

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF VOLUSIA COUNTY
2026 CHARTER AMENDMENT COMMITTEE
FINAL REPORT
July 6, 2026**

The League of Women Voters of Volusia County (LWVVC) Charter Amendment Committee (CAC) met three times to review the five amendments from the Council appointed Charter Review Commission that will be on Volusia voters' November 2026 ballot. The Charter Review Commission's final report can be found [HERE](#).

The following report represents our recommendations to support or oppose each amendment, the consequences of passage or defeat, and in some cases, the rationale for our recommendation.

Respectfully submitted:

Melissa Lammers, Chair

Pat Drago

Pattie Gertenbach

Linda Mojer

Saralee Morrissey

1. County Chair Appointed by Elected County Council Members and more Restrictive County Council Term Limits

Proposed Ballot Title and Summary:

COUNTY CHAIR APPOINTED BY ELECTED COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS AND MORE RESTRICTIVE COUNTY COUNCIL TERM LIMITS

Shall the Volusia County Charter be amended so County Council appoints one of its members as County Chair each year, not to exceed two consecutive, one-year terms as Chair; return the County Council to a seven-member body of five district members and two at-large members; and establish that no County Council Member may appear on the ballot if they would have served eight consecutive years at the end of their current term?

_____ Yes

_____ No

Position: Oppose

What happens if Amendment 1 does not pass?

The composition of the Volusia County Council, the selection of the chair, and existing term limits will remain in their current form, which includes electing the Council Chair on a countywide, at large, basis, and allowing Council members to serve a maximum of two consecutive four year terms within their district and a maximum of two consecutive four year terms in a districtwide, at large position, for a total of 16 consecutive years.

What happens if Amendment 1 passes?

The composition of the County Council will remain seven members: five (5) district representatives and two (2) at-large representatives. The County Chair will no longer be elected by the voters. The chair will be elected by the members of the County Council from among its seven members, which is a return to the Council organization that existed prior to 2006. In addition, this amendment will limit the selected council member to two (2) consecutive one (1) year terms as Chair. Separately, all County Council members' terms will be limited to two (2) consecutive terms of four (4) years each for a maximum of eight (8) years of service instead of the current maximum of 16 consecutive years.

Our considerations

This is a challenging amendment for consideration as it is not limited to a single issue. The amendment has four different decision points or components: (1) the composition of the council, (2) the method to select the council chair, (3) a term limit for the chair position, and (4) new term limits for all council members. The CAC prioritized these components, choosing changes to term limits for all members as the key issue and the basis for our recommendation to oppose the amendment. While many people favor term limits, we have observed how they have altered the Florida State Legislature, providing greater influence to leadership and to staff, while depriving legislative bodies of experience and continuity, and ultimately depriving voters of determining the value of and deciding their representation.

2. Removal of Charter Limitations Regarding Reimbursement of Work-Related Expenses Incurred by County Council Members**Proposed Ballot Title and Summary:****REMOVAL OF CHARTER LIMITATIONS REGARDING REIMBURSEMENT OF WORK-RELATED EXPENSES INCURRED BY COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Shall the Volusia County Charter be amended to remove charter limitations regarding reimbursement of work-related expenses incurred by County Council members?

_____ Yes
_____ No

Position: Support

What happens if Amendment 2 does not pass?

To attend work-related activities within Volusia County, Council members will continue to have to personally defray 100 percent of their expenses, such as transportation and admission fees.

What happens if Amendment 2 passes?

County Council members will be able to attend work-related events and activities around our county without incurring personal expenses, like travel costs and admission fees. They will be reimbursed for legitimate work-related expenses incurred on behalf of their constituents.

Our considerations

LWV has always favored removing financial barriers to civic engagement in order that participation is not limited by economic class. Volusia County is a very large and diverse county, approximately 1200 square miles, roughly the size of the state of Rhode Island. While five council members are elected solely by voters within their districts, their votes can affect all residents. Understanding countywide issues and the difference across our county is important. Volusia County currently reimburses expenses for out of county work-related activities; however, given the size of Volusia County, attending meetings and events within the county can result in significant costs to any individual council member. We recognize that there is a process for reimbursement that will provide full accountability for expenditures.

3. Amend Charter to Reflect Changes Made to Florida Constitution as to County Constitutional Officers

Proposed Ballot Title and Summary:

AMEND CHARTER TO REFLECT CHANGES MADE TO FLORIDA CONSTITUTION AS TO COUNTY CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Shall the Volusia County Home Rule Charter be amended to repeal provisions which were superseded in 2018 by the voter approved amendment to section 1 of article VIII of the

Florida Constitution as to county constitutional officers and replace superseded or obsolete provisions?

_____ Yes

_____ No

Position: Support

What will happen if Amendment 3 does not pass?

The Volusia County Home Rule Charter will be inconsistent with the Florida State Constitution.

What will happen if Amendment 3 passes?

The Volusia County Home Rule Charter will be consistent with the Florida State Constitution that establishes the Sheriff, Tax Collector, Elections Supervisor, and Clerk of Courts as Constitutional Officers.

Our considerations

Although the LWVVC has always supported the Sheriff and the Property Appraiser being hired based upon their qualifications, the County Charter must not be at odds with the State Constitution.

4. Remove Personnel Administration Provisions from Charter and Require Such Be Established by Ordinance

Proposed Ballot Title and Summary:

REMOVE PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION PROVISIONS FROM CHARTER AND REQUIRE SUCH BE ESTABLISHED BY ORDINANCE

Shall the Volusia County Charter be amended to remove provisions related to personnel administration from the Charter and require provisions related to personnel administration to be enacted as an ordinance by the County Council?

_____ Yes

_____ No

Position: Support

What happens if Amendment 4 does not pass?

The Charter will continue to include a detailed section pertaining to the qualifications and duties of the human resources director and mandatory personnel policies pertaining to

the appointment of personnel boards

What happens if Amendment 4 passes?

It would simplify the charter by removing provisions governing the personnel board's and human resource director's appointment, qualifications, and powers and duties. It would also remove requirements regarding the employee merit system and distinctions in classifications of service by moving those items to ordinances. In other words, it allows personnel management to be more agile.

Our considerations

Personnel issues do not belong in the charter. They are administrative functions that are best handled by appointed and elected leadership.

5. Establish Registry Increasing County Council Voting Requirement for Transfer of Conservation Land

Proposed Ballot Title and Summary:

ESTABLISH REGISTRY INCREASING COUNTY COUNCIL VOTING REQUIREMENT FOR TRANSFER OF CONSERVATION LAND

Shall the Volusia County Charter be amended to establish a conservation land registry to which land may be added or removed by a majority plus one vote of the entire County Council, with heightened notice requirements for removal, which registry will prohibit property from being conveyed unless the County Council determines the land is no longer needed for conservation purposes; and providing exceptions for public purpose and takings by eminent domain.

_____ Yes

_____ No

Position: Support

What happens if Amendment 5 does not pass?

There is nothing currently in the Volusia County Home Rule Charter or State law that protects conservation land owned by Volusia County beyond its land use designation in the Comprehensive Plan and any subsequent County Council actions. Florida Statute 125.35 authorizes that the County is permitted to buy and sell land. It states that *the board of county commissioners is expressly authorized to sell and convey any real or personal property, and to lease real property, belonging to the county, whenever the board determines that it is in the best interest of the county to do so*. In other words, the Volusia County Council may transfer or sell conservation land owned by Volusia County at any time

if they find it is in the County's best interests. Under this statute, a sale or transfer requires only a simple majority vote of the Council members.

What happens if Amendment 5 passes?

Conservation lands owned by Volusia County will receive greater protection than they currently enjoy through the establishment of a conservation land registry and governing rules. Land that is placed into the registry may only be removed from the registry and slated for sale or transfer, upon the vote of a majority plus one of the Council members. Such vote may only be undertaken after public notice has been given at least 30 days prior to the vote, accompanied by a statement of why the land is no longer needed for conservation. By the same majority plus one vote of the Council, Volusia conservation lands may be placed in the registry. This amendment is consistent with protections for state conservation lands in the Florida Constitution Article X, Section 18 and Chapter 259 of Florida Statutes.

Our considerations

Conservation lands in Volusia County that were purchased through a combination of State and/or Water Management District and Volusia County funds are subject to State protections and therefore, the Volusia County Council may not decide to sell or transfer those properties without the State also taking action. Any decision to surplus a property purchased under those circumstances must follow the State's process. On the other hand, Volusia conservation land solely owned by the County is vulnerable to the decisions of any given council and therefore is better protected with protections consistent with those the State provides to State conservation lands. If the people wish to further protect the conservation lands owned wholly by Volusia County, they will need to ask the Volusia County Council to place those properties into the registry.