

CITY COUNCIL

READ FILE COVER SHEET

Subject: **Charter Resolution 305 concerning Amending Sections
pertaining to City Elections**

(Public Hearing)

Date: **10/22/2025**

Notice: Any comments made after 5:00 p.m. on the Thursday before the Council Meeting will not be seen in the agenda packet.

Purpose:

☐

FYI

☒

Read and Comment as Needed

☒

Action Required by November 17, 2025

☐

In Confidential File Drawer

Approve:

Johnny Boker
Comment: _____

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ No Comment

Casi Boyer
Comment: _____

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ No Comment

Matthew Ellis
Comment: _____

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ No Comment

Vicki Jones
Comment: _____

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ No Comment

Jim Ringsaker
Comment: _____

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ No Comment

Tammy Lynn
Schneegas
Comment: _____

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ No Comment

Note: N/A

CITY COUNCIL
OF
HAVRE DE GRACE, MARYLAND

CHARTER AMENDMENT RESOLUTION NO. 305

Introduced by _____ Council President Ringsaker

**A RESOLUTION BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF
HAVRE DE GRACE, MARYLAND, ADOPTED PURSUANT TO THE
AUTHORITY OF THE MARYLAND CONSTITUTION ARTICLE
XI-E, THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ARTICLE OF THE
ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND, AND THE HAVRE DE
GRACE CITY CHARTER SECTION 19, AMENDING SECTIONS 5
THROUGH 16 OF THE CITY CHARTER GENERALLY
PERTAINING TO CITY ELECTIONS**

On: October 20, 2025

at: 7:00 p.m.

Charter Amendment Resolution introduced, read first time, ordered posted and public hearing scheduled.

PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing is scheduled for November 17, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

EXPLANATION

Underlining indicates matter added to existing law.

[Bold Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Amendments proposed prior to final adoption will be noted on a separate page with line references or by handwritten changes on the draft legislation.

28 **WHEREAS**, the Administration has reviewed the proposed changes to the election charter with
29 the Board of Election Supervisors on September 5, 2025; and
30

31 **WHEREAS**, the Board of Election Supervisors subsequently voted at a meeting on September 19,
32 2025 to recommend that the City Council adopt the proposed changes to the election charter;
33

34 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED**, the Mayor and City Council of
35 Havre de Grace, in accordance with the authority vested in the Mayor and City Council of Havre
36 de Grace, by law and the Charter of the City of Havre de Grace hereby amends Sections 5 through
37 16 of the City Charter of Havre de Grace as follows:
38

39 **Section 5 Qualifications of voters.**

40 To qualify to vote in City elections, a person must be a citizen of the United States; a resident of
41 the State of Maryland; registered, qualified, and eligible to vote in Harford County and the State
42 of Maryland; eighteen (18) years of age on the election date; and a resident within the corporate
43 limits of the City for at least twenty-one (21) days immediately preceding the election date.
44

45 **Section 6 Registration of voter; time.**

46 Persons qualified to vote in City elections under Section 5 will be known as a “Registered City
47 Voter” and shall be entitled to register to vote in accordance with the Harford County permanent
48 system of voter registration. [established and maintained by the Board of Election Supervisors
49 or its designee] Any potential voter who is not listed on the voter registry maintained by the
50 County as a Registered City Voter but who brings documentation showing proof of residency
51 within the corporate limits may request a provisional ballot on the day of election. The City does
52 not offer same day registration.
53

54 **Section 7 Board of Election Supervisors: appointment.**

55 The Mayor, with the approval of the City Council, shall appoint the members of the Board of
56 Election Supervisors. The Board shall have five (5) members who, during their term, must be a
57 Registered [registered] City Voter [voter], hold no elected office and not be a candidate for an
58 elected office in the City of Havre de Grace. Three (3) members of the Board shall constitute a
59 quorum for the transaction of business. The Board shall act only when a quorum is present and
60 only by vote of a majority of the members present and voting. Each member shall serve a term of
61 six (6) years from their appointment date. Members shall continue to serve until the appointment
62 of their successor. Where a member vacates a seat prior to the expiration of the term, the Mayor,
63 with the approval of the City Council, shall appoint a new member to fill the vacant seat, and the
64 replacement shall serve a full term of six (6) years. Each year the Board shall organize and elect
65 one (1) of its members as president. Board members shall receive such compensation as the Mayor
66 and City Council determine.
67

68 **Section 8 Board of Election Supervisors: duties.**

69 The Board shall be in charge of all aspects of conducting City elections. With the assistance of
70 City staff, the [The] Board shall advertise election notices; secure adequate accommodation for
71 elections; obtain furniture, equipment, stationery and other items to facilitate elections; prepare the
72 ballot; count the votes cast; certify the election results and announce the results. The Board shall
73 submit all election proceeds and expenses to the [Mayor and City Council] Director of

Administration for processing through the Department of Finance, who shall jointly provide an account of proceeds and expenses to the Mayor and City Council. The City shall pay for the valid expenses and otherwise assist the Board in fulfilling its duties.

Section 9 Board of Election Supervisors: judges and clerks.

On or before the first Tuesday in April for each year in which a municipal election is to be held, the Board shall appoint election judges and clerks, who shall be Registered **[registered]** City Voters **[voters]**; of good character; not holding public office and not a candidate for an elected office in the City of Havre de Grace, to serve in the next election and no longer. The Board shall fill any vacancies immediately. The judges and clerks shall have all the powers and duties provided by the City Code, the City Charter, Harford County and state law and shall receive compensation as determined by the Mayor and City Council.

Section 10 Conduct of registration and elections; Appeals.

- A. The Board of Election Supervisors shall give at least seven (7) days notice of any City election by publishing a notice in one (1) or more newspapers having general circulation within the City. The notice shall include the election date; polling places; times when the polls are open and closed; and an accurate sample copy of the official ballot.
- B. The Board **[shall]** is authorized to adopt **[enact necessary]** rules and regulations consistent with **[this]** the City Charter, City Code, and City ordinances for the maintenance of an accurate **[and valid]** list of Registered City Voters **[registration of voters, the registration of qualified candidates,]** and the conduct of orderly and fair elections. A majority vote is required to decide questions before the Board. Persons aggrieved by any act of the Board may, within ten (10) days of the aggrieved act, appeal in writing to the Mayor and City Council which shall review the written complaint and render a written decision prior to the next election or within ten (10) days of receipt of the written appeal, whichever is earlier.

Section 11 Candidates; filing requirements and procedure.

- A. Candidates shall complete the candidacy packet approved by the City's Ethics Commission. The required forms in the candidacy packet shall be those required by State and local Ethics laws. [The Board of Election Supervisors shall maintain a certification form, approved by the Mayor and City Council, and shall distribute the form to the candidates for public office for completion. The form shall require the] Each candidate **[to]** shall furnish such information **[as is]** necessary **[for the Board]** to determine if the candidate is qualified to hold the public office pursuant to the City Charter. In any election, candidates may file for and run for only one elected office in the City.
- B. The candidacy forms shall be signed by the candidate under oath before a notary public and shall be accompanied by a nonrefundable and nontransferable filing fee in the amount established by the Mayor and City Council by ordinance. Candidates shall file their forms along with the fee at City Hall to the attention of **[with]** the Director of Administration **[or designee from]** beginning the first Tuesday in March through 5:00 PM on the third Tuesday in March during normal City business hours.
- C. The Director of Administration shall deliver **[all of]** the candidacy forms **[timely]** received on or before 5:00 PM on the third Tuesday in March to the Ethics Commission for review. After Ethics Commission review to ensure the candidacy packets are complete, the candidacy forms are to be submitted to the Board on the Friday following the third Tuesday in March.

The Board is responsible for determining whether each candidate is a Registered City Voter qualified to hold office by comparing the addresses with the list of Registered City Voters. Within ten (10) days of the receipt of the candidacy forms, the Board shall notify those candidates whose certificate of candidacy was rejected stating the reasons for the rejection.

Section 12 Withdrawal of candidacy.

Candidates may cause the withdrawal of their certificate for candidacy by filing a notarized written request to withdraw **[with the Director of Administration]** by no later than 5:00 PM on the first Tuesday in April. The Request for Withdrawal shall be delivered to the Director of Administration who shall deliver **[The Director of Administration or designee shall deliver the request]** it to the Board of Election Supervisors by the Friday following the first Tuesday in April, and the name of the candidate shall not appear on the ballot prepared by the Board. Notwithstanding the provision of subsection 11C above, if a timely Request for Withdrawal is made, the withdrawing candidate may request a refund of the candidate filing fee which may be granted by the City Council by majority vote for good cause shown.

Section 13 Elections; hours.

For City elections, which shall take place on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in May, polls shall open at 7:00 A.M. and close at 8:00 P.M. **[The date and time of the May 5, 2020, election may be temporarily suspended by executive order of the Mayor until the Governor's state of emergency is lifted. If postponed, the May 5, 2020, election shall be rescheduled on a Tuesday within sixty (60) days of the lifting of the Governor's state of emergency, with polls open during the above-mentioned times.]**

Section 14 Elections; counting of ballots.

Immediately after the polls close, the **[The]** Board of Election Supervisors shall count the votes cast **[immediately after the polls close]** and announce unofficial election results by 10:00 PM on election night. For purposes of this section, the Votes Cast on election day shall not include provisional or absentee ballots. The Board is authorized to count votes using County Board of Elections supplied voting machines and equipment, City supplied voting machines and equipment, or by hand counting of paper ballots approved by the Board if no electronic voting equipment is available. The Board shall then count absentee and provisional ballots pursuant to the City Charter and City Code [state law] and any rules and regulations adopted by the Board. The Board shall certify the election results to the Director of Administration after the [time for the receipt of any outstanding] absentee and provisional ballots (if any) have [has expired] been counted and the unofficial election results have been confirmed. The official election results shall be presented by the Board at the second City Council meeting in May.

Section 15 Ballot preparation; voter notes.

Ballots for City elections shall be prepared by the Board of Election Supervisors or at their direction and with the assistance of City staff and shall contain the printed name of every candidate and every question to be submitted to a vote. Voters are permitted to take written notes into the voting booth to assist them with their vote.

Section 16 Ballots; form.

Ballots for a City election shall have the same form and arrangement provided by law for county and state elections and absentee voting, except there shall be no party name or designation on the ballot and no write-in candidates are permitted for City elections.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is determined, decided, and resolved by the City Council that the aforementioned amendments to the City Charter are hereby approved.

ADOPTED by the City Council of Havre de Grace, Maryland this ____ day of ____, 2025.

SIGNED by the Mayor and attested by the Director of Administration this ____ day of ____, 2025.

ATTEST:

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
OF HAVRE DE GRACE

Christopher Ricci
Director of Administration

William T. Martin
Mayor

Introduced/First Reading: 10/20/2025
Public Hearing: 11/17/2025 (scheduled)
Second Reading/Enacted:
Adopted/Effective Date (50 days after enactment if no referendum):

Legislative History:

Adopted by the City of Havre de Grace in 1878.

Resolution No. 155 dated 9/22/1998

Resolution No. 156 dated 9/22/1998

Resolution No. 157 dated 2/23/1999

Resolution No. 158 dated 2/23/1999

Resolution No. 159 dated 2/23/1999

Resolution No. 160 dated 2/23/1999

Resolution No. 161 dated 2/23/1999

Resolution No. 162 dated 2/23/1999

Resolution No. 163 dated 2/23/1999

Resolution No. 164 dated 2/23/1999

Resolution No. 165 dated 2/23/1999

Resolution No. 166 dated 2/23/1999

Resolution No. 229 dated 10/1/2001

Resolution No. 235 dated 2/8/2002

Resolution No. 250 dated 8/1/2005

Resolution No. 272 dated 3/15/2010