



Legislation Text

File #: ORD. NO. 2024-07, **Version:** 1

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the North Port Commission

FROM: A. Jerome Fletcher II, ICMA-CM, MPA, City Manager

TITLE: An Ordinance of the City of North Port, Florida, Calling for a Referendum Question to be Placed Before the Qualified Electors of the City of North Port, Florida at the November 5, 2024 General Election; Providing a Referendum Question Determining Whether to Amend the City Charter to Authorize the City Commission to issue Debt in Certain Circumstances Without Prior Voter Approval; Providing for the Full Text of the Proposed Charter Amendment; Providing Findings; Providing for an Effective Date for the New Charter Language if the Proposed Charter Amendment is Approved; Providing for the Filing of the Ordinance with the Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections; Providing for Publication of the Text of the Proposed Charter Amendment; Providing for Filing with the Florida Department of State if the Proposed Charter Amendment is Approved; Providing for Conflicts; Providing for Severability; and Providing an Effective Date.

Recommended Action

Continue Ordinance No. 2024-07 to second reading on July 23, 2024.

Background Information

During a Special Commission Meeting on June 26, 2024, the City's Bond Counsel and Financial Advisor participated in the discussion on proposed charter options. During this meeting the City Commission approved the following motions to:

- Direct staff to insert referendum language establishing a \$15 million principal cap per non-emergency project.
- Direct staff to include language proposed by Mr. Miller, Bond Counsel, clarifying that debt service would be payable from funds other than property taxes.
- Direct the City Attorney to include language to the Charter ordinance that the issuance of non-emergency debt cannot be conducted using an emergency ordinance.
- Include Charter language to state the Debt Management Policy will be adopted by Commission via Resolution with two readings.

Proposed Ordinance 2024-07 reflects the direction provided by the City Commission during the Special Meeting and, the proposed ballot question has been amended to read as follows:

Florida local governments may issue certain debt for various governmental purposes. The City Charter requires voter approval before the City issues any debt. Should the Charter be amended, allowing the City to issue debt payable from funds other than property taxes without voter approval: (i) for safety and public health projects with a maximum principal amount of \$15,000,000, increasing annually based on a cost index; and (ii) to respond to a declared emergency or disaster?

In addition, during the Special Meeting on June 26, 2024, the City Commission moved to:

- Direct the City Manager and City Clerk to schedule a debt policy workshop in September with the final adoption to be held prior to the November referendum.
- Rescind prior direction given regarding bond counsel presence at first reading of the Charter Referendum.

The Debt Management Policy is scheduled for discussion during the September 9, 2024, Commission Workshop.

Pursuant to Florida Statutes Section 166.041(4)(c), a business impact estimate is not required because this ordinance relates to the issuance or refinancing of debt.

Strategic Plan

Good Governance

Financial Impact

To be determined.

Procurement

Not applicable.

Attachments:

1. Ord. No. 2024-07
2. Commission Meeting Action Report June 26, 2024

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