

Charter Review Committee Recommendations and City Commission Actions to Date

The following is a brief summary of the Charter Review Committee and City Commission's actions to date affecting the City Charter. The Charter Review Committee's draft report contained nine recommendations to the City Commission. The draft has not been finalized and therefore those recommendations have not been presented to the City Commission for adoption.

During the past eight months, the City Commission has adopted various resolutions sending questions to the voters on related subjects. The City Commission has officially called for a mail ballot election to be held on April 21, 2026 to consider seven questions. The City Commission will be finalizing the ballot, ballot questions, and related details of the election in January 2026.

It is the intent of this document to provide the Charter Review Committee with a brief summary of all pertinent prior actions of the previous Charter Review Committee and the Commission and for the Charter Review Committee to consider the following possible actions:

- a) readopt, revise, or rescind any of the committee's recommendations the Committee's recommendations;
- b) provide new recommendations to the Commission; or
- c) provide input on the ballot language adopted by the City Commission.

The City Attorney's office is working diligently to finalize the language of all ballot questions consistent with applicable law and the Commission's intent. Please note that the titles of certain ballot questions and other details may be changing to comply with applicable state statutes.

November 18, 2025.

ELECTION DATE

Charter Review Committee's Prior Recommendations:

Limiting Election Date Change to Referendum or Adoption of Ordinance by a 4/5 Vote

Then-Vice Chair Wells brought a proposal to the Charter Review Commission which provides that should the City Commission wish to adjust the date of the municipal election via ordinance, it can only do so by a super-majority vote of four-fifths of the City Commission. This recommendation was adopted by a 5-0 vote of the Charter Review Committee.

The proposed amendment would add the following language to Section 1 of the Charter:

Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, including but not limited to, Florida Statutes 100.3605, 101.75, and 166.021, the date of the general election shall only be changed by referendum or an ordinance adopted by a four-fifths (4/5) vote of the City Commission.

Legal Effect: Nothing in this proposal would limit the ability of the City Commission to call for a special election for consideration of this Charter amendment or limit the public's ability to amend the election date in the Charter through the initiative process. This proposal *would* limit the ability of the City Commission to adjust the election date to coincide with state or countywide elections by simple majority. Any ordinance adjusting the election date would need to be adopted two times by a super-majority four-fifths vote. Given a recent case opinion of the Third District Court of Appeal, without future changes to the County Charter or state statutes, the City is likely unable to change the City's election date in the City Charter via ordinance.

Election Date

Ultimately, the Committee did not recommend that the City Commission send the question of the election date to the voters, but did want to adopt a motion demonstrating indicating its preference for an April election. The discussion surrounding the election date involved discussion of Coral Gables history, voter turnout, campaign financing, political action committees, and the volume of political advertisements in a county or statewide election. This motion was adopted by a 3-2 vote of the Charter Review Committee.

Charter Review Committee Motion:

To keep the City elections in April of odd-numbered years.

Legal Effect: This motion proposes no amendment to the City's Charter. The Charter currently calls for municipal elections in April of odd-numbered years

City Commission Action:

Resolution 2025-301:

Calling for a special Mail Ballot election to change the city's election and associated dates to coincide with national elections.

Proposed Question:

AMENDING THE CHARTER TO CHANGE CITY'S ELECTION AND ASSOCIATED DATES TO COINCIDE WITH NATIONAL ELECTIONS

Shall the City Charter be amended to:

Change the month and day when the City of Coral Gables holds its general elections from April of each odd year to the date of the national election in November of each even year commencing in 2026, resulting in a four- month reduction of current elected officials' terms, and adjusting associated qualifying and run-off dates, with the intention of increasing voter turnout and decreasing election costs?

_____ YES

_____ NO

Proposed Charter Change:

Sec. 1. Creation, composition, election, terms, vacancies, qualifications.

The City shall be governed by a commission consisting of five members elected from the City, at large, in groups or seats numbered One through Five. One of the said Commissioners shall be the Mayor and shall be elected by the people from the group numbered One, and all persons desiring to qualify as a candidate for Mayor shall file in Group One. The Mayor shall have the powers set in the Charter of the City of Coral Gables, Dade County, Florida (today Miami-Dade County). All persons desiring to qualify for Commissioner shall file in Groups Two through Five.

Commissioners in Groups Two and Three shall be elected at the general election to be held the ~~second~~ first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, 2026 ~~April, 1985~~, and at general election every four years thereafter.

Commissioners in Groups Four and Five ~~shall be those Commissioners whose terms presently expire in 1987, and Commissioners who elect to run in Groups Four and Five shall be elected the~~

~~second~~ first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, 2028 ~~April, 1987~~ and general election each four years thereafter.

The Mayor shall be elected at each general election beginning the ~~second~~ first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, 2026 ~~April 2011, and shall hold office~~ for a term of two years and at a general election every two years thereafter. The Mayor and Commissioners shall take office at noon on the third day after their election. The Mayor and all other members of the Commission shall be subject to recall, as provided by the Charter.

The candidate receiving the greatest number of votes in each group shall be considered elected after the canvas of the vote and the declaration of the elections' result as hereinafter provided.

Any Commissioner whose term of office does not expire at noon on the third day after the election, desiring to run for the office of Mayor shall present an irrevocable resignation of his or her office of Commissioner to the City Commission not less than 60 days prior to the date of election, and said resignation shall become effective at noon on the third day after the election. Upon receipt of resignation, the Commission shall make public announcement by resolution accepting the resignation and instructing the Clerk to accept qualified candidates to run for election for the unexpired term of the resigning Commissioner for the purpose of running for Mayor.

Within 30 days after a vacancy occurs on the Commission, the remaining Commissioners shall elect a Commissioner to fill the vacancy until the next general biennial election. At that time, if the term of office vacated extends beyond such election, a Commissioner shall be elected to fill the balance of the unoccupied term, except as provided for recall. Members of the Commission shall not hold any other elected office except that of Notary Public, or member of the Florida State Militia. A member of the Commission ceasing to possess any of the qualifications specified in the Charter, or if convicted of a felony while in office, shall immediately and automatically forfeit his or her office.

Sec. 1.1. Run-Off Election.

The candidate receiving a majority of the votes in each group shall be considered elected. In any election for Groups One through Five, if a majority of the vote is not received by any one candidate of a group, a run-off between the two candidates receiving the most votes in the respective group shall be held ~~two~~ four weeks after the general election, on a Tuesday. The candidate receiving the most votes in the run-off shall be considered elected. The Mayor and Commissioners shall take office at noon on the ~~third~~ fifth Friday after the general election. No run-off election shall be required when a candidate receives a majority of the vote or if a candidate is unopposed in the run-off election. Run-off and all other dates related thereto may be adjusted by Ordinance. This provision shall take precedence over any conflicting provision in this Charter.

Canvassing, and Qualifying Periods

The members of the Commission shall be residents of the City and shall have the qualifications of electors therein. The Commission shall be the judge of the election and qualifications of its own members in accordance with the parameters outlined in this Charter.

- (a) *Age and Residency Requirements*

To be a candidate for Mayor or Commissioner, an individual must: be a U.S. Citizen and have resided in the City of Coral Gables for at least one year prior to the election for which he or she seeks office.

(b) *Ballots, Canvassing.*

It is the duty of the City Commission to have ballots prepared in advance of an election and to complete all prerequisites required of the Commission under this Charter or any other governing provision of Florida law. After an election, the Commission shall canvass the election returns and declare its results as soon as may be practicable.

[(c) Reserved.]

(d) *Candidates, Fee; Rebate of Excess Fees.*

Any person who meets the qualifications for a candidate, as outlined in this Charter, may offer himself or herself as a candidate for City Commissioner by submitting a written declaration to the City Clerk and paying a \$200.00 filing fee, which shall be used to off-set the costs of the election. The name of any person so qualified shall be placed on the official ballot. Within 30 days after the election, the City Clerk shall advise the Commission as to the costs of the election and the amount of candidate filing fees collected. If the amount of candidate filing fees collected is greater than the election's cost, the City Commission shall order that such excess be returned to the candidates in a pro rata manner.

(e) *Qualifying Period.*

To be qualified to run for Mayor or Commissioner, candidates must file their written declaration of intent with the City Clerk, ~~and~~ pay the required candidate filing fee, and submit all required qualifying documents. Candidates for Mayor or Commissioner shall qualify with the City Clerk during a qualifying period which shall coincide with the qualifying period for election to a county office as specifies in F.S. 99.061(2). Only that qualifying period specified in F.S. 99.061(2), which is any time after noon on the 71st day prior to the state's primary election, but not later than noon on the 67th day prior to the state's primary election shall be applicable. ~~between noon of the 50th day and noon of the 46th day prior to the election.~~ This period shall constitute a four-day qualifying period

Legal Effect: If adopted by the voters, the City's elections would take place the first Monday after the first Tuesday in November of each even year beginning in November 2026. If adopted, the sitting Commissioner's terms would each shortened by four months. Rather than finishing their term in April of 2027 the term would end in December of 2026. The City's run-off election would take place four weeks after the general election and, consistent with the state law, qualifying would take place 71 to 67 days prior to the state's primary election.

Resolution 2025-163:

Sending to the voters a question on prohibiting election changes via ordinance.

Proposed Question:

**AMENDING THE CHARTER TO PROHIBIT FURTHER CHANGES TO THE
ELECTION DATE VIA ORDINANCE**

Shall the City Charter be amended to:

Prohibit changing the City's general election date away from November of even numbered years through the adoption of an ordinance by the City Commission, in so far as that prohibition is not in conflict with state law.

YES

NO

Proposed Amendment:

To the extent not in conflict with state law, the date of the general election shall not be changed by ordinance.

Legal Effect: If adopted, nothing in this proposal would limit the ability of the City Commission to call for a special election for consideration of this Charter amendment or limit the public's ability to amend the election date in the Charter through the initiative process. This proposal *would* limit the ability of the City Commission to adjust the election date to coincide with state or countywide elections ordinance. Given a recent case opinion of the Third District Court of Appeal, without future changes to the County Charter or state statutes, the City is likely unable to change the City's election date in the City Charter via ordinance.

TERM LIMITS

Charter Review Committee's prior recommendation:

Then Vice Chair Wells brought a suggestion regarding term limits to the Charter Review Committee for consideration. The suggested language creates a limit on an individual's ability to be elected, chosen, or appointed as mayor or commissioner if they have served as mayor or commissioner for each of the preceding twelve consecutive years. No individual who has served as mayor or commissioner for twelve consecutive years shall be eligible for appointment, selection, or election as mayor or commissioner unless they have not held either office for four consecutive years prior to said election, selection, or appointment.

Currently, the City Code provides that no person shall serve as mayor for more than eight consecutive years, or commissioner for twelve consecutive years. The current Charter has no limitation on an individual serving twelve years as commissioner followed by eight years as mayor. The City Attorney's Office has previously opined in Opinion 2014-055 that once a commissioner ceases to hold office after twelve consecutive years, if an interruption of at least one year of service occurs, then the individual is eligible to hold office as commissioner again.

At the Committee's request, the members were provided with term limit provisions from various other municipalities and discussed the issue at length. Ultimately, the Charter Review Committee adopted the Vice Chair's recommendation regarding additional term limits. The recommendation was adopted by the Charter Review Committee in a 3-2 vote.

Proposed Amendment:

Sec. 2. - Term Limitations.

No person shall be elected to serve as Mayor for more than eight consecutive years. Likewise, no person shall be elected to serve as City Commissioner for more than twelve consecutive years. No person shall be chosen, appointed or elected to serve as Mayor or a Commissioner if he or she has held either such office during each of the preceding twelve consecutive years.

Such person who has served either or both as Mayor and/or a Commissioner during any consecutive twelve-year period cannot be chosen, appointed or elected as Mayor or a Commissioner unless he or she has not held either such office for at least four consecutive years prior to such appointment or election.

Except as otherwise set forth above, the time served by an individual chosen, appointed or elected to fulfill an unexpired term resulting from a vacancy on the City Commission shall not be counted in applying these term limits.

Legal Effect: The proposed amendments, if adopted, would provide a limit to qualification for an individual to be elected or appointed as mayor or commissioner. In practice a commissioner having served three terms would be ineligible to run for mayor until a four year "cooling off"

period had elapsed. However, a commissioner having served two terms, with eight consecutive years of service, would be eligible to be elected or appointed as mayor for two two-year mayoral terms. Should an individual have served only as mayor for the maximum eight years, they would be eligible to be appointed or elected for one four-year commission term but would be ineligible to be reelected at the conclusion of that commission term as they would have served twelve consecutive years. This proposal would prohibit the appointment of any individual who had previously served as mayor or commissioner to any vacancies on the commission unless they had not served in the previous four years. This provision is a limitation on the current term limits and may affect potential candidates in upcoming elections.

City Commission Action:

None to date.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE

Charter Review Committee's Prior Recommendation:

Residency qualification requirement

Background: At the City Attorney's Office suggestion, the Charter Review Committee looked at the residency requirement for qualification for running for office in the City. Given recent legal disputes in neighboring municipalities regarding interpretations of residency requirements, the City Attorney's Office suggested amending the City Charter to reflect the City's longstanding interpretation of the residency requirement. Currently, Section 3 of the City Charter provides that "To be a candidate for Mayor or Commissioner, an individual must: be a U.S. Citizen and have resided in the City of Coral Gables for at least one year prior to the election for which he or she seeks office." The City Attorney's Office suggestion was to clarify the City's interpretation that the one year prior to the election, is the one year "immediately" prior to the election in which the candidate seeks office. The Charter Review Committee considered this suggestion and found that this amendment would provide additional clarity regarding the City's interpretation of this provision. This recommendation was adopted by a 5-0 vote of the Charter Review Committee.

Proposed Amendment:

Sec. 3. - Election to Office; Commission as Judge of Qualifications, Requirements, Ballots, Canvassing, and Qualifying Periods.

The members of the Commission shall be residents of the City and shall have the qualifications of electors therein. The Commission shall be the judge of the election and qualifications of its own members in accordance with the parameters outlined in this Charter.

(a)

Age and Residency Requirements. To be a candidate for Mayor or Commissioner, an individual must: be a U.S. Citizen and have resided in the City of Coral Gables for at least one year immediately prior to the election for which he or she seeks office.

City Commission: No action to date

Legal Effect: The addition of this language should not affect any current qualification requirements. The City's interpretation of the Charter has always been that the required residency is immediately prior to the election. This amendment merely codifies that interpretation.

City Commission Action:

None to date.

COMPENSATION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Charter Review Committee's Prior Recommendation:

None to date.

City Commission Action:

Resolution 2025-160:

REQUIRING A VOTE OF THE ELECTORS PRIOR TO ANY CHANGES TO THE
COMPENSATION OF THE CITY'S ELECTED OFFICIALS

Shall the City Charter be amended to require:

That any change to the compensation of the City's elected officials, beyond the annual adjustment to compensation based on the Consumer Price Index as set forth in the Code, requires an affirmative vote of the electors prior to adoption by the City Commission.

_____ YES

_____ NO

Proposed Charter Language:

Sec. 7. - Compensation, Commissioners and Mayor.

The Commission may, by ordinance, provide for the compensation of its members, including the Mayor, and for the allowance of travel and office expenses. Any changes to the compensation of the Commission after November 3, 2026, beyond the annual increases in compensation for elected officials tied to the annual increase in the CPI-W for urban wage earners and clerical workers from the preceding July as set forth in the City Code, shall require a vote of the electors prior to adoption by the City Commission.

Legal Effect: This change would require a vote of the electors prior to any change of the compensation of an elected official. The City Charter provides for a) compensation of Commission members, and b) travel and office expenses. The City Code currently provides set compensation, along with travel and other expenses which are set in the annual adopted budget. This would require any changes to compensation beyond the CPI-W increase set in the City Code to be submitted to the electors.

Initiative and Referendum

Charter Review Committee's Prior Recommendation:

Then Vice Chair Wells, made two proposals for recommendations to amend Section 10. The proposals were to replace “the total number of registered voters in the City” with “the average number of voters who voted in the last three regular election (excluding runoffs) with the highest number of votes in any such election if there were multiple elections on such date.”

The proposal was to keep the ten percent (referendum) and twenty percent (initiative) requirements for petitions, but the suggested change would allow for a different number of petition signatures required based on voter turnout in the last three regular elections.

Currently, an initiative petition would require signatures of twenty percent of registered voters in the City as of the last municipal election. During the municipal general election held in April 2023 and there were 33,002 of registered voters, this would require 6,600 of petitions be validated for an initiative to succeed.

The proposed changes would change this calculation to be twenty percent of the average of the race which received the highest number of votes (mayor or commissioner) in the last three municipal elections. For a current initiative petition that would mean a requirement of twenty percent of the average of the 2023 general election (6,905 votes cast), 2021 election (10,406 votes cast in the mayoral race), and the 2019 election (8,519). This would be an average of 8,610 votes cast in the last three general elections and require only 1,722 initiative petition ballot signatures to proceed to a special election as compared to the 6,600 required signatures based on the 2023 registered voters. Please note these numbers were calculated prior to the April 2025 election and have not been updated.

The Charter Review Committee discussed the details of this proposal extensively. There was discussion regarding the lowering of the threshold for these processes, the representative nature of the City Commission, as well as the costs of special elections. Ultimately, the Charter Review Committee did not adopt the recommendation to alter the calculation of number of voters for the referendum process (the motion failed 2-3) but did recommend that the City Commission consider amending the calculation of number of voters for the initiative process (that motion was adopted by a 3-2 vote).

Proposed Amendment:

Sec. 10. - Initiative and Referendum

(C) Power to Institute Ordinances, Initiatives.

(ii) *Circulating and Filing of Initiative Petition.* Within thirty days of the Commission's approval of the form of the Initiative petition, the person(s) circulating the petition shall obtain the signatures of at least twenty percent of the average number of voters who voted in the last three regular local elections (excluding run-offs) with the highest number of votes in any such election if there were multiple elections on such date. ~~the City's registered voters as evidenced by the official voter registration records for the regular election that immediately preceded the filing of the Initiative petition.~~

The petition shall then be filed with the City Clerk. Within ten days after the petition is filed with him or her, the City Clerk shall determine whether the signatures therein are sufficient. Upon completing his or her examination of the petition, the City Clerk shall attach thereto a certificate showing the result of the examination.

If the City Clerk finds that the petition is insufficient, he or she shall set forth in his or her certificate the manner(s) in which such petition is defective and shall at once notify the petitioners' committee of his or her findings. An insufficient petition may be amended within thirty days of the City Clerk certifying that the petition is insufficient, by filing an amended petition containing additional papers signed and filed in conformance with the requirements applicable to the original petition, as set forth in this Section.

The City Clerk shall examine an amended petition within ten days after it is filed. If the City Clerk determines that the amended petition is again insufficient, he or she shall file the amended petition in his or her office, notify the petitioners' committee of his or her findings, and take no further action on such insufficient petition. The City Clerk's finding that a petition is insufficient shall not prejudice the filing of a new petition for the same purpose.

Legal Effect:

This proposed change would result in inconsistency between various election procedures. The Charter Review Committee only adopted this proposal for the initiative process, not the referendum process. Adoption of this change would result in different voter total calculations for the initiative and referendum processes. Additionally, state law governs the percentage of registered voters required to sign petitions in both the charter amendment and recall petition processes. Those state requirements are for a percentage of registered voters as evidenced by the last election, not the language in the proposed amendment. Should the City Commission want to proceed with this proposal the City Attorney's office would suggest cleaning up the language regarding the calculation of average number of voters. Should city elections be moved to coincide with state or county-wide elections, or a local election contain referendum questions, the calculation as to which number of votes cast should be used for the average needs to be solidified. If a local election takes place in August, for a special election for a referendum as was done in the past, along with countywide positions, the Charter should be clear if it is the number of votes cast for the countywide or local referendum that would be used in calculating the average number of voters.

City Commission Action:

None to date.

City Attorney's Office:

The City Attorney's office continues to review the applicable Charter provisions and will be suggesting a streamlined version to the Charter Review Committee for review.

Estimated Revenues

Charter Review Committee's Prior Recommendation:

Vice Chair Wells brought forth a suggestion related to Section 18 of the City Charter addressing the estimated revenues and expenditures included in the budget estimate provided by City staff to the City Commission in July of each year. The request from Vice Chair Wells was to include both estimated revenues and expenses from non-tax sources in that estimated budget. The City's Finance Department staff was present for these discussions and had no concerns about including that language in the City Charter. The recommendation was adopted by a 5-0 vote of the Charter Review Committee.

Recommendation:

That the following amendment to City Charter should be presented to the voters for adoption via referendum, or by ordinance if feasible and approved by the City Commission.

Sec. 18. - Budget Estimate of Expenditures and Revenues of All City Departments, Divisions, and Offices.

Not later than three months before the end of each fiscal year, the City Manager shall prepare and submit to the Commission a budget estimate of the expenditures and revenues of all City departments, divisions, and offices for the ensuing fiscal year. The estimate shall be compiled from detailed information obtained from the several departments, divisions, and offices on the uniformly formatted templates furnished by the City Manager. The classification of the estimates shall be as uniform as possible for the main functional divisions and offices, and in parallel columns the following information shall be provided:

- (a) a detailed estimate of the expense of conducting the business of each department, division or office;
- (b) expenditures for corresponding items for the last two fiscal years;
- (c) expenditures for corresponding items for the current fiscal year, including adjustments due to transfers between appropriations, as well as an estimate of the expenditures necessary to complete the current fiscal year;
- (d) the value of supplies and materials on hand, as of the date of the preparation of the estimate, that are not included in the central storeroom in a ready to be issued status;

- (e) increases or decreases to appropriation requests shall be compared with corresponding appropriations for the current year, and the reasons for the requested increases or decreases shall be set forth;
- (f) the City's total expected income from taxes for the period covered by the estimate;
- (g) an itemization of anticipated revenues (together with corresponding expenses) from other sources;

Legal Effect: The addition of this language would require City staff to provide revenue and expenditure estimates for non-tax sources of revenue when providing the budget estimate during July of each year.

City Commission Action:

No action to date.

Reserve Policy

Charter Review Committee Prior Recommendation:

None to date.

City Commission Action:

Resolution 2025-161

AMENDING THE CHARTER TO INCLUDE A CITY FUND BALANCE AND RESERVE POLICY REQUIREMENT AND APPROVAL OF THE ELECTORS PRIOR TO EXPENDING FUNDS FROM THE GENERAL FUND RESERVE OR AMENDING THAT POLICY

Shall the City Charter be amended to require:

That the City maintain a twenty-five percent general fund reserve requirement and other fund requirements as adopted by the Commission in Ordinance 2025-05, and require that expending funds from the General Fund Reserve, except in those emergency situations outlined in the Ordinance, or amending the City's fund balance and reserve policy, require an affirmative vote of the electors.

_____ YES

_____ NO

Proposed amended charter language:

Sec. 20. Unappropriated Accruing Revenue, Unexpended Balances, General Fund Reserve.

The Commission may, from time to time, appropriate for such uses as it determines any unappropriated accruing revenue of the City as well as the balance remaining for an appropriation after the purpose of the said appropriation has been accomplished or abandoned. The City shall maintain the classifications of Fund Balance adopted in Ordinance 2025-05 which codified the City's Fund Balance and Reserve Policy. The General Fund Reserve shall be maintained at twenty-five percent (25%) of the City's total Operating Expense and Debt Service budgets as outlined in that Ordinance. Any change to the Fund Balance and Reserve Policy, or any expenditure of the General Fund Reserve, other than those funds authorized to be spent pursuant to the emergency powers of the City as authorized in the Charter, City Code, a declaration of emergency or other applicable law, shall be submitted to the electors of the City for approval.

Legal Effect: The City Commission has adopted Ordinance 2025-05 which codified the City's Fund Balance and Reserve Policy and requires that any change to that policy requires a 4/5 vote of the City Commission. The policy further requires that any expenditure from the General Fund Reserve, other than those funds authorized to be spent in certain emergency situations, requires a 4/5 vote of the City Commission. If adopted, this amendment to the Charter would further require that any change to the policy or any non-emergency expenditure of those funds require a vote of the electors as well as a 4/5 vote of the City Commission. There would be associated costs and time frames when submitting these questions to the electors.

Public Works Contracts

Charter Review Committee's Prior Recommendation:

The City Charter currently provides that all contracts for the performance of public works projects or improvements over \$25,000 shall be awarded to the lowest and most responsive bidder, after public advertising and receipt of bids as may be prescribed by ordinance. This results in most public works projects complying with the City's formal solicitation procedure requirements as few public works projects are estimated to cost under \$25,000 in today's economic climate. The City Manager suggested increasing this to \$100,000. This increase reflects the practical realities of project costs and aligns with the City's operational needs. The City Manager suggested that raising the threshold would streamline procurement processes, reduce administrative burdens, and allow staff to focus on more complex projects requiring formal solicitation. Additionally, the Manager suggested that this adjustment remains in line with best practices observed in other municipalities and provides greater efficiency while maintaining fiscal responsibility and oversight.

Proposed amendment:

Sec. 24. - Public Works or Improvements-Direct Labor, Contracts, Bidding.

The Commission may authorize any public work project or improvement by either contract or direct labor; however, prior to the Commission authorizing direct labor to perform any public work or improvement, the City Manager shall submit detailed plans and estimates thereof to the Commission and there shall be a separate accounting as to each public work project or improvement so performed.

All contracts for the performance of public work projects or improvements valued at more than ~~\$25,000.00~~ \$100,000 shall be awarded to the lowest and most responsive bidder, after public advertising and receipt of bids as may be prescribed by ordinance. The Commission, however, shall have the power to reject all bids and re-advertise the project for new bids. All advertisements as to contracts shall contain a reservation of the foregoing rights. Contracts for public work projects or improvements shall be signed by the City Manager and City Clerk after approval of the Commission.

Legal Effect: This change would allow City staff to procure contracts for public works projects and improvements up to \$100,000 without public advertising and receipt of bids. The City's procurement code addresses procurement of services in all amounts and would address the necessary procedures and requirements for procurement of services up to \$100,000.

City Commission Action:

None to date.

City Attorney's Office:

Staff has suggested further increasing the threshold amount to \$300,000 to be consistent with applicable state statutes.

Boards and Committees

Charter Review Committee Prior Recommendation:

None to date.

City Commission Action:

Resolution 2025-211

Proposing the following language for referendum:

AMENDING THE CHARTER TO ALLOW THE APPOINTING COMMISSIONER OR APPOINTED OFFICIAL TO REMOVE A BOARD MEMBER FROM THAT POSITION PRIOR TO THE EXPIRATION OF THAT TERM

Shall the City Charter be amended to:

Allow the City Commissioner, or appointed official, who appointed a member to a City board or committee, to remove that member from that position prior to the expiration of their term , for any reason, in so far as that removal is not in conflict with state law.

_____ YES

_____ NO

Proposed amendment:

Sec. 26. - Advisory Boards, Authority of Commission to Appoint.

The Commission may appoint boards or commissions, composed of such number of City residents as the Commission may deem expedient, consistent with exceptions authorized by law, to act in an advisory capacity in conjunction with any one or more City departments. The members of all such boards and commissions shall serve without compensation and may be removed at any time by a majority vote of the Commission, or by the appointing elected or appointed official, with or without cause, subject to any state requirements for particular boards or committees.

Legal Effect: If adopted, this amendment to the Charter would allow an individual elected or appointed official to remove, with or without cause, any board member previously appointed by the official to a City Board or Committee. This would not apply to those particular boards or committees where removal of members is addressed in applicable state statutes.

Resolution 2025-87:

REQUIRING A DECENNIAL REVIEW OF THE CITY CHARTER

Shall the City Charter be amended to require:

That the City Commission convene a Charter Review Committee every ten (10) years beginning in 2035, to review the City Charter and provide recommendations to the City Commission on potential amendments. The Charter Review Committee shall consist of seven members. The Commissioners and City Manager will each appoint one member who is a resident of the City. The City Attorney's appointee shall be a current or former municipal or county attorney.

_____ YES

_____ NO

Adding the proposed language:

Sec. 26. Advisory Boards, Authority of Commission to Appoint.

The Commission may appoint boards or commissions, composed of such number of City residents as the Commission may deem expedient, consistent with exceptions authorized by law, to act in an advisory capacity in conjunction with any one or more City departments. The members of all such boards and commissions shall serve without compensation and may be removed at any time by a majority vote of the Commission.

Beginning in 2035, the City Commission shall convene a Charter Review Committee every ten years in order to provide recommendations to the City Commission on potential amendments to the City Charter. The Committee shall consist of seven members. Each City Commissioner and the City Manager shall appoint one member who is a resident of the City. The City Attorney shall appoint one member who shall be a current or former municipal or county attorney.

Legal Effect: This proposal, if adopted, would add the Charter Review Committee to the City Charter and require that the board meet every ten years beginning in 2035. The composition of the Committee would be required to match the current composition of the Charter Review Committee.

Inspector General

Charter Review Committee's Prior Recommendation:

The City Commission requested in Resolution 2024-142 that the Charter Review Committee consider whether the City Charter should be amended to establish an office of Inspector General. After an extensive discussion, including presentations by then City Manager Amos Rojas, and current City Manager Alberto Parjus, the Charter Review Committee adopted a motion, later amended, addressing the need for an Independent Inspector General in the City.

As evidenced by the robust and lengthy discussion on this topic, this item was a particular focus of the Committee. During the presentations by the City Manager's Office and City staff, the Charter Review Committee was presented with detailed explanations of the City's current processes and procedures for internal and external audits, internal affairs investigations, and information regarding the County Inspector General's ability to assist with allegations of fraud, waste, or abuse.

Currently, the City Commission may, by majority vote, direct the City Manager, City Attorney, or other party to investigate allegations of fraud, waste, or abuse. The Miami-Dade County Inspector General has the ability, after approval of the Board of County Commissioners, to contract services with the City of Coral Gables, however, concerns were raised about the Miami-Dade County Inspector General's capacity to provide those services to the City, and the feasibility of entering into such an agreement.

The Charter Review Committee and City Manager Rojas discussed the need for a permanent Office of the Inspector General in the City, and based on the information provided by City staff, including the ongoing costs to the City to create such an office, the Charter Review Committee did not find that a permanent independent Inspector General in the City was warranted.

However, the Charter Review Committee continued to discuss the ability of the City Commission and City Attorney to appoint an ad hoc independent special counsel to investigate particular allegations of fraud, waste, or abuse in the City at two separate meetings, and after amending the initial motion, the final recommendation of the Charter Review Committee was adopted by a 4-1 vote.

Recommendation:

That the following addition to the City Charter be presented to the electors for consideration or if possible, adopted via Ordinance:

The City Attorney has the independent power to designate ad hoc special counsel to investigate specific allegations of fraud, waste, or abuse in the City.

Legal Effect: The City Attorney's office currently has the independent authority to hire independent counsel to address numerous issues. The City Commission currently has the ability, by majority vote, to direct the hiring of special counsel or an independent investigator to address concerns. The addition of this provision would clarify that the City Attorney has independent authority, separate and apart from the Commission's existing authority, to hire ad hoc special counsel to investigate specific allegations of fraud, waste, or abuse in the City. Nothing in this provision would limit the City Commission's authority to, by majority vote, engage ad hoc counsel to investigate specific allegations of fraud, waste, or abuse in the City, or limit the City Commission's ability to appoint an independent inspector general, or create an office of inspector general at a later date. This item would be placed in a new section of the Charter, to be determined by the City Attorney's Office.

City Commission Action:

Resolution 2025-88:

AUTHORIZING AN INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES

Shall the City Charter be amended to authorize a contract with Miami-Dade County or a private entity to provide inspector general services, as needed, to the City to investigate, audit, and oversee municipal matters in order to identify efficiencies and investigate and prevent fraud, waste, mismanagement and abuse of power, and who can subpoena witnesses and require production of documents, and whose appointment, term, functions, and powers shall be established by ordinance?

_____ YES

_____ NO

Adding the following section to the Charter:

Section 34h.- Inspector General

The Commission is authorized, as needed, to appoint, through contract with the Miami-Dade County Inspector General or with a private entity, through a process further established by Ordinance, an Inspector General. The Inspector General shall have the power to investigate, audit, review, and oversee municipal matters in order to identify efficiencies, and investigate and prevent fraud, waste, mismanagement, and abuse of power and subpoena witnesses and require the production of documents. The Inspector General's appointment, term, functions, authority, and powers shall be further established by ordinance and in an executed agreement with the

Miami-Dade County Office of Inspector General or private entity as approved by the City Commission.

Legal Effect: This proposal, if adopted by the electors, would allow the City to, when needed, contract with the Miami-Dade County Office of Inspector General or a private entity or individual to provide inspector general services to the City. This would be on an as needed basis, and the Inspector Generals' appointment, qualifications, term, and purview would be further outlined in an ordinance and agreement adopted by the City Commission.

Other Suggestions

Charter Review Committee's Prior Recommendation:

Budget Transparency

The Charter Review Committee spent a significant amount of time discussing transparency in City budgeting and expenditures. Following discussions with the City Manager's office and Finance Department staff the City committed to publicly posting the quarterly budget updates that are currently provided to the City's Budget Advisory Board. The Charter Review Committee wanted to clearly recommend to the City Commission that though inclusion of a specific charter provision may not be necessary or appropriate, its recommendation is for more transparency regarding budget updates throughout each fiscal year, particularly as related to capital improvement projects. The recommendation was adopted by a 5-0 vote of the Charter Review Committee.

Charter Review Committee Motion:

The Charter Review Committee is concerned about transparency in budget items and would like quarterly updates to the budget, especially regarding capital improvement projects, be provided to the public.

Legal Implication: There is no legal effect of this broad policy statement or adoption by the City Commission of this requirement.