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# **SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL** **EDITORIALS**

## **The City Charter Measures**

Included on the general election ballot are eight proposed changes in the Santa Cruz City Charter, including Measure E, which has created major opposition by the Santa Cruz City Employees association.

These proposals, Measures C through K on the city ballot, are the result of an extensive study by an advisory committee, appointed by the city council, to make recommendations concerning changes in the City Charter.

Other changes have also been recommended by the committee, but only eight are on the ballot at this time due to the crowded condition of the general election ballot.

The proposed changes include:

**Measure C:** This change would allow the city library board to be enlarged should the proposed city-county library agreement be adopted. At the present time the board has five members, all city residents. Should the city-county contract be signed as it is expected to be, the library board would be enlarged to seven members, four from the city, three from the county to allow broader representation. If the city-county contract lapses, the board would revert to its state of five city resident members.

The Sentinel recommends a Yes vote on Measure C.

**Measure D:** This proposal would increase the size of the city's civil service commission from three to five members. Due to the fact that a three-man commission sometimes finds it difficult to get all members in attendance, due to illness, business, ect., the advisory group recommended that the civil service commission be enlarged to a five-member board.

The Sentinel recommends a Yes vote on Measure D.

**Measure E:** This proposal has created a major controversy between the city council and the City Employees association, who object strongly to proposed changes in the civil service section of the City Charter.

Generally, the proposed changes from the City Charter to an ordinance, governing civil service regulations are somewhat technical in nature and it is to be assumed that many of them will be included in the proposed ordinance to

to be assumed that many of them will be included in the proposed ordinance to replace the charter provisions.

The mayor and council members have said that they believe the ordinance would contain much of the same material in ordinance form that is now in the Charter.

However, the major issue concerns Section 1113 of the Charter. Here the committee has recommended that the council be given the authority to overrule the civil service commission. Under the Charter, the decision of the civil service commission on suspension, demotion and dismissal is final.

We are not sure that all city councils in the future would prefer the authority to overrule the civil service commission, but both the advisory committee and the mayor feel this is a necessary consideration to be allowed the council as the elected representatives of the people.

This is the specific section which the City Employees association objects to strongly.

We believe that the ordinance should provide ample protection to city employees and that such changes that are recommended should not mean any wholesale changes in city personnel, who generally perform their functions well.

Because we believe that the council will provide an ordinance that will meet with the approval of most of the city employees and provide a workable agreement which protects city employees, The Sentinel recommends a Yes vote on Measure E.

Measure F: This proposal eliminates the prohibition against inclusion of certain non-classified officers in the city's retirement program. As it is difficult to recruit good personnel without a suitable retirement program, repeal of the prohibition would be helpful.

The Sentinel recommends a Yes vote on Measure F.

Measure G: This proposal eliminates a section of the Charter dealing with board of equalization procedures. Because the city contracts with the county for this service, the section is not needed and should be replaced.

The Sentinel recommends a Yes vote on Measure G.

Measure H. This proposal changes the Charter regulation on bonded indebtedness to exclude bonds to be redeemed from utility revenue, such as from the water department or from sanitation services.

The Sentinel recommends a Yes vote.

Measure J: This proposal changes an outdated regulation in charter concerning sale of surplus city property. It retains the vested rights authority.

The Sentinel recommends a Yes vote.

Measure K: A similar proposal to Measure J except that it pertains to water department property not used in the operating system.

The Sentinel recommends a Yes vote.