

## Charlotte elections supervisor's budget meets quota

By NEIL HUGHES STAFF WRITER

Before he was elected Charlotte County's Supervisor of Elections, Paul Stamoulis faced tough decisions as a New Jersey municipal court judge.

It turns out his new job isn't so simple either.

Charlotte County's new supervisor of elections had promised significant cuts at his department, and he delivered. His preliminary 2009-2010 fiscal year budget filed last Friday with the commission is a 15 percent reduction from the current year, and off 46 percent from the previous fiscal year, which had the added impact of a presidential election.

"It wasn't easy," Stamoulis said of the cuts he made. "It was a lot of pain involved. I tell you, it was one of the most difficult things I've ever had to do."

Stamoulis has laid off three employees — two full-time and one parttime — and will not give raises to his remaining 12 employees. His proposed total budget is \$1,752,700.

The cuts have the Supervisor of Elections office in compliance with the 15 percent budget reduction requested by the Charlotte County Commission.

Commission Chairwoman Tricia Duffy said Wednesday that she was pleased by the cuts Stamoulis had made.

"He absolutely did a very good job working on his budget," she said, "and I'm really, really happy."

Stamoulis said he felt it was his duty to meet the 15 percent goal to do his part for those who elected him into office last fall.

"The citizens of Charlotte County are hurting financially right now," he said, "and raising their taxes at this time is the worst thing you can do to them."

It will be more difficult for the department to run with fewer personnel, Stamoulis admitted, and he's unhappy about having to let employees go.

"It's always nice to have as many people as possible," he said, "but I believe that it's the best allocation of the resources here."

E-mail: [nhughes@sun-herald.com](mailto:nhughes@sun-herald.com)



STAMOULIS