



TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH AGENDA MEMORANDUM

MEETING TYPE: Town Commission Meeting

MEETING DATE September 5, 2023

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager's Office

SUBJECT: Discussion on past charter amendments and upcoming referendum questions.

SUMMARY:

Vice Mayor Stern has requested a Commission discussion of past charter amendment and any potential future referendum questions.

History:

In 2022, the Town's Charter Review Board conducted a thorough review of the Town's Charter, resulting in a recommendation to the Commission to ask the electorate to vote on charter amendments by way of referendum questions. On the March 2022 ballot, five (5) referendum questions were proposed to the voters. Of the five questions, four (4) were ultimately voted against by the electorate.

The five charter questions were:

1. SHALL THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH AMEND ITS CHARTER TO ADOPT SECTION 2.01(31) TO PROVIDE THAT THE TOWN MAY NOT TRANSFER CONTROL, ABOLISH, MERGE WITH, OR SELL THE SERVICES OF FIRE RESCUE, POLICE OR WATER UNLESS APPROVED BY A REFERENDUM VOTE OF THE ELECTORATE?
 2. TO RECOGNIZE THE GROWTH OF COSTS AND SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF TOWN SERVICES, INCLUDING ITEMS LIKE THE WATER TREATMENT PLANT, LIBRARY, POLICE, AND FIRE RESCUE, SHALL THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH AMEND ITS CHARTER AT SECTION 2.01(30) TO PROVIDE THAT THE FUNDING LIMITS BE INCREASED FROM THE CURRENT LIMIT OF \$350,000, WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1991, TO FIVE PERCENT (5%) OF THE TOWN'S TOTAL ANNUAL BUDGET?
 3. SHALL THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH AMEND ITS CHARTER SECTION 3.02(1) TO AUTHORIZE THE MANAGER AND FINANCE DIRECTOR SIGN CHECKS AND PAY LAWFUL DEBTS; AUTHORIZE A MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION TO SIGN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE MANAGER OR FINANCE DIRECTOR OR TWO
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COMMISSIONERS TO SIGN IN THE ABSENCE OF BOTH THE TOWN MANAGER AND FINANCE DIRECTOR?

4. SHALL THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH AMEND ITS CHARTER AT SECTION 1.06(3) TO PROVIDE THAT NO PERSON MAY SERVE MORE THAN THREE CONSECUTIVE FULL TERMS IN ANY ONE OFFICE; NOR SERVE MORE THAN TWELVE CONSECUTIVE YEARS AS A TOWN ELECTED OFFICIAL?
5. SHALL THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH AMEND ITS CHARTER AT SECTION 3.05 TO PROVIDE THAT THE SALARIES OF THE TOWN COMMISSIONERS AND MAYOR MAY BE DETERMINED BY ORDINANCE BUT SHALL NOT BE INCREASED BY MORE THAN FIVE (5%) IN ANY GIVEN YEAR?

Besides redressing the past charter questions, the Town Manager's Office suggests that the Commission should also consider charter questions related for capital projects such as the rehabilitation of the old fire station, Town wide sewer lining project, and the rehabilitation of lift stations as well as other charter amendments such as the canvassing board change.

It is important to keep in mind if the Commission decides to include referendum questions on the March election ballot, there must be two reads of an ordinance approving the final language. This language must be submitted to the Supervisor of Election's (SOE) office no later than Friday, December 15, 2023. Please note, this date is subject to change per the SOE.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

Commission discussion.