



TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH AGENDA MEMORANDUM

MEETING TYPE: Town Commission
MEETING DATE *December 03, 2024*
SUBMITTED BY: Lanelda Gaskins, Town Clerk's Office
SUBJECT: Proposed Ordinance / Electronic Publication of Notices

An Ordinance of the Town Commission of the Town of Highland Beach, Florida, amending Chapter 1, "General Provisions," of the town code of ordinances by adopting a new Section 1-13, "Electronic Publication of Notices;" providing for the repeal of all ordinances in conflict; providing for severability and codification; and providing for an effective date.

SUMMARY:

Consideration of the proposed ordinance amending Chapter 1, "General Provisions," of the town code of ordinances by adopting a new Section 1-13, "Electronic Publication of Notices" which will allow the Town Clerk to public legal advertisements and public notices on the county's publicly accessible website in accordance with Section 50.0311, Florida Statutes.

Section 50.0311, Florida Statutes, was recently enacted by the Florida Legislature to give a governmental agency the option to publish certain legally required advertisements and public notices on a publicly accessible website of the county in which it lies, rather than in a newspaper of general circulation, if the cost of publishing advertisements and public notices on the website is less than the cost of publishing advertisements and public notices in the newspaper.

Palm Beach County has established a publicly accessible website in accordance with the statute ("Website") and staff has determined that the cost of publishing advertisements and public notices on the Website is less than the cost of publishing such advertisements and public notices in the newspaper.

The cost of publishing legal advertisements and public notices in the newspaper has increased over the past two fiscal years. The total cost in FY 2023 was \$7,380.94, and in FY 24024 was \$11,821.45, which is a \$4,440.51 increase in advertising costs. The cost of publishing advertisements and public notices on the county's website is \$5,000.00 annually.

If the Town Commission elects to utilize the website, section 50.0311(6), Florida Statutes, further requires Highland Beach to provide notice in the newspaper at least annually, advising residents and property owners that they may receive legally required advertisements and public notices from Highland Beach by first-class mail or e-mail. Highland Beach must also

establish and maintain a registry for this purpose. Additionally, Highland Beach will execute the necessary agreement with Palm Beach County to utilize its website.

The proposed ordinance creates a new section of the Code of Ordinances and amends certain other provisions of the Code to allow Highland Beach to publish legally required advertisements and public notices on the website. The proposed new Code section also contains language providing for the annual notice to residents and property owners and establishing the registry required by the statute.

Town staff believe that the proposed changes will promote efficiency and provide cost savings for the town. If the Town Commission approves the proposed ordinance on first reading, staff will advertise the ordinance in the newspaper of general circulation and bring it back as a second reading at the December 17 meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Cost savings due to reduction in costs associated with electronic legal advertising.

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

Town staff recommend approval of the proposed ordinance amendments.