

The Short Story: Ethics is a critical issue in this year's City Council election. Your votes may determine whether the proposed Ethics Charter Amendment gets on the ballot.

The history: (more details about the issues [here](#) and candidate endorsements [here](#))

- Ethics Naples, a citizens' initiative for better ethics: Ethics Naples was formed after City Council voted to abolish the City's ethics code in 2016. A model code to improve the City's ethics policy was drafted with advice from ethicists and commissions around the state. The petition received almost 1,500 signatures and was certified in April 2018 by the Supervisor of Elections to be placed on the City's ballot.
- The City sues Ethics Naples: Instead of following State law, Mayor Barnett and City Councilors McLeod, Seigel and Buxton refused to place the petition on the ballot and voted instead to sue Ethics Naples.
- The City loses and appeals: The City lost its case and has appealed. For almost two years the City has kept this litigation going, spending hundreds of thousands of dollars of your tax money in legal fees and forcing the Board of Directors of Ethics Naples to spend a similar amount on the organization's behalf.
- The bottom line?
 - Mayor Barnett and Council members McLeod, Buxton and Seigel decided that City voters couldn't be trusted to make up our own minds about ethics.
 - They spent our tax money to sue Ethics Naples and to take away everyone's right to vote on the petition – except theirs.

The opportunity:

- The upcoming City Council election offers you the opportunity to elect new Council members: Mayoral candidate Teresa Heitmann and Council candidates Blankenship, McCabe and Perry.
- These four candidates have each pledged that if elected they will vote to end the City's litigation against Ethics Naples and place the matter on the ballot.
- The differences between the incumbents and the challengers regarding the ethics is outlined below. You may find this information useful in considering who should get your votes.

	Incumbents Up for Election	Challengers
	Bill Barnett	Teresa Heitman
Vote or Position	Reg Buxton Michelle McLeod Ellen Seigel	Ted Blankenship Mike McCabe Paul Perry
Abolish City's Ethics Code, August 2016	Voted to abolish ethics code	Not on City Council
Refuse a vote and sue petitioners, May 2018	Refused to allow ethics vote Voted to sue Ethics Naples	
Appeal City's loss, continue suit 2018	Lost in court Voted to appeal	
Position regarding ethics amendment	Oppose the Ethics Charter Amendment	Support the Ethics Charter Amendment
Position regarding voting on ethics	Deny citizens' right to vote on the Charter Amendment	Support citizens' right to vote on the Charter Amendment
Commitment to end litigation	None	If elected, will vote to end litigation and put the Charter Amendment on the ballot

Candidate websites:

Mayor	Barnett	https://billbarnettformayor.com/
	Heitmann	https://heitmannformayor.com/
City Council	Blankenship	https://www.tedblankenshipfornaples.com/
	Buxton	https://electregbuxton.com/electreg/
	McCabe	https://mikemccabe4naples.com/
	McLeod	https://mcleodforcouncil.com/
	Perry	https://www.paulperryforcitycouncil.com/
	Seigel	https://www.facebook.com/ElectEllenSeigel