

Council District System

Last month Vice Mayor Tom Eggleston retired from the Glendale City Council. During his 15 years of service, Tom was a part of history-making decisions and undertakings. Tom also blazed the trail as a District Councilmember. In fact, Tom made history even before being sworn into office. This is how it happened.

In 1988 a group of citizens created a ballot initiative to establish geographic districts and require city council members to be elected by the voters in each of those districts. Voters approved the initiative and Glendale's first district elections were held in 1990. The Ocotillo, Barrel, and Cholla districts were on the 1990 ballot.

Barrel District voters elected Ian Hugh who subsequently resigned in order to run for mayor in the 1992 election. Our City Charter dictates that, "The council, by a majority vote of its remaining members, shall fill the vacancies in its own membership and in the office of mayor for the unexpired term". The six of us remaining on the council had to figure out how to accomplish that.

In a very short time frame, we developed a thorough process and ten citizens applied for the position. Tom Eggleston won our votes and was sworn into office in December 1991.

Little did we know circumstances would require us to fill four more vacancies in the next five years using that very same process. In 1993 I was appointed Mayor to succeed Quentin Tolby who had resigned, and Karen Ewing was appointed Cholla District Councilmember to succeed me. In 1996 Karen Ewing resigned and Manny Martinez was appointed Cholla District Councilmember to succeed her. Just one month later Martin Samaniego was appointed Yucca District Councilmember to succeed David Peterson who had died six months after taking office.

For those keeping track there have been five other changes on the council and those happened in the more traditional manner, through elections. But the frequency of the appointments required in 1991-1996 is a piece of Glendale's interesting history.