



CITY OF PACIFIC GROVE
300 Forest Avenue, Pacific Grove, California 93950

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM: Alex Lorca, City Attorney and Sandra Kandell, City Clerk
MEETING DATE: October 7, 2026
SUBJECT: Resolution Accepting the Certificate of Signature Verification for Initiative Charter Amendment Requiring Voter Approval of Mayor and Councilmembers Compensation and Benefits.
CEQA: Does not constitute a Project per California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15378

RECOMMENDATION

1. Adopt the Resolution Accepting the Certification of Signature Verification;
2. Direct staff to return at a future City Council meeting with a resolution submitting the Initiative to voters in the City.

DISCUSSION

Background

On February 3, 2026, resident Luke Coletti ("Proponent") presented the City Clerk's Office with a Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition for the purpose of "amending the Charter of the City of Pacific Grove to require voter approval for compensation and benefits for the Mayor and Councilmembers." (Hereinafter "Charter Amendment Initiative"). The Notice of Intent is attached here as Attachment 1.

As required by law, the City Attorney prepared a title and impartial analysis of the Charter Amendment Initiative. The City Attorney's Impartial Analysis is attached here as Attachment 2. Thereafter, the Proponent circulated the petition among registered voters in the City. As the Charter Amendment Initiative seeks to amend the City Charter, the Petition was required to be signed by at least 15% of the registered voters of the City to place it on the ballot.

On August 17, 2026, the Proponent submitted the Charter Amendment Initiative petition to the City Clerk. The petition format was reviewed by the City Clerk for adherence to state law (e.g. required

heading, copy of the ordinance, proper components for voter entries, declaration of circulator) and a prima facie count was conducted. Finding the petition compliant with state law, on August 17, 2026, the City Clerk delivered the Charter Amendment Initiative petition to the County of Monterey Elections Department and Registrar of Voters for review of the petition's signatures.

The County of Monterey's Registrar of Votes examined the petition's signatures and certified it had been signed by the requisite number of voters in the City. The Registrar of Voters' January 14, 2026, Official Report of Registration to the Secretary of State found there were 10,549 registered voters in the City. Therefore, to obtain the requisite signatures of at least 15% of registered voters in the City, 1582 valid signatures were needed to qualify the Charter Amendment Initiative for the ballot.

The following is the Registrar of Voters' summary of the signatures received, reviewed, qualified, and determined to be found not sufficient:

Signatures submitted to City (prima facie count):	2105
Signatures required to qualify:	1582
Signatures filed with the County (per County count):	2120
Signatures verified:	2120
Signatures - valid:	1725
Signatures - found not sufficient:	395

On September 22, 2026, the County of Monterey Registrar of Voters issued a Certificate of Signature Verification, which was received by the City Clerk, who forwarded it to the Proponent and the City Council. The Certificate of Signature Verification is attached here as Attachment 3.

The draft Resolution accepting the Monterey County Election's Certificate of Signature Verifications is attached here as Attachment 4.

Submission to the Voters

Where, as here, an initiative seeks to amend a city charter, a city council does not have the option to adopt it without change as it might with other initiatives. Rather, a city council must submit such an initiative to the voters.

Timing of Election

Elections Code section 9255(c) provides that a petition to amend a city charter that is signed by 15% of the registered voters of the city "shall be submitted to the voters at an established statewide general, statewide primary, or regularly scheduled municipal election ... occurring not less than 88 days after the date of the order of election... ."

Article 8 “Elections” of the City Charter provides, “General municipal elections shall be held in the City on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November in each even numbered year under and pursuant to the provisions of the General Laws of the State of California so far as the same may be applicable, except as herein otherwise provided. All other municipal elections that may be held by authority of this Charter or of the General Law shall be known as special municipal elections.”

Based upon the forgoing, the Charter Amendment Initiative could be placed on the ballot on the following dates:

1. March 2028 (consolidated with Statewide Primary Election)
2. November 2028 (consolidated with Statewide General Election)

Note that the Proponent has requested the City place the Charter Amendment Initiative on the November 2028 ballot.

Future Actions

This item consists only of adopting the Resolution accepting the Monterey County Election's Certificate of Signature Verification. At an appropriate time in the future, City Staff will return to Council with a resolution containing typical election-related items such as, placing the Charter Amendment Initiative on the ballot, authorizing arguments for and against, consolidating the City's election with a statewide election, and retaining the County of Monterey Elections Department for election services.

OPTIONS

Provide alternate direction.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There are no costs associated with this item. Future fiscal impacts will be based on calling and conducting an election.

FOCUSED Not Applicable.
PRIORITY
AREA:

Attachments

Notice of Intent

CA Impartial Summary

ROV Signature Verification

Proposed Resolution
