**RESOLUTION 2024-01**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE NORTH RIVER FIRE DISTRICT PROVIDING FOR A REFERENDUM OF THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS WITHIN THE NORTH RIVER FIRE DISTRICT TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE NORTH RIVER FIRE DISTRICT SHOULD BE AUTHORIZED TO LEVY AN AD VALOREM TAX NOT TO EXCEED 1 MILL ANNUALLY TO FUND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES; PROVIDING FOR THE PLACEMENT OF A REFERENDUM ON THE NOVEMBER 5, 2024 BALLOT; PROVIDING FOR OFFICIAL BALLOT LANGUAGE; PROVIDING FOR NOTICE OF THE REFERENDUM AND CERTAIN OTHER MATTERS IN CONNECTION WITH CONDUCT OF THE REFERENDUM; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS,** North River Fire District (“District”) is an independent special fire control district created by Legislative Special Act in Chapter 2007-280, Laws of Florida and amended by Chapter 2023-339, Laws of Florida, (collectively referred to as “Enabling Legislation”); and

**WHEREAS** the District is conferred general and special powers under its Enabling Legislation and general law including Chapters 189 and 191, Florida Statutes; and

**WHEREAS,** theDistrict provides fire control and rescue services within its jurisdiction in unincorporated Manatee County; and

**WHEREAS,** since the District’s inception, the District has funded fire control and rescue services through non-ad valorem assessments and impact fees as authorized pursuant to the District’s Enabling Legislation and applicable Florida general law; and

**WHEREAS,** the District is also authorized pursuant to the District’s Enabling Legislation, general law and the Florida Constitution to levy an ad valorem tax to construct, operate, and maintain district facilities and services, including emergency medical services, provided the ad valorem tax is less than 3.75 mills and approved by the qualified District voters at referendum; and

**WHEREAS,** the District seeks to expand its fire control and rescue services by providing emergency medical services within its jurisdiction, and desires to fund such additional services and associated facilities and infrastructure through an ad valorem tax; and

**WHEREAS,** the District’s Board of Fire Commissioners seeks to pose a referendum as required by applicable Florida law to the qualified voters requesting voter authorization to provide the District with an additional source of funding that would allow the District to levy an ad valorem tax not to exceed 1 mill on real property within the District to fund fire control and rescue services including emergency medical services, facilities and infrastructure; and

**WHEREAS,** if authorized by the District’s voters at referendum, the District’s ad valorem tax would be assessed, levied and collected by the District annually in the same manner as county taxes commencing in Fiscal Year 2024-25; and

**WHEREAS**, the North River Fire District’s Board of Fire Commissioners seek to take all actions required under applicable Florida law to present the referendum question set forth herein to the District’s qualified voters and place such question on the November 5, 2024 general election ballot.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS OF THE NORTH RIVER FIRE DISTRICT THAT:**

**SECTION 1. RECITALS.** The recitals set forth herein are true and correct and are hereby incorporated fully by reference.

**SECTION 2. CALLING FOR REFERENDUM.** Pursuant to applicable Florida law including Florida Statutes § 101.161, a referendum election is hereby called for and ordered in Manatee County, Florida to be held on November 5, 2024, for the purpose of submitting to the qualified electors of the North River Fire District on the question of whether the North River Fire District is authorized to levy and collect an annual ad valorem tax not to exceed 1 mill to provide supplemental funding for the District’s fire control and rescue services, facilities and infrastructure, including emergency medical services. The referendum shall be conducted by the Manatee County Supervisor of Elections in accordance with all applicable requirements of law. The staff of the North River Fire District is hereby authorized and directed to take such actions as may be necessary or desirable in furtherance thereof, including coordination with the Manatee County Supervisor of Elections and entering into an agreement with the Supervisor of Elections on the North River Fire District's behalf regarding conduct of the referendum.

**SECTION 3. Compliance with Applicable laws.** Said election shall be conducted according to the requirements of all special and general laws governing special district elections, including but not limited to, Chapters 2007-280 and 2023-339, Laws of Florida, and Florida Statutes §§ 100.011, 100.342, and 101.161.

**SECTION 4. Conduct of Election and Official Ballot.** Pursuant to Florida Statutes §§100.011, 101.151, and 101.161, the election shall be held at the polling places and early voting sites as designated by the Supervisor of Elections of Manatee County, Florida. The polls and early voting sites shall be opened and closed as provided by law. The ballots to be used in said election shall be in the form as provided by law and shall contain the question to be voted upon and said question shall be in substantially the following form:

**North River Fire District**

**Taxation Authorization Referendum**

Shall the North River Fire District (“District”) be authorized to levy and collect an annual ad valorem tax on real property in an amount not to exceed 1 mill to provide additional operational revenue to fund the District’s fire control and rescue services, infrastructure and facilities, including emergency medical services?

**YES-Approve \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**NO- Reject \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**SECTION 5. Notice of Election.** Pursuant to Florida Statutes §100.342, the North River Fire District shall comply with all applicable notice requirements associated with the referendum. The North River Fire District shall provide at least 30 days’ notice of the election or referendum by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in Manatee County. The North River Fire District shall publish such notice at least twice, once in the fifth week and once in the third week prior to the week in which the election or referendum is to be held.

**SECTION 6. Intent to Reimburse.** Pursuant to Florida Statutes §100.011, the North River Fire District shall bear responsibility for costs directly associated with the referendum election or pay the North River Fire District’s proportionate share, if applicable. The North River Fire District shall reimburse the Manatee County Supervisor of Elections immediately upon receipt of invoiced applicable costs.

**SECTION 7. Language.** To the extent required by law, the official ballot referendum shall be published in both the English and Spanish language. The North River Fire District shall pay the costs associated with obtaining a Spanish translation of the above stated official ballot question.

**SECTION 8. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED by the North River Fire District Board of Commissioners, meeting in regular session this 18th day of January, 2024.

ATTEST: **NORTH RIVER FIRE DISTRICT, an independent special fire control district.**

By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Scott Smith Robert Bell

Secretary Chairman

[DISTRICT SEAL]