could-get-paid-60-k-year/2358173002/">https://www.coloradoan.com/story/news/2018/12/18/fort-collins-city-council-members-and-mayor-could-get-paid-60-k-year/2358173002/</a> (General news article with council member quotes; Dec, 2018)</p> <p><a href="https://ftcftcblog.wordpress.com/">https://ftcftcblog.wordpress.com/</a> (Fred Kirsch’s FTCFTC website)</p>
<b>In the Past...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When the idea of a paid Council has been floated in the past, the Chamber used it as an opportunity to discuss other Charter changes like reducing the number of council districts from 6 to 4 while adding two at-large Council seats.</li> <li>• In the past the idea of paid Council never moved past the trial balloon stage.</li> </ul>
<b>Where We Stand</b>	<p><b>GOOD GOVERNMENT BASIC PHILOSOPHY:</b> The Chamber believes that business should expect government to be predictable, efficient in the delivery of services, reasonable in imposition of costs, be accessible and responsive, open and transparent, accurate and timely, be open to understanding the views of business, focus on basic services, be conscious of actions that impact business climate, be mindful of property rights and avoid mandates when possible.</p> <p><b>SUPPORT OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT:</b>  The Chamber supports representative government as the best form of</p>

<p>government by a free people and believes in the right to freely elect representatives to public office. The Chamber supports the right of citizens to petition their governmental representatives. To protect the viability of a representative form of government, citizen initiatives should be used sparingly. We support elections that allow more members of the city council to be elected at-large. In terms of the form of local government, the Chamber believes that professional management is preferred over a strong-mayor. The latter form can unnecessarily politicize local government.</p>
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