



## Powers Of The People

- **General authority for initiative and referendum**

(a) **Advisory Question.** The qualified voters of the City shall have power to gauge public sentiment through nonbinding questions relating to domestic, regional, statewide, national, or international concerns, **whether constituting the "business to be transacted" at any election or not.**

(b) **Binding Initiative.** The qualified voters of the City shall have power to **propose, for any lawful purpose, binding ordinances** to the Council and, if the Council fails to adopt an ordinance so proposed without any change in substance, **to adopt or reject it at a City election.**

(c) **Referendum.** The qualified voters of the City shall have power to **require reconsideration by the Council of any adopted ordinance** and, if the Council fails to repeal an ordinance so reconsidered, **to approve or reject it at a City election.**

- **Petitions**

(a) **Number of signatures.** Petitions for ballot initiatives, referendums and advisory questions must be signed by at least **five percent** of the legal voters of the City.

(b) **Form and content.** In addition to State requirements in **17 V.S.A. § 2642**, petition for inclusion in the warning of an article to reflect public sentiment shall clearly state to be advisory only. Petition for inclusion in the warning of an article to adopt or repeal an ordinance shall clearly state that it is to be binding.

(c) **Time for filing referendum petitions.** Referendum petitions must be filed within **60 days** after adoption by the Council of the ordinance sought to be reconsidered.

(d) **No alteration of substance.** The City Attorney is authorized, subject to the approval of the Council, to correct such proposal to enact ordinances so as to avoid repetitions, illegalities, and unconstitutional provisions and to ensure accuracy in its text and references and clearness and precision in its phraseology, but the City Attorney **shall not materially change its meaning and effect.**

- **Action on petitions**

(a) **Action by Council.** When an initiative or referendum petition has been finally determined sufficient, the Council shall promptly consider the proposed initiative ordinance in the manner provided in this Article or reconsider the referred ordinance by voting its repeal. If the Council fails to adopt a proposed initiative ordinance without any change in substance within **60 days** or fails to repeal the referred ordinance within **30 days** after the date the petition was finally determined sufficient, it shall submit the proposed or referred ordinance to the voters of the City.

(b) **Submission to voters.** The vote of the City on a proposed or referred ordinance shall be held during the next annual meeting, primary or general election or in a special meeting 30 days from the date of the final Council vote thereon. Copies of the proposed or referred ordinance shall be made available at the polls.

- **Results of election**

(a) **Initiative.** If a majority of the qualified voters voting on a proposed initiative ordinance vote in its favor, **it shall be considered adopted upon certification of the election results and shall be treated in all respects in the same manner as ordinances of the same kind adopted by the Council.** If conflicting ordinances are approved at the same election, the one receiving the greatest number of affirmative votes shall prevail to the extent of such conflict.

(b) **Referendum.** If a majority of the qualified voters voting on a referred ordinance vote against it, **it shall be considered repealed upon certification of the election results.**