

MEMORANDUM

TO: Pinellas County Charter Review Commission

FROM: Kurt Spitzer

DATE: June 15, 2005

RE: Non-Partisan Election of the Supervisor of Elections

This is to provide you with background information on the subject of electing the Supervisor of Elections on a non-partisan basis.

Two documents are attached for your review. One is a summary of some of the common policy arguments for and against making such changes. The other table identifies the practice in other charter counties in Florida.

Of the charters that have provided that one or more of the Constitutional Officers are elected on a “non-partisan” basis, most have done so without first abolishing the offices’ “constitutional” status.

You should also know that there are minor differences in terms of the required filing fees for candidates for office and the disposition of the revenue when comparing partisan and non-partisan offices. Currently, in partisan elections at the county level, the filing fee is a total of six percent of the office’s annual salary. An amount equal to one percentage point goes to the Election Commission’s Trust Fund at the State of Florida. A total of five percentage points goes to the respective state political party’s executive committee.

If the charter provided that the office was elected on a non-partisan basis, the total filing fee would be four percent of the Supervisor’s annual salary. Of that amount, one percentage point would still go to the Election Commission’s Trust Fund. However, the remaining three percentage points would go to the general revenue fund of the county.

Since a proposed amendment on this subject would likely need to be adopted as a Special Act by the Legislative Delegation before being presented to the voters, you may wish to make a final decision on this issue prior to your meeting of August 15th.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

attachments