



CITY COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DEPARTMENT: Commission

DATE: April 28, 2026

SUBJECT: Discussion and Possible Action: Consideration of a Non-Binding Referendum Regarding Potential City Acquisition of the Cooper Colony Golf Course – **Commissioner Katzman/Commissioner Mallozzi**

BACKGROUND OF ITEM:

The City Commission is aware of community interest and concern regarding the future of the Cooper Colony Golf Course property, including the potential for residential redevelopment. In response, the Commission is exploring all available options to help preserve the property's current use as a golf course.

One option under consideration is the potential acquisition of the property by the City. At this time, it is unclear whether such a purchase is feasible. Any acquisition would likely require a significant financial commitment and, if pursued, would ultimately require support from residents who would bear the associated costs.

As part of this process, the Commission may consider placing a non-binding referendum on the November 3, 2026 ballot to gather community input on whether the City should explore using public funds to purchase and preserve the property as a golf course.

A non-binding referendum (also known as an advisory question) allows voters to express their opinion on a specific issue. While the results are not legally binding, they provide valuable guidance to the Commission on matters involving significant policy and financial considerations.

ANALYSIS:

If directed by the City Commission, the City Attorney would prepare proposed ballot language for consideration. Any proposed question must comply with applicable Florida election laws, including the requirements of Florida Statutes Section 101.161, which generally limit ballot summaries to 75 words and require clear, unambiguous language.

It is important to note that:

- A non-binding referendum does not commit the City to purchasing the property
- It does not authorize funding or financing

- It does not replace any required future approvals related to budgeting, land acquisition, or voter authorization, if applicable

Key considerations for the Commission include:

- **Purpose of the Question:** The referendum is intended to gauge general support for acquisition and preservation of the property
- **Feasibility:** The City's ability to negotiate and fund a potential acquisition, which remains uncertain at this stage
- **Timing:** Placement on the November 2026 General Election ballot to minimize additional costs
- **Cost Implications:** While the referendum itself does not authorize spending, there may be costs associated with ballot placement depending on coordination with the Supervisor of Elections
- **Legal Review:** Ensuring ballot language is clear, accurate, and legally sufficient
- **Public Engagement:** Providing residents with a formal opportunity to express their views on a significant community issue