



SAM S. GASTON
CITY MANAGER

December 10, 2021

Dear Mountain Brook Residents,

At the December 13th City Council meeting, which will start at 7pm, the City Council plans to announce a special council meeting for Friday, December 17th at 8:30am. The purpose of this special meeting is to discuss changing the election cycle for city council members and the mayor for the City of Mountain Brook and consideration of a resolution requesting legislative action to enact those changes.

As many of you know, the approach taken by the legislature last legislative session with respect to all but nine (9) of the cities in Alabama was to simply add a fifth year to the terms of officials who had already been elected in 2020. This Legislation was intended to include Mountain Brook and Scottsboro, but our cities were not granted a fifth year since we have staggered elections. After receiving public comments on this issue in November, the City will move forward with holding the election this summer for the three council seats that expire in 2022. The City's resolution will request that the terms of the three Councilmembers to be elected in 2022 be for five years with the terms to end in 2027. The City's resolution will also request that the terms of the Mayor and two Council members elected in 2020 be extended by one year to 2025, consistent with the approach adopted for the 449 other municipalities by Act 2021-157 passed by the Alabama Legislature earlier this year. This would align the election cycle for these two council seats and the Mayor with the municipal election cycles for other cities in the State. Then, in 2025 and 2027, the terms of office for all elected City officials will return to four (4) year terms. This would take the City of Mountain Brook, like all the other municipalities in Alabama, off Presidential election cycles. Scottsboro is asking for the same change of terms of office for their elected officials.

Act 2021-157 was adopted by our State Legislators for the following reasons:

1. It is difficult for cities and counties to recruit enough poll workers for up to five (5) elections in one year, including the Republicans/Democrat primaries and runoffs, municipal elections and runoffs and the general election in November during Presidential election cycle years. Our City has experienced first-hand the difficulties in obtaining sufficient poll workers, especially during the 2020 elections.

2. The logistics associated with programming, testing, certifying, cleaning and transporting more than 400 voting machines to the voting locations across Jefferson County alone becomes especially challenging during the even year Presidential election cycles.

3. Changing municipal elections to an off-year or odd year cycle is expected to increase voter turnout and awareness of local elections and issues as well reduce election fatigue and voter confusion.

Please feel free to attend this special City Council meeting at 8:30am on Friday, December 17th at City Hall. If you cannot attend, but would like to comment on this proposal, please feel free to contact me at (205) 802-3803 or gastons@mtnbrook.org.

Sincerely,



Sam S. Gaston
City Manager