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City of Lincoln
Mayor's Office

2020 Media Releases

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Voters to Decide City Charter Changes

Lincoln voters have two proposed City Charter changes to consider on the May 12 City general election ballot. City Attorney Jeff Kirkpatrick said the changes are proposed to revise dated purchasing authority thresholds, eliminate archaic language and fix typographical errors. None would result in significant changes to City operations. The City Charter Revision Commission recommended the changes, and the City Council voted in March to put the changes on the ballot.

Kirkpatrick said the proposed changes would bring Lincoln's financial limits into agreement with those used by the State of Nebraska, the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, and Lancaster County. The proposed changes include the following:

- Increase the threshold from $25,000 to $50,000 for those purchases and contracts that require approval from the Mayor. Purchases below that level must be approved by department directors.
- Increase the threshold from $25,000 to $50,000 for requiring bids.
- Add the word "responsive" to the "lowest responsible bidder" language to clarify that in order to be considered, bids must be responsive to all bid specifications.
- Clarify that for purchases too small to require formal bidding, the City Purchasing Division may collect fewer than the three informal bids that are required now. This resolves situations in which there are not three entities willing to submit informal bids.
- Substitute the more accurate term of "rebid" for "readvertise" when a bidding process is reopened.

If approved, the Charter would also be amended to correct an inaccurate Article reference, to eliminate some masculine references to the mayor, and to correct typographical errors.

The City Charter is available at lincoln.ne.gov (keyword: city attorney). A sample ballot is available from the Lancaster County Election Commission website at lancaster.ne.gov.

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