



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00232

Agenda Date: 9/26/2023

Agenda Item Name:

Ordinance No. 2023-10 Digital Publication of Legally Required Advertisements and Public Notices

Presenter:

Tommy Crosby, Assistant County Manager Budget & Fiscal Services 352-337-6205

Description:

This Ordinance supports 2022 Florida Statute, Chapter 50 (Legal and Official Advertisements). Beginning on January 1, 2023, public notices and legal advertisements are allowed to be published on a publicly accessible website.

The migration of public notices to the Alachua County Website will allow the public to find and access all Alachua County public notices.

This Ordinance would allow Alachua County to decrease overall operating advertising expenditures/costs for the County related to print/publishing public notices and legal advertisements in a newspaper, while increasing accessibility and transparency to the public.

Recommended Action:

As the Board of County Commissioners Approve Ordinance 2023-10 which allows public notices and legal advertising in compliance with Florida Statute 50.011 and 50.0311.

Convene as the Land Development Regulation Commission and find the proposed Ordinance 2023-10 which allows public notices and legal advertising in compliance with Florida Statute 50.011 and 50.0311 relates to the Unified Land Development Code consistent with the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan.

Reconvene as the Board of County Commissioners and approve Ordinance 23-10.

Prior Board Motions:

Agenda Item 23-0712, April 25, 2023, the Board of County Commissioners approval to request to advertise Ordinance.

Fiscal Note:

Each department has a budget in account 49.04 for public notices in the newspaper.

The County has averaged between \$60,000 and \$100,000 per year in publication costs.

The County will utilize an existing administrative position to administer the public notices and the public notice webpage.

Strategic Guide:

All Other Mandatory and Discretionary Services

Background:

Florida House Bill No. 7049 passed and beginning January 1, 2023, revises requirements for posting public notices in the newspaper (2022 Florida Statutes, Chapter 50 (Legal and Official Advertisements)). Florida Statutes now allow for digital publication of public notices on certain publicly accessible websites, such as the County website (www.alachuacounty.us). Alachua County currently publishes/prints public notices and legal advertisements at a substantial cost in the local newspaper and performing the service in-house and on-line will reduce costs. The proposed ordinance will authorize Alachua County to publish legal advertisements and public notices digitally on its accessible website www.alachuacounty.us.

An online solution will provide free access to Citizen's to view all public notices in one place on the County website.

The public will have the ability to sign up for online notifications through the County website for information they wish to receive. This aligns with the current effort to improve citizen engagement on our website.

This offers multiple advantages to Alachua County.

1. It will be less expensive to provide notice to the public.
2. The citizen does not have to pay for a subscription or buy a newspaper to follow Government business.
3. The notice remains online for review much longer than the one or two days normally posted in the paper.