

the commission to a vote of the people in the manner provided under this charter and the state Constitution. Amendments shall be in the form provided by council.

(b) Amendments to this charter may be submitted to the registered voters of the city by a two-thirds vote of all councilmembers and, upon petitions signed by 10 percent of the registered voters of the city proposing an amendment, shall be submitted to the voters by council. The submission of a proposed amendment to the registered voters shall be governed by the requirements of Article XVIII, Sections 8 and 9 of the Constitution of the state of Ohio as to the submission of the question of choosing a charter commission; and notice of the proposed amendment may be mailed to the registered voters as provided by the Constitution or notice may be given pursuant to ordinances adopted by council. If any amendment is approved by a majority of those voting on the amendment, it shall become a part of the charter of the city, except that if two or more inconsistent amendments on the same subject are submitted at the same election and each is approved, only the amendment receiving the largest affirmative vote shall become a part of the charter. A copy of the charter or any amendment shall be certified to the secretary of state within 30 days after its adoption by the registered voters.

ARTICLE EIGHT. ETHICS AND TRAINING

8.1 ETHICS

(a) Expectations of Government. The citizens of Lakewood rightfully expect their government of elected and appointed officials, and their employees, to behave legally and ethically following principles of open government. All officials will treat each other with respect and together work to make Lakewood a desirable place to live. The citizens also rightfully expect honesty, respect and fair treatment by all involved in governance. City officials have a responsibility to educate, monitor and support all employees and city representatives in this mission.

(b) Oath of Office. Every elected or appointed officeholder of the city shall, before entering upon the duties of his or her office, take and subscribe to an oath or affirmation, to be filed and kept in the office of the clerk of council, that he or she will in all respects faithfully discharge the duties of his or her office.

(c) Public Ethics. The city shall be governed by the following ethical obligations:

(1) The mayor, councilmembers, director of law and director of finance owe a fiduciary duty to the city. As such, these officials, and the city employees under their supervision, shall be held to the highest ethical standards in all public matters. In the interest of preserving the public trust, these officials shall avoid any perceived conflict of interest or any action likely to give the appearance of impropriety in the execution of their public duties.

(2) Upon taking office, the mayor shall insure that policies governing the ethics of city employees in the execution of their job duties are in place, that these policies are consistent with the ethical requirements of general law, and that these policies are communicated in writing to all city employees.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent council from enacting by ordinance or resolution any rules or policies governing ethics of city employees.

(3) No city official or employee, through any improper use of that person's official position with the city, may affect the hiring of any person, letting of any contract or any other action by the city that may result in that official or employee, or any of the official or employee's immediate family members or close business associates, securing anything of value.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a city official or employee from serving as an employment, personal or credit reference for any person.

(4) Any person who has been found guilty by a court of competent jurisdiction of any felony violation of the general law relating to bribery, theft in office, having an unlawful interest in a public contract, soliciting or accepting improper compensation, perjury relating to any official duty, or corrupt practices relating to state or federal elections, shall be ineligible to hold office as mayor, member of council, director of law or director of finance.

If, while in office, the mayor, any member of council, the director of law or the director of finance is found guilty by a court of competent jurisdiction of any felony violation of the general law relating to bribery, theft in office, having an unlawful interest in a public contract, soliciting or accepting improper compensation, perjury relating to any official duty, or corrupt practices relating to state or federal elections, that person shall, upon the finality of the conviction, immediately forfeit the office held.

The terms used in this section shall be interpreted consistent with their use in the general law. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit council from enacting additional prohibitions or penalties relating to public ethics.

8.2 TRAINING FOR COUNCIL AND MAYOR

The city is committed to the best practices of municipal governance, innovation and administration, including those related to ethics, finances, budgeting, safety forces, infrastructure, human resources, planning and development, and current issues facing Lakewood. To achieve these goals, councilmembers and the mayor shall complete training on the best practices of municipal governance and administration. Training sessions are to be provided for by the city, as determined by council, within three months of a person's election or appointment to the position of councilmember or mayor.

Training shall consist of four contact hours of instruction for new councilmembers and 16 contact hours of instruction for a new mayor. Councilmembers who have previously served on council and any mayor who has previously held the office of mayor of the city are exempt from the requirements of this section.

When training is completed, the clerk of council shall provide each officer with a certificate of completion. The certificate shall be signed by the person designated by council to verify the completion of the training. The signed certificate shall be filed with the clerk of council prior to the expiration of the three-month period of time for the completion of training.

ARTICLE NINE. ELECTIONS, INITIATIVE, REFERENDUM, RECALL

9.1 ELECTIONS

(a) Regular and Special Municipal Elections. General municipal elections for the purpose of the election of officers provided for in this charter shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November in each odd-numbered year and shall be known as regular municipal elections. Except for primary elections, all other elections held under the provisions of this charter or as may be required by law shall be known as special municipal elections.