

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA



Agenda Date:	May 3, 2021
Action Required:	Ordinance Enactment
Staff Contacts:	Taylor Yowell, Acting Director of Elections and General Registrar Lisa Robertson, Chief Deputy/ Acting City Attorney Katrina Callsen, Assistant City Attorney
Presenters:	Taylor Yowell, Acting Director of Elections and General Registrar
Title:	Central Absentee Precinct Temporary Change (1st Reading)

Background:

Virginia Code Section 2.2-712 permits each locality to establish a central absentee voter precinct.

The City of Charlottesville maintains one central absentee voter precinct at City Hall pursuant to Charlottesville City Code Section 9-31.

Last year, due to concerns about the spread of COVID-19, the Charlottesville Electoral Board and the Charlottesville General Registrar and Director of Elections recommended that the central absentee voter precinct be temporarily moved from City Hall to City Space for the November 2020 general election. City Council approved this recommendation and adopted a temporary ordinance that allowed for a location change. The ordinance expired on November 10th, 2020.

Discussion:

Due to continued concerns about the spread of COVID-19, the Charlottesville Electoral Board and the Charlottesville General Registrar and Director of Elections are recommending that the central absentee voter precinct again be moved from City Hall to City Space for the June 8th, 2021 primary election.

This ordinance is prepared as a temporary ordinance with an expiration date of June 9th, 2021.

Attachments:

Proposed Ordinance

**ORDINANCE
APPROVING CITY SPACE
AS CENTRAL ABSENTEE PRECINCT FOR
JUNE 8, 2021 PRIMARY ELECTION**

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2020, Governor Ralph S. Northam issued Executive Order 51 declaring a state of emergency for the Commonwealth of Virginia due to the potential spread of COVID-19 and that state of emergency continues in effect, by virtue of Executive Order Seventy Two and Order of Public Health Emergency Nine (March 23, 2021, made effective April 1, 2021); and

WHEREAS, Governor Northam's March 12, 2020 declaration found that the anticipated effects of COVID-19 constitute a disaster pursuant to Virginia Code Section 44-146.16; and

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2020, pursuant to a Resolution adopted by the Charlottesville City Council the City Manager/ Director of Emergency Management declared the potential spread of COVID-19 to be an emergency and disaster within the City of Charlottesville, and this declared local emergency remains in effect; and

WHEREAS, provisions for the safe conduct of elections are necessary to assure continuity of government during a state of emergency; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Code Section 24.2-310 provides that if an emergency makes a polling place unusable, the Director of Elections and General Registrar shall provide an alternative polling place; and

WHEREAS, Charlottesville City Code Section 9-31 establishes City Hall as the polling place for the City of Charlottesville's Central Absentee Precinct; and

WHEREAS, the Charlottesville Electoral Board and the Charlottesville General Director of Elections and Registrar have determined that the use of City Space as the polling place for the City of Charlottesville's Central Absentee Precinct may assist the City's efforts to avoid the spread of COVID-19 and that City Hall is unusable as the Central Absentee Precinct polling place during the COVID-19 emergency, because the limited space available may contribute to the spread of COVID-19 due to the inability to maintain appropriate social distancing; and

WHEREAS, the potential spread of COVID-19 is a rare and unforeseen circumstance necessitating the movement of the Central Absentee Precinct Polling place.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia that for the June 8, 2021 primary election, the City of Charlottesville's Central Absentee Precinct shall be located at City Space located at 100 5th Street NE, Charlottesville, Virginia 22902.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia that this ordinance is adopted pursuant to the provision of Virginia Code Section 24.2-310 to

assure the safe conduct of elections within the City of Charlottesville during the continuing declared state and local emergency declarations.-

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia that this ordinance shall be effective on May 5th, 2021 and shall expire on June 9th, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia that this ordinance is passed with the votes of four-fifths of the City Council and that the second reading of this ordinance shall not be required.