

- [Classified Ads](#)
- [Advertising Info](#)
- [EXTRA](#)
  - [Humanitarian Awards](#)
  - [NIE](#)
  - [UnderAge Page](#)
  - [Church Directory](#)
  - [Business Card Directory](#)
  - [From House to Home Magazine](#)
  - [Local Employers](#)
  - [Newsstands](#)
  - [RSS Feeds](#)
- [HELP](#)
  - [Contact Us](#)
  - [Subscriber Services](#)
  - [Advertising Info](#)
  - [Jobs with Us](#)
  - [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
  - [About the Temple Daily Telegram](#)

NEWS

[EMAIL](#) [PRINT](#) [LISTEN](#)

## Last shot at changing the city's charter

by [Fred Afflerbach](#) | Business Writer

Published: September 27, 2009

Temple mayor pro tem Patsy Luna said this week it's time for voters to decide whether or not council members and city employees can do business with the city.

Working with councilman Tony Jeter, the duo has gotten the matter placed on the city council agenda for its Thursday meeting.

The council can vote to either add this issue to the election ballot next May, or let it drop.

For almost two years, Jeter has been an outspoken critic on this issue. Until now he has found no support from the mayor and fellow council members.

Mrs. Luna said on Friday that she has been recently overwhelmed with constituents wanting to change the city charter.

"This is the only subject of conversation that I've had in a long time. At the grocery store, everywhere I go, people are concerned about it," Mrs. Luna said. "I've had a lot of phone calls too, I think I've had about two a day this week."

The seven-year council member said these folks feel the city is being taken advantage of and letting council members win city contracts paints Temple in a negative light.

Mrs. Luna said she does not agree with some of those assertions, and she has told her constituents that, but it's her duty to address their concerns.

"Everybody doesn't agree with me, and I think we should take it to the voters and let them settle the matter," she said.

If council members Russell Schneider and Marty Janczak, and Mayor Bill Jones III, maintain their position that the charter does not need to change, the resolution would fail 3-2.

Janczak did not return phone messages Friday afternoon.

Jeter says two of those people shouldn't be voting in the first place. As elected city officials, Jones and Schneider have for several years sold goods and services to the city. (Schneider landed a \$2.2 million contract for work on Airport Business Park improvements in 2007.)

Schneider maintained his earlier position that there's absolutely nothing wrong with elected officials doing business with the city.

Jones was out of the country and could not be reached for comment. Earlier this year, he said, "I think it's silly to prohibit a council member from doing business with the city if it's going to benefit the city."

Schneider agrees with Jones. He said in an earlier story one of his contracts saved the city \$200,000 because that's the amount he was below the closest bidder.

Schneider said contracts with the city comprise about 7 percent of his annual revenue.

"We don't deal with the city directly when we're doing (bidding) a project. We deal with an engineer who has been hired by the city," Schneider said.

Jeter asks: Why wouldn't these two vote in their best business interest?

"It seems to me it ought to be a conflict of interest for people who are currently doing business with the city to even vote on it (the charter amendment)," he said.

Jeter also points out that city money paid to subcontractors cannot be traced. A city official or employee could be doing large amounts of work for the city, indirectly, under the radar.

City officials have said they don't track how much subcontractors make on city work.

"This whole lower level of doing subcontracting with the city, or providing raw materials to general contractors, or subcontractors to the city - that runs completely below the level of accountability," Jeter said. "There's no transparency at all. The city has no oversight or insight at what deals are going on at that level, with council people."

Twenty years ago, Temple voters approved changing the city charter to allow elected officials to do business with the city. Jeter says things have changed

"The voters 20 years ago are not the voters today."

The city council begins a workshop session at 3 p.m. Thursday at 401 N. Third St. City council meets at 5 p.m.

PREVIOUS ARTICLE

[GOP paws at powerful voting bloc in fight for health reform](#)

## more from Sep. 27

- [Making their way: Leon: Seeing the bright side with a little help from his family](#)
- [Making their way: Lanny: One in the same, no matter how we got here](#)
- [Making their way: Patrick: Leaving old habits behind](#)
- [Making their way: John: Fighting a lifelong battle](#)
- [Christian Farms: Helping some refocus their direction in life](#)
- [Data: High percentage of divorcees in Bell Co.](#)
- [GOP paws at powerful voting bloc in fight for health reform](#)

## related articles

- [Councilman continues quest to change charter](#)
- [Vaccine not required locally](#)
- [Rockdale City Council removes councilmember](#)
- [No lanes to call their own: Temple bowlers must travel out of town to play](#)
- [Emmy Awards: Absolute Madness!](#)

## more from Fred Afflerbach

- [No lanes to call their own: Temple bowlers must travel out of town to play](#)
- [Big problems on the Little River: River eroding bank beneath trailer in Milam County](#)
- [Big problems on the Little River: Recent storms dump piles of driftwood along waterway](#)
- [McLane donates \\$100K to Hutchison](#)
- [Back in business: Salado ready for visitors after storm](#)
- [contact Fred Afflerbach](#)

## most popular

- [Fatal wreck: Three dead in I-35 accident](#)
- [Three killed in accident, I-35 northbound lanes shutdown](#)
- [Backroads: Zabcik gave community more than just its name](#)
- [Big problems on the Little River: Recent storms dump piles of driftwood along waterway](#)
- [Stay up tonight to see Holy Trinity grad perform](#)
- [Charges dropped: Former police officer no longer faces felonies in Dallas County](#)
- [Lynch leaves legacy of family first at Fort Hood](#)
- [Big problems on the Little River: River eroding bank beneath trailer in Milam County](#)
- [40-mile utility line concerns local farmers](#)
- [Commentary: After much-needed win at Plano, Temple will be talking about this one for a while](#)