

Regular Workshop – November 13, 2013
Agenda Item 13

Agenda Item: Establishing the Date for the 2014 General Municipal Election and Early Voting Schedule

Presenter: Town Manager

Summary: The Town's Charter sets the date for the Town's General Election as the third Tuesday in March. The Charter also provides for the option to align the Town's election with any other County administered election. The Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections (SOE) office has advised that they have scheduled a Special Election for the Sarasota County School Board on March 25, 2014, and have requested consideration to align the Town's election with this date. Manatee County has indicated that they have no elections currently scheduled in March other than the Town's.

Chapter 36, Elections, of the Town Code provides for establishing early voting in accordance with State law and established procedures. The Sarasota County SOE office has indicated that they will provide early voting services to the Town based on the schedule established for the School Board's Special Election, for a period of 13 days, from March 10, 2014 through March 22, 2014. The hours established are from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day. Additional (unbudgeted) costs will be incurred if the Commission elects to hold early voting at Town Hall due to the expanded early voting days and hours. The Town Commission office will need to be utilized for the Manatee County early voters as the previously vacant office utilized is now occupied by the Assistant Town Manager.

This item is placed on the November 13, 2013, Regular Workshop Meeting seeking confirmation of the General Election date of March 25, 2014, direction on providing early voting, and authorization to utilize the Town Commission office for SOE staff and equipment. Upon confirmation by the Commission, Staff will draft the appropriate Ordinance to be forwarded to the December 2, 2013, Regular Meeting Agenda for first reading.

Attachments: 11-05-13 Memo, Town Clerk to Manager;
Page CHT-5, Town Charter, Section 4, Elections Generally
E-Mail from Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections

Recommended Action: Pending discussion, provide direction to Manager.

M E M O R A N D U M

Date: November 5, 2013

TO: David Bullock, Town Manager
FROM: Trish Granger, Town Clerk
SUBJECT: Establishing the Date for the Town's General Municipal Election and Early Voting Schedule

The Town's Charter sets the date for the Town's General Election as the third Tuesday in March. The Charter also provides for the option to align the Town's election with any other County administered election.

The Town was notified by the Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections (SOE) office that the Sarasota County School Board was scheduling a County-wide Special Election in March 2014, two weeks prior to the date of the Town's March 2014 General Election. Sarasota County SOE Kathy Dent requested consideration for the Town to align our General Election with the School Board's proposed date. Following discussion that were held with School Board representatives, a mutually accepted date of March 25, 2014, was proposed for both elections.

The qualifying deadline for the General Election is November 18, 2013, at 12:00 noon. As of the date of this Staff report, five candidates have qualified for four Commission seats, as follows:

District At-Large:

Mr. Terry Gans, Incumbent
Mr. Armando Linde

District 1:

Ms. Lynn Larson, Incumbent

District 3:

Mr. Ray Rajewski

District 5:

Ms. Pat Zunz, Incumbent

Both County SOE offices have requested information pertaining to the offering of early voting. Florida Election Laws were amended in the 2012-2013 Legislative session providing additional early voting days and times that can be offered. We have been notified by Ms. Dent that the School Board has selected to offer a total of 13 days (March 10 through March 22, 2014) for early voting from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day.

Traditionally, the Town has offered one week (7 days) of early voting, with approximately 65 hours for poll workers during the early voting period.

If early voting is scheduled at Town Hall, the Town is required to pay for all associated early voting expenses in addition to election day expenses. The 2013 early voting election costs for poll workers totaled \$4,506.20 (\$1,593.50-Manatee County and \$2,912.70-Sarasota County). As the proposed early voting days are expanded by both days and hours the early voting poll worker expenses will more than double the budgeted costs for this service. Sarasota County has advised that if the Town elects to hold early voting on the mainland, no costs will be incurred for the service.

The Town Clerk has requested information from Manatee County on the estimated costs for on-site (Town Hall) versus holding early voting at the Manatee County SOE office. At the time of agenda material submission, a response has not been received and will be provided during consideration of this item at the November 13, 2013, Regular Workshop Meeting.

During past election cycles, a vacant office was available to locate the Manatee County early voting equipment and poll workers. However, with the establishment of the position of Assistant Town Manager that office space is no longer available. The only available office to conduct early voting in Town Hall is the Town Commission office and the Town Clerk's office is seeking approval to utilize this office to accommodate Manatee County voters. This will restrict access to the office by Town Commissioners and Staff members as the voting equipment will be locked in the room during the early voting dates. Sarasota County will utilize the Antechamber during the early voting dates.

The applicable section of the Town Charter pertaining to election provisions is attached for reference, as well as the correspondence from Sarasota County SOE Dent regarding the early voting schedule. Section 6 of the Charter requires the Town Commission to meet within three (3) business days following certification of the election by the Supervisor of Elections. As such, the Statutory Meeting is scheduled for March 31, 2014.

compensation but shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in connection with official duties.

Sec. 4. Elections generally.

When there are more than two (2) qualified candidates for an elective office on the town commission, there shall be both a preliminary and general election. The preliminary election shall be held on the last Tuesday of January and the general election shall be held on the third Tuesday of March, or, when practicable, in conjunction with any County administered election held in March by the coordinating County, either Sarasota or Manatee County. If the date of the general election is changed as a result of coordinating with a County, the date of the preliminary election may also be changed in order to comply with State election laws. The names of the first and second highest number of votes cast for a particular office in the preliminary election shall be placed on the ballot for that office at the general election. If no more than two (2) electors qualify as candidates for nomination for each office to be voted upon, then no preliminary election need be held; and such qualified candidates shall be nominees at the next following general election.

Sec. 5. Conduct of elections.

The town commission shall, by ordinance, prescribe the method and manner of holding all elections in the town and shall provide when and how special elections shall be called and held, which are not provided for by the terms of this Charter. All elections shall be conducted substantially in accordance with the laws governing state elections insofar as there is no conflict with the terms of the Charter.

Sec. 6. Hours polls to be open; canvass of returns; certification of election.

The polls shall be open at the voting places from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., or as otherwise provided by law, on the same day, and the time shall be regulated by the customary time in standard use in the Town of Longboat Key on the date of the particular election. **The result of the voting, when**

ascertained, shall be certified by the Supervisor of Elections or his deputy and delivered to the town clerk who shall transmit the returns to the town commission at a meeting to be held at 7:00 PM within three (3) business days following certification. At such meeting, the town commission shall canvass the returns and the result as shown by such returns shall be declared by the commission to be the result of the election. The town clerk shall thereupon furnish a certificate of election to each person shown to have been elected, and each such person shall take office at that meeting.

Sec. 7. Judge of qualifications.

The town commission shall be the judge of the election and qualification of its own members, subject to review by the courts.

Sec. 8. Vacancies.

(a) Vacancies in the town commission shall be filled by the town commission, with any person so appointed to be a qualified elector from the district of the vacated commissioner, to serve until the next general municipal election. At the next general municipal election, the vacancy shall be filled by election; the person elected in such election to serve the remaining unexpired term of the town commissioner whose vacant office is being filled. If a vacancy is not filled by the town commission within thirty (30) days after the vacancy occurs, a special election shall be held within ninety (90) days after such a vacancy occurs; and the person so elected shall serve the remaining unexpired term.

(b) Any vacancy resulting from a recall election shall be filled in the manner provided by state laws applicable to recall of municipal officials.

Sec. 9. Recall of town commissioners.

All members of the town commission shall be subject to recall as provided by the Laws of the State of Florida.

From: Dent, Kathy [KDent@sarasotavotes.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2013 2:52 PM
To: Trish Granger
Cc: Administration 7th Floor; Michael Bennett;
'ahardy@matthewseastmoore.com'
Subject: Early voting days and hours for the March 25, 2014 election

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Good afternoon, Trish:

The school board has settled on 13 days of early voting beginning on Monday, March 10, 2014 and running through Saturday, March 22, 2014. The hours will be from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day. We will conduct early voting in my three offices – Sarasota, Venice, and North Port.

If the Town wants early voting at Longboat Key Town Hall, it will be responsible for the cost of the early voting. To avoid confusion for voters, the same days and hours would be necessary.

Please let us know your decision.

Thanks.

Kathy Dent

Kathy Dent, CERA
Supervisor of Elections
Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections
101 S. Washington Blvd.
Sarasota, Florida 34236

(941)861-8606
(941)650-0992 (cell)
(941)861-8609 (fax)
kdent@sarasotavotes.com

www.sarasotavotes.com



IMPORTANT: All mail sent to and from the Sarasota County Supervisor Of Elections office is subject to disclosure under the public records law of Florida. This email has been scanned by the MX Police managed email security.



End of Agenda Item