

**DE 85-09 - August 12, 1985**

**BOARD MEMBERS  
s. 100.071, F.S.**

*To: Honorable Joanne E. Koester, Supervisor of Elections, Sarasota County, 101 South Washington Boulevard, Sarasota, Florida 33578-4194*

*Prepared by: Division of Elections*

Pursuant to your request, this is a formal elections opinion pursuant to Section 106.23(2), Florida Statutes, on the following questions:

1. Should members of the Sarasota County Public Hospital Board be required to run for individual seats instead of running for a group of four or five seats?
2. Should members of the Sarasota County Public Hospital Board be required to run from districts in the county?

The Sarasota County Public Hospital Board was created in 1949 by the enactment of Chapter 26468, Laws of Florida. That statute was subsequently amended by Chapter 83-525, Laws of Florida, which included an amendment to the method by which members of the board are elected. The statute provides for a nine member board elected at staggered terms of four years each. Five members are elected at one election and the four remaining members are elected at an election two years later. The statute is silent as to whether the members of the board are to be elected by district. Reference must be made, therefore, to the Election Code to determine whether it prescribes the method by which the board members shall be elected.

Section 100.071(1)(a), Florida Statutes, provides as follows:

Where two or more similar offices are to be filled in the same election, the names of candidates shall be placed or printed upon the ballot or voting machine in groups or districts; that is, if . . . two or more members of a governing board are to be elected from the same geographical area, then the candidates' names shall be placed or printed on the ballot or voting machines in groups or districts, as the case may be.

In November, 1986, five members will be elected to the Sarasota County Public Hospital Board. In accordance with Section 100.071(1)(a), Florida Statutes, those five offices must be assigned groups, with one member of the board being selected from each group. The groups should be announced as far ahead of the election as possible in order to allow candidates to qualify in each group.

SUMMARY

The names of candidates for the Sarasota County Public Hospital Board must be

placed on the ballot and on the voting machines in groups with one member of the board being selected from each group.