


## MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Lori Stelzer, City Clerk 

RE: Ordinance No. 2014-21, Changing Dates for Qualifying and Certification of Election

DATE: June 23, 2014

---

Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections (SOE) Kathy Dent requested that the City of Venice change its dates for qualifying and the certification of election due to a recent change in state law. The Florida Legislature adopted a law which decreased the time period between the primary and general election by two weeks and extended the time period for submission of overseas ballots. The SOE has a concern with getting the ballots printed in a timely manner for the general election since there is a one and a half week wait for the city's qualifying period from August 26 (primary) to September 5 (the city's qualifying end date).

Qualifying dates currently begin at 8 a.m. on September 2 and end at noon on September 5. With this proposed ordinance the new qualifying dates would begin at noon on August 18 and end at noon on August 22, moving the qualifying period up two weeks. Any persons interested in running for city council would have to file all of their paperwork by noon on August 22.

The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) extended the deadline for overseas ballots which provides a 10-day receipt period after the election. The city's certification of election occurs on Wednesday, a week after the election; which is within eight days of the election and cannot comply with the 10-day requirement.

Staff discussed the option to adjust the schedule by one week this year and adjust the schedule by another week next year; however, it was considered more efficient to complete it in one step. Staff is concerned with the short notification for the public and will make every effort to assure the public is well informed about the change, including preparing a news release and running an ad in both newspapers.

Let me know if you have any questions.

:las