

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Vice-Mayor Kristen Rosen Gonzalez
DATE: March 13, 2024

SUBJECT: DUAL REFERRAL TO THE AD HOC ADVISORY CHARTER REVIEW AND REVISION BOARD AND THE PUBLIC SAFETY NEIGHBORHOODS AND QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS WHETHER THE CITY CHARTER SHOULD BE AMENDED TO PROVIDE FOR EVEN-YEAR ELECTIONS.

RECOMMENDATION

I would like to refer an item to the March 25, 2024 Ad Hoc Charter Review and Revision Board (the "Charter Review Board") meeting and the March 20, 2024 Public Safety Neighborhoods and Quality of Life Committee (the "Committee") to discuss whether the City Charter should be amended to provide for even-year elections to allow for greater participation by the City's electorate.

Local governments have a significant voter turnout problem in odd-numbered years, which is when elections are held for the election of Mayor and Commissioners in the City. Turnout is often less than 20% of the electorate, such that local officials are often selected by a small fraction of eligible voters. In contrast, turnout in even-numbered years is often twice the number of voters who participate in odd-numbered years.

After consulting with the City Attorney, I believe the first formal step would be to submit a non-binding, straw ballot question to the voters asking whether the City should initiate the process, with final approval of required Charter amendments subject to voter approval in a subsequent Citywide referendum. I ask that the Charter Review Board promptly make a recommendation to the City Commission as to whether to proceed with a straw ballot well in advance of the County's deadline to submit ballot questions for the November General Election. The County's deadline for the November 5, 2024 General Election is July 26, 2024.

SUPPORTING SURVEY DATA

N/A

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

N/A

Applicable Area

Citywide

Is this a "Residents Right to Know" item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-14?

Yes

Does this item utilize G.O. Bond Funds?

No

Strategic Connection

Non-Applicable

Legislative Tracking

Vice-Mayor Kristen Rosen Gonzalez