

# Home Rule Referendum

## Frequently Asked Questions



### **BACKGROUND**

At the November 6, 2018 General Election, the Village Board would like you to vote on whether Winthrop Harbor should be a home rule unit of government or remain non-home rule.

### **WHAT IS HOME RULE?**

In Illinois, home rule is the State constitutional authority of local governments to self-govern provided the General Assembly did not explicitly limit that power or maintain the exclusive exercise of authority in a specific area. Home rule communities may do anything they deem necessary unless the State specifies they cannot. Non-home rule communities only have the authority that is specifically granted under state statutes. Having home rule authority results in decision making being shifted from the state level to the local level.

### **HOW DOES A COMMUNITY BECOME HOME RULE?**

Municipalities with certified populations of over 25,000 are automatically granted home rule status. Communities under 25,000 can place a referendum question on a ballot and let the voters decide.

### **POTENTIAL ADVANTAGES OF HOME RULE**

Improve the Village's bond rating potentially saving thousands of dollars in interest costs for future bond issuance.

Incur debt beyond 20 years lowering the burden on residents by stretching out payments.

Reduce property tax burden on residents by shifting tax burden to non-residents.

Opt out of certain unfunded mandates as they are created unless preempted by the State of Illinois.

### **POTENTIAL DISADVANTAGES OF HOME RULE**

Home rule grants municipalities broad taxing and regulation authority including the ability to increase property taxes without referendum, issue debt within current restrictions, create new taxes and fees, and to regulate property.

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN IF I VOTE YES ON HOME RULE?**

Voting yes on the November 6<sup>th</sup> referendum question means that you want the Village of Winthrop Harbor to become a home rule unit of government. By state statute Winthrop Harbor is currently a non-home rule unit of government.

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN IF I VOTE NO ON HOME RULE?**

Voting no on the November 6th referendum question means that you are opting to have the Village of Winthrop Harbor retain its status as a non-home rule unit of government.

**CAN THE VILLAGE REVERT TO NON-HOME RULE STATUS?**

Residents oversee the use of home rule through the normal election process. In addition, voters can file a petition to rescind home rule by referendum.

**SOME HOME RULE COMMUNITIES IN LAKE COUNTY**

- Buffalo Grove
- Highland Park
- Highwood
- Lake Barrington
- Lake Bluff
- Lake Forest
- Mettawa
- Mundelein
- North Chicago
- Park City
- Riverwoods
- Vernon Hills
- Volo
- Waukegan

**CALENDAR OF COMMUNITY MEETINGS**

**Saturday**

**August 18, 2018**

**2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Schlader Building**

**Saturday**

**2700 9<sup>th</sup> Street**

**September 29, 2018**

**Winthrop Harbor, IL**

**2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Saturday**

**October 20, 2018**

**2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

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**A fourth meeting has been added for Thursday, Oct. 25, 2018, 6:00pm to 7:30pm at Village Hall, 830 Sheridan Road in Winthrop Harbor, IL**

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