

INCORPORATION OF CITY OF PETERSBURG AS A GENERAL LAW CITY AND ALDERMANIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT

On August 1st, 1927 an election was held to determine if the town of Petersburg should be incorporated for municipal purposes as a general law city. On August 2nd, 1927 County Judge George L. Mayfield canvassed the vote and determined that there were a total of 23 votes at the election (24-yes votes and 1 no vote) to approve the formation of an incorporated general law city. Judge Mayfield issued an Order that day declaring the inhabitants of the town of Petersburg duly incorporated for municipal purposes as a general law city under the commission form of government. A newly formed incorporated city can choose to operate under the aldermanic form of government or the commission form of government.

The City of Petersburg operated under the commission form of government until an election was held on April 9th, 1962 at which point the voters were asked whether they wanted to change from the commission form of government to the aldermanic form of government. The vote was 119 in favor of changing to operating under the aldermanic form and 21 against the change. Since 1962 the City of Petersburg has operated under the aldermanic form of government.

Because the City of Petersburg is not divided into wards the City Council is composed of a Mayor and 5 aldermen (city councilmen) and the words City Council can be used interchangeably with the term aldermanic form of government. The term council members can be used interchangeably with aldermen.

Seventy-five percent (75%) of Texas cities are general law cities. General law cities are divided into types (A, B, or C) but if the city is over 600 in population it can be a Type A city. Petersburg is a Type A general law city. Once the population grows to 3,000 Petersburg could change to a home rule city.

The difference between a general law city and a home rule city is that Petersburg, as a general law city, has to find authority under state law to do most anything it wants to do such as passing ordinances etc. Whereas, a home rule city only looks to the general laws of the State to see what it is prohibited from doing.

In conclusion, Petersburg is an incorporated Type A general law city that operates under the aldermanic form of government. We have a Mayor and 5 aldermen.