

§ 120-163. Petition.

(a) The process of seeking the recommendation of the Municipal Incorporations Subcommittee is commenced by filing with the Municipal Incorporations Subcommittee a petition signed by fifteen percent (15%) of the registered voters of the area proposed to be incorporated, but by not less than 25 registered voters of that area, asking for incorporation. The voter shall sign the petition and also clearly print that voter's name adjacent to the signature. The petition must also contain the voter's residence address and date of birth.

(b) The petition must be verified by the county board of elections of the county where the voter is alleged to be registered. The board of elections shall cause to be examined the signature, shall place a check mark beside the name of each signer who is qualified and registered to vote in that county in the area proposed to be incorporated, and shall attach to the petition a certificate stating the number of voters registered in that county in the area proposed to be incorporated, and the total number of registered voters who have been verified. The county board of elections shall return the petition to the person who presented it within 15 working days of receipt. That period of 15 working days shall be tolled for any period of time that is also either two weeks before or one week after a primary or election being conducted by the county board of elections.

(c) The petition must include a proposed name for the city, a map of the city, a list of proposed services to be provided by the proposed municipality, the names of three persons to serve as interim governing board, a proposed charter, a statement of the estimated population, assessed valuation, degree of development, population density, and recommendations as to the form of government and manner of election. The petition must contain a statement that the proposed municipality will have a budget ordinance with an ad valorem tax levy of at least five cents (5¢) on the one hundred dollar (\$100.00) valuation upon all taxable property within its corporate limits. The petition must contain a statement that the proposed municipality will offer four of the following services no later than the first day of the third fiscal year following the effective date of the incorporation: (i) police protection; (ii) fire protection; (iii) solid waste collection or disposal; (iv) water distribution; (v) street maintenance; (vi) street construction or right-of-way acquisition; (vii) street lighting; and (viii) zoning. In order to qualify for providing police protection, the proposed municipality must propose either to provide police service or to have services provided by contract with a county or another municipality that proposes that the other government be compensated for providing supplemental protection. The petition must contain a statement from the Local Government Commission regarding the proposed municipality's prospects for financial viability and effective fiscal management. The proposed municipality may not contain any noncontiguous areas.

(d) The petitioners must present to the Municipal Incorporations Subcommittee the verified petition from the county board of elections.

(e) A petition must be submitted to the Municipal Incorporations Subcommittee at least 60 days prior to convening of the next regular session of the General Assembly in order for the Municipal Incorporations Subcommittee to make a recommendation to that session. (1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 1003, s. 1; 1999-458, s. 1; 2001-353, s. 6; 2011-291, s. 2.32; 2021-124, s. 2.)