

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Lori Stelzer, City Clerk

RE: Domestic Partnership Registry

DATE: December 30, 2016

Before expending staff time drafting an ordinance relative to the domestic partnership registry, it was important to get council's direction on the subject.

On March 26, 2013, the City of Venice adopted Ordinance No. 2013-04 to establish a domestic partnership registry, which included a sunset provision that caused the ordinance to expire on March 25, 2016. On November 6, 2013, Sarasota County adopted Ordinance No. 2013-037 establishing a county-wide domestic partnership registry.

45 partnerships have been registered with the city, with three having been terminated, one has registered with Sarasota County and four have marriage licenses recorded with Sarasota County. (which effectively terminates the partnership registration). (August, 2016 data)

I have been working with the city attorney to determine the best course of action regarding the city's registry. Sarasota County has been contacted to incorporate the city's registry into its program, but due to minor differences between the city and county ordinances, a joint registry was not practical. The city's options appear to be 1) readopt the same ordinance as Ordinance No. 2013-04 and continue to maintain the city registry or 2) encourage applicants to apply to the county's registry program and draft an ordinance to phase out the city's registry within a certain time period (i.e. three years).

Because of Sarasota County's registry and county-wide impact, I am recommending option 2) to draft an ordinance to phase out the registry within a certain time period (i.e. three years) and encourage those partnerships to become registered with Sarasota County. To help facilitate the phase out, I would also recommend the city incur the expense for filing the terminations at an approximate cost of \$420 and to waive the fee to file for termination.

xc: Charter Officers

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