



Office of the West Seneca Town Supervisor  
Hon. Gary A. Dickson

**Memorandum**

To: Honorable Town Board  
From: Gary Dickson, Town Supervisor  
Date: April 30, 2021  
Subject: Results of Term Limits Survey

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Dear Colleagues,

The Term Limits Survey ran for ten days from 4/19/2021 to 4/28/2021. In that period there were 326 valid\* entries with the following breakdown:

In favor of term limits:	70%
Against term limits:	26%
Unsure:	4%

Of the elected positions, respondents were in favor of term limits for the following positions:

Supervisor:	92%
Councilpersons	96%
Town Clerk	66%
Highway Superintendent	70%

Comments from respondents are attached. As with any informal survey, the results are not scientific.

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\*380 responses were discarded as being invalid because it appears that the same person was answering the survey multiple times within seconds of the prior response with identical answers. Of these invalid responses, 370 were against term limits and 10 were in favor. The attached spreadsheet illustrates the problem.

## Comments from Respondents<sup>†</sup>

1. The election decides a term limit.
2. Elected officials are done when voters decide they're done
3. We see the same faces constantly. It's time to get some new residents involved.
4. Any positions of power need to have term limits!
5. We need term limits in State and in Washington DC
6. I believe there should be term limits of 8 to 12 years for ALL elected officials, including school boards.
7. The voters have the power and ability to impose their own term limit.
8. Let the people vote and see who gets in office.
9. Politics isn't a career, it's a service to the community.
10. Elections are term limits
11. Term limits are important no matter how much we enjoy one member or dislike another. This keeps from the members from using favoritism or spending money erratically for too long. People or politicians should not be in control too long then they relax and potentially find ways of making their own position more lucrative for themselves.
12. A reasonable amount of time, such as 2–4-year terms allow sufficient time to have an impact. However, we do not need career politicians that stop working for the town's residents. Having fresh faces might just help West Seneca keep on the cutting edge of progress.
13. This is the beginning of good government.
14. I feel that elections serve as term limits
15. Term limits appointment, if the remaining term is greater than 50 percent it should count if less it should not.
16. It's important to always get fresh ideas and opinions, but it takes a while to learn the ropes of the job, so 2 terms are appropriate
17. Term limits for all forms of government.
18. Be SMART (save money and reduce taxes)!
19. Term limits keep fresh ideas in the system. It is imperative that complete and transparent notes are kept for every item of discussion
20. Residents decide a term limit with the process of an election.
21. Brilliant
22. Highway superintendent and town clerk are a must to not have a term limit
23. Voting someone out is limiting their term if you don't like them
24. I feel term limits are necessary for both financial and integrity issues.
25. I believe term limits should also apply to town committees such as zoning, planning etc.
26. Unfortunately, Politicians get too comfortable in their elected positions, they need to be reminded, they work for the people. All too often, they never follow through with campaign promises.
27. The town already has term limits in place. It's called elections. Do we really want to discard great leaders who, in their prime, are automatically removed by term limits? Though term limits are a procedural automatic cleansing of incompetent or politically self-indulgent

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<sup>†</sup> Comments were lightly edited. Those that were off-topic or contained personal attacks were not included.

individuals, the citizens by right of the election process can detect and remove said persons; while retaining knowledgeable and dedicated leaders for the town. By deciding to have term limits, the town has surrendered to the concept that the best way to rid ourselves of poor leaders is to let them automatically expire with time, not through our long and proven due process of open elections. Let the voters decide, not a bureaucratic process that is founded on the belief, voters are insufficiently knowledgeable to decide who they want to represent them.

28. Abolish career politicians at my expense.
29. One of the problems that I have observed with politicians as a whole is that as they get comfy and their position, they start to have issues. They get comfortable with corruption. Even a well-intentioned person can fall if given enough Temptation and time.
30. 10 to 12 years should be limit on any term.
31. First of all, if terms limits are too short, there may not even be enough people in the town who care enough to run because being a politician sucks. Secondly, if a person is doing a good job, the constituents should be allowed to select them to represent and lead them. If I like a person, why should the only reason they can't be in office be because they have been doing it too long? I'd rather have a multi-party system where you vote for a party and each party elects its candidates in a primary system. This way, you vote between the same half-dozen parties for every race, every single year. If you want to avoid confusion and the name recognition problem, that's the way.
32. If someone is doing a great job in a town position, I don't feel there should be a limit on how many terms that person should be able to serve as long as they are re-elected by the voters. Why would you want to remove a capable, successful, person to be replaced by someone who might be less capable? On the same token, if a person is not or cannot uphold the duties of their position for the good of the whole town or is found to be self-serving in their position, they should be able to be removed or become a one-and-done by the voters.
33. Term limits will help us to decide if that person is doing the job that the town needs and feels they are taking proper steps to make our town the best place to want to live.
34. I believe term limits allow time for an official to achieve their goals and also allow for fresh new ideas
35. No person should hold office for too long, nor should they be allowed to influence their own salaries or appoint within their circle of friends and family
36. I feel that terms are good but can there be an option to bypass the rule if someone is doing a good job? Maybe a petition or a special vote to allow someone to run again if that is what the people of the town feel they are doing a great job.
37. Bad idea
38. I believe that we have enough capable people in town to fill these positions so that we do not need to have elected officials in office for long extended periods of time. Seems like some officials feel entitled to those positions. Remember that the objective is to serve the public.
39. People should serve their community as part of a civic duty. The concept of career politician is not what we need in government, at the local or national level. Experience is good, and useful, however too many elected officials then lose touch with what the Community wants, and they start telling the Community what THEY think and want.

40. While term limits are important, for a Town of our size, I do not think term limits would be beneficial. We have a lack of qualified candidates who run for office each election and when a qualified candidate does succeed, I do not think the Town should then put a limit on their terms.
41. Term limits are logical.