

Elect Polin, Dodge And McGarry

March 7, 2007

Four candidates are running for three seats on the Hillsboro Beach Town Commission. The South Florida Sun-Sentinel Editorial Board recommends voters elect Alan J. Polin, Daniel R. Dodge and Carmen McGarry on March 13.

The candidates discussed three important issues facing Hillsboro Beach. The town needs to find an alternative to its water treatment plant, which is deteriorating. It needs to revise its outdated charter. And the process of inspecting construction and issuing building permits, which is currently outsourced to Broward County, is expensive and slow.

Polin has served for seven months on the commission, after being appointed to replace Constance Caloggero.

Polin, 53, a real estate lawyer, would revise the town charter to change municipal election dates from March to November, expand commissioners' terms from two years to four and set two-term limits for officeholders.

Polin favors a competitive bid process to decide how the town replaces its water treatment plan. He would like to outsource inspections and permits to a neighboring city or a private company.

Dan Dodge, 54, is the general manager of the Hillsboro Club and has served two terms as commissioner. Beach replenishment is his first priority. Dodge prefers repairing the existing water treatment plant rather than replacing it with a more expensive reverse-osmosis facility.

Though he acknowledges that Broward County has been slow to react to overpriced inspection and permit fees, he feels efficiency has improved and is pleased with the county's service.

He has proposed switching to four-year terms in the past and favors imposing term limits.

Carmen McGarry, 65, served as commissioner from 1999 to 2003 and is currently the town historian. She would seek to revise the charter to impose term limits and define the duties of the city manager. McGarry favors selling the town's water treatment plant and buying water from a neighboring municipality.

Retiree T. J. Micelli, 73, is the fourth candidate in the race.

DEERFIELD BEACH

Deerfield Beach voters will get a chance on March 13 to vote on issuing bonds for fire-rescue and public safety facilities, for parks and recreation facilities, and to lease firefighting facilities to the Broward County Sheriff's Office. The South Florida Sun-Sentinel Editorial Board recommends voters vote YES on all three ballot questions.

Question No. 1 concerns the issuance of bonds, not to exceed \$25 million, to update equipment and technology and for new facilities for the fire department. Even if Deerfield Beach eventually contracts with BSO for fire-rescue services, the facilities will be the property of the city. Vote YES.

Question No. 2 involves the issuance of bonds, not to exceed \$30 million, for funding a variety of parks and community center projects in the city, including beach renovation and the design and construction of a dog park. Vote YES.

Question No. 3 involves the leasing of city fire-emergency rescue facilities to BSO. Depending on the outcome of the vote, commissioners will then determine if the city should contract those services with BSO. The fire department has been hampered by resignations and various legal settlements in the past year. Clearing the way for a fire department merger with BSO makes sense. Vote YES.