

April 28, 2008

Early voting begins for May 6 referendum

Sarasota County residents who wish to vote early for the May 6 special referendum election may do so now until May 4.

Eligible voters may vote early in one of the three Supervisor of Elections offices in Sarasota (Terrace Bldg, 2001 Adams Lane), Venice (R.L. Anderson Administration Bldg, 4000 S. Tamiami Trail), and North Port (Biscayne Plaza, 13640 Tamiami Trail). Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, and 1-5 p.m. Sunday.

Two measures are on the ballot for consideration by voters:

- An amendment to the Sarasota County Charter that would, if approved by voters, place an Urban Service Boundary (USB) into the County Charter and require a unanimous vote of the county commission to change the Urban Service Boundary. The USB is a conceptual line delineating the higher density urban service area from the lower density rural lands to the east. A unanimous vote of the county commission would also be required to add or expand overlay districts that would increase the allowable density on land outside the USB. The issue would also require fiscal neutrality for comprehensive plan amendments increasing the urban service area.
- Allowing Sarasota County to issue a series of bonds up to \$300 million to help fast-track several surtax infrastructure projects approved by voters in November 2007. Voter approval is needed since the county charter limits the bonding authority of the county at any one time to \$19.4 million.

“There’s not a lot local government can do to impact the national or state economic picture,” said County Commission Chair Shannon Staub. “But we can do something to stimulate our local economy, and Issue Two is our local economic stimulus package, which we hope the voters will support.”

For more information about the ballot measures, call the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 or visit the county’s Web site at www.scgov.net and click on “PennyWise.”