



TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH

AGENDA MEMORANDUM

MEETING TYPE: Town Commission

MEETING DATE 08/15/2023

SUBMITTED BY: Lanelda Gaskins, Office of the Town Clerk

SUBJECT: Municipal Canvassing Boards versus County Canvassing Board

SUMMARY:

On November 16, 2021, the Town Commission discussed the Canvassing Board members for 2022 General Municipal Election and decided to maintain the Highland Beach Canvassing Board as defined in Section 1.06(7) of the Town's Charter.

Additionally, on January 31, 2023, the Town Commission requested Town staff to provide information about the duties of the Town's Canvassing Board and alternative options available to the Town. This item is before the Town Commission to educate the Commission about the responsibilities of the Canvassing Boards and an alternative option.

Currently, the Town maintains its Municipal Canvassing Board according to Section 1.06(7) – "Town Commission Created; Election; Terms; Town Clerk; Qualifications of Electors; General Election Law" of the Charter. The canvassing board members consist of the Town Clerk or designee of the town clerk, the Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections (SOE) or designee of that office, and one Commissioner appointed by the Town Commission (who is not running for election), which is designated by a resolution.

There are 39 municipalities in Palm Beach County. Most of the municipalities have designated the County Canvassing Board to serve as their canvassing board except the Town of Highland Beach, City of Delray Beach, City of West Palm Beach, and the Town of Juno Beach.

The County and Municipal Canvassing Boards have the several responsibilities during an election cycle. Attached is the Division of Election Reference Guide 0020 – Canvassing Board Membership and Activities. The reference guide summarizes the duties and activities of the board members.

There are additional responsibilities for the municipal clerks and canvassing board members such as:

<u>Municipal Clerks</u>	<u>Canvassing Board Members</u>
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Attend all Canvassing Board Meeting activities. Ensure all Canvassing Board members complete the Signature Verification Training and send certificates to the County SOE prior to the first Canvassing Board Pre-Election meeting.	Take the Signature Verification Training
Prepare and distribute the Canvassing Board meeting activities to the members.	Attend various canvassing board meetings.
Prepare and post the Notice of Logic & Accuracy (L&A) Testing on the website and at town hall.	All members attend canvassing meetings on election days and night includes certifying election results.
Post and publish the canvassing board members names on Town's website and at town hall.	Attend Post Audit election.
Provide County SOE with L&A Notice as soon as possible.	
Prepare, publish, and distribute Canvassing Board Meeting agendas and transcribe minutes to all members.	

Should the Town continue to maintain its own Municipal Canvassing Board beyond 2024, the Palm Beach County Supervisor of Election may elect not to serve as a Canvassing Board member for the Town.

As an alternative, the County Canvassing Board is an option. According to Florida Statute 102.141(1), the County Canvassing Board is composed of the supervisor of election; a county court judge, who shall act as the chair; and the chair of the board of county commissioners. In addition, alternate canvassing board members must be appointed in the event county canvassing board is unable to serve or is an option in the election being canvassed or is an active participant in the campaign or candidacy of any candidate who has option in the election being canvassed, such member shall be replaced according to the statute. As mentioned above, the responsibilities of a Municipal Canvassing Board and County Canvassing Board are the same.

Please note: When a municipal election runs concurrent with county-wide election, the Division of Election has determined that only the County Canvassing Board can certify the election results.

If the Town decides to designate the County Canvassing Board, this Board will only be responsible for canvassing activities during the election cycle. The Town Clerk will remain as

the Supervisor of Elections for the Town's election. Persons interested in running for the offices of the Mayor, Vice-Mayor or Commissioner will continue to file their candidate, campaign reports and qualifying papers with the Town Clerk/Filing Officer.

The Town's insurance carrier, Brown and Brown, has confirmed Canvassing Board members who are employees of the town are covered under the insurance plan.

Lastly, County Canvassing Board canvasses county, state and federal elections and is very knowledgeable of the canvassing board duties.

FISCAL IMPACT:

\$20,000 (estimate)

ATTACHMENTS:

November 16, 2021 Town Commission agenda memorandum

November 16, 2021 Town Commission meeting minutes

Division of Election Reference Guide 0020 – Canvassing Board Membership and Activities

2023 Highland Beach Canvassing Board Schedule

RECOMMENDATION:

At the discretion of the Town Commission.