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MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 6, 2025

TO: Mayor Pachota and City Council Members

CC: James Clinch, City Manager
Kelly Michaels, City Clerk

FROM: Kelly M. Fernandez, City Attorney

SUBJECT: Charter Referendum for Vice-Mayor Term

After the passage of the 2024 City Charter referendum eliminating odd-year elections, the wording of Section 3.02(b) of the City Charter resulted in a two-year term for the selected Vice-Mayor instead of the traditional one-year term. Section 3.02(b) states: “A vice-mayor shall be elected by and from the members of the city council at the first regular council meeting following the certification of the results of the city election.”

At City Council’s December 10, 2024 meeting, discussion occurred as to whether the City should return to an annual selection process for the Vice-Mayor. Sarasota County and the City of Sarasota, both of which do not have odd-year elections, have charters that provide for the annual selection of a Vice-Mayor/Vice-Chair. City Council voted to proceed with returning to an annual section process. Amendments to the City Charter require the adoption of an ordinance by City Council setting forth the text of the proposed amendment and the approval of a majority of the registered voters of the city voting in a referendum.

To that end, an ordinance has been drafted for Council consideration. The ordinance provides a question for inclusion on the November 3, 2026 General Election ballot on whether to amend the Charter to allow for the annual selection of the Vice-Mayor.