CITY ATTORNEY’S IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS OF MEASURE CA5

Background. The California Constitution gives charter cities such as Redondo Beach “plenary authority” to provide for “the manner in which, the method by which, the times at which, and the terms for which the several municipal officers . . . shall be elected or appointed.” Currently Section 18.4 of the Redondo Beach City Charter provides that:

a majority (more than half), of the votes cast for all candidates for each City elective office is required for the election of the candidate to such office. In the event no candidate for an elective office receives a majority of the votes cast for all candidates for such office, the two (2) candidates receiving the highest numbers of votes cast for any such office shall thereby qualify as candidates for such office at a runoff election to be held not later than seventy (70) days after such election.

The above does not apply to candidates for members of the Board of Education who are elected by a plurality of votes cast.

The Measure. Measure CA5 (“Measure”) was placed on the March 7, 2023 General Municipal Election Ballot by the Redondo Beach City Council. Measure CA5 would amend Section 18.4 of the Redondo Beach Charter to eliminate separate runoff elections and require the City Council by ordinance to provide for an instant runoff voting system in the elections of each city elective office.

When there are more than two candidates for one seat, an instant runoff voting system allows voters to rank candidates for that seat in order of preference when marking their ballots. Only one candidate can represent each of the voter’s first, second, or third, etc., choices. For all city elective offices with more than two candidates, all first choices are initially tallied. If any candidate receives a majority of the first choices, that candidate is elected just as they would be under the current Charter Section. However, if no candidate receives a majority of first choices, the “instant runoff” process is triggered. The candidate receiving the fewest first choices is eliminated, and the voters for that eliminated candidate now have their second choices counted. The ballots are again tallied and the process continues until one candidate wins a majority. An instant runoff voting system is so named because it allows a majority winner to be determined in just one election. It is a substitute for a separate runoff election.

Measure CA5 is a charter amendment to be implemented by a later ordinance that the City Council would adopt, which will lay out the details of how the instant runoff voting system will work in the City of Redondo Beach. The ordinance will only affect elections for city office and will have no effect on ballot measures for any Federal, State, County, District or Board of Education elections.

The above statement is an impartial analysis of Measure CA5. If you desire a copy of the ordinance or measure, please call the City Clerk’s Office at (310) 318-0656 or email the same at cityclerk@redondo.org and a copy will be mailed at no cost to you. You may also access the full text of the measure and other election material from the internet of the City’s website at: http://www.redondo.org