



**Rockford Chamber of Commerce  
Board Resolution  
January 2018**

**WHEREAS:** In 1983 Rockford voters supported a referendum removing Home Rule authority from the City of Rockford and replaced it with Non-Home Rule Authority, and;

**WHEREAS:** The City of Rockford administrations since that time have voiced the belief that the lack of Home Rule authority has impinged on the City's ability to address City issues and seek out diverse revenue streams to serve the citizens of Rockford and sustain necessary City services, and;

**WHEREAS:** The Rockford City Council has the power to place a referendum on the March 2018 primary ballot seeking a vote by registered voters of the City of Rockford to support restoring Home Rule authority to the City of Rockford, and;

**WHEREAS:** The Rockford City Council has placed the question of reauthorizing Home Rule status on the March 20, 2018 ballot, and;

**WHEREAS:** A citizens' committee entitled "Our Decisions – Our Solutions" has been formed to advocate for restoration of Home Rule authority, and;

**WHEREAS:** On November 17, 2017 and January 12, 2018, the Rockford Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Council heard presentations by Rockford Mayor Tom McNamara and representatives of the citizens' committee on Home Rule, and;

**WHEREAS:** The Government Affairs Council initially voted to support the placing of the Home Rule question on the March 2018 primary ballot, and, subsequently the Government Affairs Council voted to endorse support for the Home Rule referendum, with the inclusion of certain governance polices, and;

**WHEREAS:** Article VII of the Constitution of the State of Illinois of 1970 (the "Constitution") became effective on July 1, 1971, and Section 6(a) of said Article provides that, except as limited by said Section 6, a home rule unit (as therein defined) may exercise any power and perform any function pertaining to its government and affairs, including but not limited to the power to regulate for the protection of the public health, safety, morals and welfare; to license; to tax; and to incur debt; and

**WHEREAS,** the Rockford Chamber of Commerce believes that the City should exercise the special Home Rule powers and functions provided by Illinois Law with due care and caution and with the view to the long-range impacts on our community, and for such reasons believes it necessary and desirable to adopt policy guidelines for the exercise of such special Home Rule unit powers; and

**WHEREAS,** the Rockford Chamber of Commerce wishes to keep the residents of Rockford informed and to ensure they are given the opportunity to express their views to the City

Council before the City Council votes on any Ordinance related to instituting or increasing any tax that is afforded only to a Home Rule unit of government; and

**WHEREAS**, debt issued by the City of Rockford should continue to be approved by the City Council consistent with the self-imposed debt limitations already in place by the City of Rockford that will not unreasonably burden and cause financial hardship on residents of the City, present and future; and

**WHEREAS**, the Rockford Chamber remains committed to seeking to limit the local property taxes paid by our residents and businesses within the City of Rockford.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that;** The Rockford Chamber Board of Directors hereby endorses support for the Home Rule authority referendum on restoration of such authority to the City of Rockford and encourages Rockford voters to vote to support the restoration of Home Rule powers, along with the following recommendations for governance of Home Rule policies;

1. Prior to adoption of any ordinance that will establish a new tax or increase an existing tax that is not authorized under the provisions of the Illinois Municipal Code (Illinois Compiled Statutes, Chapter 65) for municipalities that are not home rule units of government, the City will take the following steps:

- a. Schedule a public hearing on the proposed tax to give residents an opportunity to express their opinion to the City Council.
- b. No less than 7 days before such public hearing, the City shall publish a notice of the hearing in at least one newspaper having general circulation in the City, will post the notice on the City's website, and will ensure the notice is available for review at City Hall.
- c. The notice of the public hearing shall inform the public of the date, time and location of the public hearing and shall state the purpose and intended use of the tax to be established or increased.

2. Any final property tax levy established for the City by Winnebago County will not contain an increase that exceeds the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) found in the Illinois Compiled State Statutes, 35 ILCS 200/18-185 through 35 ILCS 200/18-245, provided, however, that the City Council may deem, in its sole discretion, that an emergency financial condition exists, in which case, this section 2 would not apply during such emergency period. Any tax adjustments instituted in order to address any such emergency would thereafter be included within the determination of the base tax levy subject to applicable future PTELL limitations.

3. The City will continue to maintain a debt to assessed value ratio that is 20% more stringent than the state debt limit which is currently no greater than 8.625% of the value of taxable property contained within the City limits, pursuant to Illinois Compiled State Statutes 65 ILCS 5/8-5-1.

4. The City Council may from time to time after the adoption of this policy review its provisions, and may make additions or amendments hereto. Any ordinance or resolution adopted by proper action of the City Council that is otherwise in compliance with applicable law, but that is not fully consistent with this Resolution shall be permitted.

Einar K. Forsman, Board Secretary

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(Printed Name)



(Signed Name)

Board approved at its January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 meeting.