

COLIN BAENZIGER & ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE RECRUITING

Section 10

Peter “Pete” J. Sweeney

Fort Pierce City Attorney

Candidate Report

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Cover Letter and Resume

Peter J. Sweeney, Esq., B.C.S.

215 13th Avenue, Vero Beach, FL 32962 | 772-359-3054 | peterjsweeney@gmail.com

October 12, 2018

City of Fort Pierce

Honorable Mayor Linda Hudson and Members of the City Commission

C/O Colin Baenziger

100 N. U.S. Highway 1

Fort Pierce, FL 34950

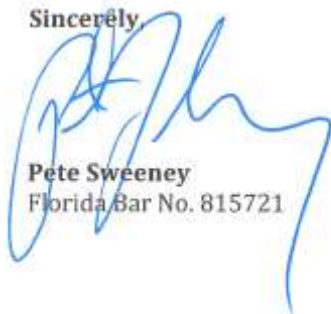
Dear Mayor Hudson and Members of the City Commission:

I would like to be the next City Attorney for the City of Fort Pierce. As a Fort Pierce native and lifelong Treasure Coast resident, this is a dream opportunity for me. I grew up in Fort Pierce, went to elementary school at Lawnwood Elementary and attended middle and high school at Lincoln Park Academy, where I graduated Salutatorian. From playing Little League baseball on Delaware Avenue to surfing on South Beach, the City has been an integral part of my life and helped to form who I am now.

For the past six years, I have worked in the Palm Bay City Attorney's Office and served as a Deputy City Attorney. I am the only attorney, out of over 105,000 members of The Florida Bar, who is a board-certified expert in **both** City, County & Local Government Law **and** Construction Law. I believe this is an invaluable asset to the City considering the tremendously important construction and redevelopment projects in the City's immediate future. Particularly, I am aware of the redevelopment of the former H.D. King parcel, potentially involving BrightLine train service, as well as the imminent development of the Port of Fort Pierce (which is governed by the land use and building restrictions of the City). These are but two projects which will involve complicated construction and municipal government expertise, which I am uniquely suited to provide. Additionally, I have been featured in Florida Trend's Florida Legal Elite as being one of the top 1% of attorneys in Florida in 2016, 2017 and 2018, as well as holding an AV Preeminent Rating from Martindale, which is the highest possible rating in both legal ability and ethical standards.

I know that I would be an excellent fit as your next City Attorney if afforded the chance. It is truly a dream opportunity for me, and I would love to be able to spend the rest of my career in the town I grew up in, representing it to the best of my ability and helping it continue to develop and advance. I look forward to meeting with you and the other members of the City Commission.

Sincerely,



Pete Sweeney
Florida Bar No. 815721

Peter J. Sweeney, Esq., B.C.S.
215 13th Avenue
Vero Beach, Florida 32962
Telephone: 772-359-3054
E-mail: peterjsweeney@gmail.com
Florida Bar No. 815721



Practice Areas

- ✦ City, County & Local Government Law
- ✦ Construction Law
- ✦ Tort/Liability Defense Litigation
- ✦ Zoning, Planning and Land Use
- ✦ Appellate Law

Summary

- ✦ The only attorney in Florida that is board certified in both City, County & Local Government Law and Construction Law by the Florida Bar
- ✦ Deputy City Attorney of Palm Bay, the largest city in Brevard County, the 12th largest city in Florida by land area, and the 16th largest city in Florida by population
- ✦ AV Preeminent[®] peer review rated by Martindale-Hubbell[®] and 10.0 Superb rating from Avvo[®]
- ✦ Selected for inclusion in Florida Trend's Florida Legal Elite in 2016, 2017 and 2018

Education

The Florida State University, College of Law

Tallahassee, FL

Juris Doctor – *Cum Laude*

2004

- ✦ *Florida State University Law Review* - Member
- ✦ Moot Court Team - Treasurer and Member
- ✦ Order of the Barristers - Member

Florida State University, College of Business

Tallahassee, FL

Bachelor of Science, Management – *Magna Cum Laude*

2001

Bachelor of Science, Multinational Business – *Magna Cum Laude*

2001

- ✦ Dual Bachelor's Degrees from a top-30 Public Business School in the United States of America.

Experience

Office of the City Attorney

Palm Bay, FL

Deputy City Attorney II

October 2012 – Present

- ✦ In-house legal representation of large municipal corporation. Serve at the pleasure of the City Attorney as the charter officer responsible for all legal affairs of this Florida municipal corporation with approximately 115,000 residents and 66 square miles of real property, making it the largest city in Brevard County, the 12th largest city in Florida by land area, and the 15th largest city in Florida by population.
- ✦ Act as the City Attorney on an as-needed basis.
- ✦ Supervise two attorneys, a paralegal, a risk manager, a worker's compensation adjuster and two administrative assistants.
- ✦ Render oral and written legal opinions to City Departments regarding local government matters. Departments include City Manager, City Clerk/Legislative, Fire, Police, Economic Development, Growth Management/Land Planning, Community Redevelopment, Building, Utilities, Public Works, Parks & Recreation, Finance, Information Technology, Human Resources and Code Enforcement
- ✦ Provide legal research, drafting, review and opinions on various legal documents and correspondence including but not limited to: contracts, bonds, leases, easements, deeds, municipal ordinances, municipal resolutions, policies, procedures, RFPs/RFQs, releases/indemnification provisions, land development agreements, claims, liens, MOU's, land plats, and ILA's.
- ✦ Reviewed and revised portions of the City's Charter while assisting Palm Bay's Charter Review Commission.
- ✦ Assisted with the development and creation of a Merged Risk Management Division into the City Attorney's Office, improving customer service response times and lowering insurance premium payments, saving the citizenry an average of millions annually as demonstrated below:
 - 2012: \$ 218,777.00;
 - 2013: \$1,252,729.78;
 - 2014: \$ 506,526.81;
 - 2015: \$1,909,545.00;
 - 2016: \$2,108,942.60; and
 - 2017: \$1,722,565.87.
 - TOTAL: \$7,719,084.06**
- ✦ Serve as principal tort litigator and support appellate advocate for Palm Bay which has an average annual caseload of greater than 300 cases, notably:
 - ❖ Successfully defended \$1.8 million bid protest by competing design-builders.

Section 10

- ❖ First Chair of a trial and appellate team that successfully defended the City's Sexual Predator and Offender Ordinance against nine (9) separate constitutional law claims asserted by a registered sex offender at the trial court and 5th Fifth District Court of Appeal twice.
- ❖ First Chair of trial team which received a directed verdict in a lawsuit involving the Palm Bay Police Department on a cause of action for negligent entrustment.
- ❖ Second Chair of an appellate team that successfully defended the City's land use decision on appeal to both the Eighteenth Circuit and Fifth District Court of Appeal which resulted in the preservation of a \$1 million regional asset used by numerous law enforcement agencies in Central Florida.
- ❖ Second Chair of a trial team which filed suit seeking approximately \$10 million from a prominent public contractor for construction defects due to settling of twin runs of stormwater pipelines causing road depressions to manifest along one of the City's two main arterial roadways.
- ❖ Second Chair involved in the successful defense of the City's interest in a Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceeding in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida (Tampa division) which enabled the City to meet its obligations to the Florida Department of Transportation for the construction of the new I-95 interchange at Micco Road with an economic impact to Palm Bay of \$55 million.
- ❖ Reported appellate cases including:
 - *Holmes v. City of Palm Bay*, 249 So. 3d 760 (Fla. 5th DCA 2018).
 - *City of Palm Bay v. Ranger Construction Industries, Inc.*, 236 So. 3d 1114 (Fla. 5th DCA 2017).

Vocelle & Berg, LLP

Vero Beach, FL

Associate
2012

August 2004 – September

✚ Litigation associate with trial experience throughout Indian River, St. Lucie, Brevard and Martin counties. First and Second chair litigation experience including \$768.28 claims, construction, commercial, serious personal injury and wrongful death, and trust/probate matters. Litigation responsibilities including initial claim investigation, drafting and arguing motions, conducting and defending depositions, successful negotiation/mediations of claims and trial. Appellate experience in the Fourth and Fifth District Courts of Appeal for the State of Florida. Reported appellate cases including:

- ❖ *Laufen, Inc. v. Andrew*, 83 So. 3d 898 (Fla. 5th DCA 2012).
- ❖ *Denco, Inc. v. Tropicana Products, Inc.*, 78 So. 3d 549 (Fla. 4th DCA 2012).
- ❖ *Larkin v. Buranosky*, 992 So. 2d 268 (Fla. 4th DCA 2008).
- ❖ *Havens v. Chambliss*, 906 So. 2d 318 (Fla. 4th DCA 2005).
- ❖ *McMullin v. Beaver*, 905 So. 2d 928 (Fla. 4th DCA 2005).

Certifications

- ✚ Board Certified in Construction Law by the Florida Bar, 2013 – present
- ✚ Board Certified in City, County and Local Government Law by the Florida Bar, 2016 – present

Bar Admissions

- ✚ State of Florida
- ✚ United States Supreme Court
- ✚ United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
- ✚ United States District Court, Northern District of Florida
- ✚ United States District Court, Middle District of Florida
- ✚ United States District Court, Southern District of Florida

Programs

- ✚ National Institute for Trial Advocacy, *Teacher Training: San Francisco*, 2016
- ✚ National Institute for Trial Advocacy, *Building Trial Skills: San Diego*, 2015

Recognitions

- ✚ **Florida Trend's Florida Legal Elite**
 - ❖ Recognized in 2018 as one of the top 1,012 attorneys licensed to practice law in the State of Florida and as one of the top 58 attorneys in the State of Florida employed by municipal, county, state or regional government agencies and non-profit organizations.
 - ❖ Recognized in 2017 as one of the top 1,080 attorneys licensed to practice law in the State of Florida and as one of the top 67 attorneys in the State of Florida employed by municipal, county, state or regional government agencies and non-profit organizations.
 - ❖ Recognized in 2016 as one of the top 1,144 attorneys licensed to practice law in the State of Florida and as one of the top 65 attorneys in the State of Florida employed by municipal, county, state or regional government agencies and non-profit organizations.
- ✚ **AV® Preeminent Peer Review Rated by Martindale-Hubbell®**
 - ❖ Highest possible rating in both legal ability and ethical standards given by this renowned attorney rating service, 2015 – present.
- ✚ **Avvo® 10.0 Superb Rating**
 - ❖ Highest rating by this lawyer referral service calculated using a mathematical model that considers the information shown in a lawyer's profile, including a lawyer's years in practice, disciplinary history, professional achievements and industry recognition, 2014 – present.

Organizations

A. FLORIDA BAR

- ✚ Florida Bar Foundation, Fellow, 2016 – Present
- ✚ Governmental and Public Policy Advocacy Committee, July 2018 – Present
- ✚ Member Benefits Committee, July 2010 – June 2016 and July 2018 – Present
 - ❖ Chair, July 2014 – June 2016
 - ❖ Vice Chair, July 2013 – June 2014
- ✚ Eminent Domain Committee, July 2015 – Present
- ✚ Unlicensed Practice of Law Committee (19th Judicial Circuit), August 2011 – March 2018

B. LOCAL BAR ASSOCIATIONS

- ✚ Brevard Bar Foundation, 2017 – Present
- ✚ Brevard County Bar Association, 2012 – Present
- ✚ Indian River County Bar Association, 2004 – 2012

Publications

- ✚ *Risk[y] Business: Transitioning to a Stand-Alone Self-Insurance Program*, Stetson Law Review, May 2017, 46 Stetson Law Review 3.

Presentations

- ✚ *Ethics Training for Elected Municipal Officers*, Florida League of Cities, Inc. and Palm Beach County League of Cities, Palm Springs City Hall, October 2018.
- ✚ *Ethics Training for Elected Municipal Officers*, Florida League of Cities, Inc. and Alachua County League of Cities, Alachua City Hall, October 2018.
- ✚ *Ethics Training for Elected Municipal Officers*, Florida League of Cities, Inc. and Northeast Florida League of Cities, Orange Park City Hall, September 2018.
- ✚ *Ethics Training for Elected Municipal Officers*, Florida League of Cities, Inc. and Suncoast League of Cities, Dunedin City Hall, July 2018.
- ✚ *Sovereign Immunity (2632)*, Florida Bar's City, County and Local Government Law Section Annual Certification Review Course, May 2018.
- ✚ *Local Government Lobbying Regulations – Look Who's Talking*, Florida Association of County Attorneys Midyear CLE Program, November 2017.
- ✚ *What Lies Beneath? Latent Defects in Pipe Construction: A 6-Year Story of Construction Litigation Told from the Trenches (2313R)*, Florida Bar's City, County and Local Government Law Section's 40th Annual Local Government Law in Florida, May 2017.
- ✚ *Ethics Training for Elected Municipal Officers*, Florida League of Cities, Inc. and Alachua County League of Cities, Alachua City Hall, October 2017.

- ✚ *Ethics Training for Elected Municipal Officers*, Florida League of Cities, Inc. and Alachua County League of Cities, Alachua City Hall, September 2016.
- ✚ *Ethics Training for Elected Municipal Officers*, Florida League of Cities, Inc., Belleview City Hall, June 2015.
- ✚ *Transitioning to a Stand-Alone Self-Insurance Program*, Florida Bar's City, County and Local Government Law Section's 38th Annual Local Government Law in Florida (1863R), May 2015.

Related News

- ✚ Rachael C. Moulton, *Palm Bay City Attorney's Office Employs All Board Certified Full Time Attorneys*, The Capstone News and Resources for Board Certified Lawyers Issue 63, Jan. 2016, at 3.
- ✚ *City of Palm Bay Attorneys' Office Raises Bar On Professional Standards*, Space Coast Daily (Aug. 5, 2015), <http://spacecoastdaily.com/2015/08/city-of-palm-bay-attorneys-office-raises-bar-on-professional-standards>.
- ✚ Bryan A. Lober, *Office Spotlight: Palm Bay City Attorney's Office*, The Ex Parte, A Publication of the Brevard County Bar Association, Apr. 2015, at 14.
- ✚ *City Attorney's Office Among Elite Experts In The Field*, Space Coast Daily (Aug. 8, 2013), <http://spacecoastdaily.com/2013/08/city-attorneys-office-among-elite-experts-in-the-field>.

References

- ✚ John Stewart, Esq., President-Elect, The Florida Bar, 772-231-4440
- ✚ Palm Bay Mayor Guillermo "William" Capote, 321-292-0382.
- ✚ Patricia Smith, Esq., City Attorney, City of Palm Bay, FL, 321-409-7185.
- ✚ Allison Dawley, Esq., City Attorney, City of Melbourne, FL, 321-608-7247.
- ✚ Rory C. Ryan, Esq., Ryan Law, P.A., Oviedo, FL, 407-359-0403.
- ✚ Steve Brannock, Esq., Brannock & Humphries, Tampa, FL, 813-223-4300.
- ✚ Michael Sjuggerud, Esq., Cantwell & Goldman, P.A., Cocoa, FL, 407-413-4301.
- ✚ Chief Jim Rogers, Police Chief, City of Palm Bay, FL 321-952-3458.
- ✚ Chief Jim Stables, Fire Chief, Johnson City, TN, 423-975-2852.

Candidate Introduction

Peter Sweeney

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor, The Florida State University College of Law (Cum Laude)
Bachelor of Science, Management, Florida State University (Magna Cum Laude)
Bachelor of Science, Multinational Business, Florida State University (Magna Cum Laude)

EXPERIENCE

Deputy City Attorney, City of Palm Bay, Florida	2012 - present
Associate Attorney, Vocelle & Berg, LLP, Vero Beach, Florida	2004 - 2012

BACKGROUND

Palm Bay is the largest city in Brevard County and is the 15th most populous city in Florida, with a population of approximately 115,000 residents. It is also a very large city, comprised of 66 square miles of real property, but is only 45% developed. The city is bisected by I-95 and also borders US-1 on its eastern edge, with several miles of frontage on the Indian River Lagoon. The city is a full-service municipality, with 815 employees, spread across 15 departments including Utilities, Police, Fire, Public Works (including Stormwater), Community Planning & Economic Development (including Code Enforcement), Community Redevelopment (CRA), Parks and Recreation and Human Resources, among others. In Fiscal Year 2018, the overall city budget was approximately \$170 million, with the General Fund accounting for \$68 million of the total budget. The Palm Bay City Attorney's Office is comprised of five attorneys and seven staff members. As Deputy City Attorney, I have direct responsibility for management and supervision of two attorneys and four staff. I also have acted as the City Attorney on multiple occasions, including attendance at Council meetings, when the City Attorney is on leave.

We are a full-service City Attorney's office and handle as much legal work in-house as possible. This includes all Risk Management litigation, which includes tort claims (trip and fall, auto accidents), police liability (Section 1983 claims), workers compensation, property damage claims and professional liability/errors and omissions. The only legal work that is outsourced are labor and employment matters, due to the inherent conflict of interest that can arise in those claims. The total budget for the office is \$4.5 million, but approximately \$2.85 million is the cost for city-wide insurance coverage, and funding for claim reserves.

The most significant legal issues facing the City of Palm Bay are:

- Large-scale development projects. The city has more than 20,000 acres of developable land. Currently, there is a new I-95 interchange scheduled to open by March 2019, and two different developers are in the process to develop more than 2,000 acres of property. The

Peter Sweeney

legal issues include planning and zoning issues with specific focus on large-scale Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), utilities extensions (both water and wastewater), infrastructure development and stormwater management.

- Community Redevelopment/Business attraction. The city is home to Harris Corp, which is one of the largest defense contractors in the United States. The city is constantly renewing and developing strategies to attract more defense/aerospace/technology-oriented businesses. The legal issues involved in that process include tax-abatement and other relocation incentives, creation of a business development district and code modification/amendments to address new technologies.
- Pollution in the Indian River Lagoon. There have been massive fish kills in the last several years and it is believed that stormwater runoff has been the major cause. The city has taken significant steps to mitigate stormwater runoff, which required substantial legal expertise. The issues include development of a stormwater special assessment, creation of a legally-defensible calculation/methodology for stormwater Equivalent Residential Unit (“ERU’s”) and a successful bond validation lawsuit, including appeal, to support the cost of the stormwater program.

GENERAL, MANAGEMENT STYLE AND EXPERIENCE

As a Fort Pierce native and lifelong Treasure Coast resident, this is a dream opportunity for me. I grew up in Fort Pierce, went to elementary school at Lawnwood Elementary and attended middle and high school at Lincoln Park Academy, where I graduated Salutatorian. From playing Little League baseball on Delaware Avenue to surfing on South Beach, the City has been an integral part of my life and helped to form who I am now.

For the past six years, I have worked in the Palm Bay City Attorney’s Office and served as a Deputy City Attorney. I am the only attorney, out of over 105,000 members of The Florida Bar, who is a board-certified expert in **both** City, County & Local Government Law **and** Construction Law. I believe this is an invaluable asset to the City considering the tremendously important construction and redevelopment projects in the City’s immediate future. Particularly, I am aware of the redevelopment of the former H.D. King parcel, potentially involving Brightline train service, as well as the imminent development of the Port of Fort Pierce (which is governed by the land use and building restrictions of the City). These are but two projects which will involve complicated construction and municipal government expertise, which I am uniquely suited to provide. Additionally, I have been featured in Florida Trend’s Florida Legal Elite as being one of the top 1% of attorneys in Florida in 2016, 2017 and 2018, as well as holding an AV Preeminent Rating from Martindale, which is the highest possible rating in both legal ability and ethical standards.

I believe the most important attributes of a successful City Attorney are honesty, adaptability, and a broad knowledge of municipal law. Without absolute honesty, Council will never trust in your legal opinion, which is the number one priority of a successful City Attorney. Adaptability is key

Peter Sweeney

because most legal situations involving the city are dynamic, with multiple moving parts and people. One must be able to adapt to any situation that the city could face. Finally, having a broad knowledge of municipal law is important for at least two reasons. First, the more I know, the more I can properly advise my Council without having to resort to hiring outside counsel. Secondly, if the issue truly is outside my broad knowledge of municipal law, my Council has confidence that the issue really is unique and requires specialized outside attorneys.

My approach to handling law suits is unique from many other city or county attorneys, as I have direct responsibility for the defense of all tort claims filed against the city. This means that as soon as the city is served with the lawsuit, I begin the defense of the claim, which includes filing an answer and affirmative defenses, preparing and propounding discovery requests, taking and defending depositions, filing motions to dismiss, handling mediation and ultimately trying the case as necessary, including the appeal on several occasions. My belief is that lawsuits must be properly managed at all times, with the appropriate resources used carefully and efficiently. Further, it is vital that I make myself aware of all possible outcomes so that I can inform Council and advise them with the best possible legal advice regarding the potential liability and exposure of each case. My management style is above all respectful. I have managed all types of personalities, including different generations, ethnicities and educational levels, and I have treated each and every one of them with respect, dignity and encouragement. I believe in investing in staff members, whether it be by mentoring directly, supporting initiatives to further educational or professional development, or simply asking how I can help a subordinate do his or her job better.

In communicating with elected officials, particularly with my City Council members, I feel it is important to provide the most pertinent and important legal issues at the beginning of any conversation. I always prepare myself to provide as much detail as requested, but Council members' time is valuable, and I do not waste it. However, I will take as long as any member of Council would like to discuss any legal issue facing the City. I am happy to meet in person, communicate by phone or by email, depending on the preferences of the different council members. I believe the members of the City Council would say I provide honest and objective, direct, ethically-correct, top-notch legal advice and that I do not play politics, nor do I impart my own personal views into the decision-making process. I am not a policy-maker and I pride myself on providing the best possible unbiased legal advice to each of them, no matter what. I believe the City Manager would echo these statements, as I have provided the same level of service to him for the last three and a half years.

A weakness is that I do not tolerate incompetence. I have on occasion directly pointed out a department director's mistake (which was always based on facts) that could or actually did expose the city to liability. However, I have learned to nuance my approach, and work with the City Manager to allow him to do his job in managing the departments under his direction.

My greatest achievement is to have been a key member of the transition team of bringing all risk management litigation in-house. I was specifically hired in 2012 to lead the team and defend the

Peter Sweeney

city from all tort lawsuits; the entire program hinged on my ability to efficiently and effectively protect the city. It has been an incredible success, as we have not lost a single tort case in my entire tenure and have saved the city several million dollars in that timeframe. I have had the privilege of leading, but also mentoring, coordinating and developing the rest of the team, which has been just as important to the overall success of the program.

However, I am human, and my biggest mistake was becoming a friend with a subordinate. It was discovered he was having an affair with another married female office member, but he also lied about it, even when confronted with indisputable evidence. I had to fire him, and it was more difficult because I was friendly with him. I have learned to treat all employees, and especially subordinates, as professional colleagues and I do not spend time with them outside of the office. I believe it has made me a better manager because my staff respects my position and role; as a result, staff do not attempt to play the “friend” card when difficult conversations are necessary.

In the first six months as the City Attorney for Fort Pierce, I would do the following:

- First and foremost, I would take as much time as possible, as soon as possible, to meet with the elected officials, management and senior staff of all the departments to understand the immediate and long-term legal issues facing each of them, both as individual components and collectively on behalf of the city.
- Next, I would make sure I am aware of every lawsuit currently pending against the city, including reviewing any notice of claims received over the last four years. I would then coordinate a discussion of each claim with the insurance defense counsel that is handling the litigation, so that I may advise the Commissioners as to the status of liabilities against the city.
- Review and discuss with each current staff member what current work loads are, and if necessary, rebalance work distribution to meet fairness and efficiency within the office. I will also develop a specific plan for each employee to continue to develop professionally by discussing and asking what the employee’s short, medium and long-term goals are within the city.

After six months, I expect that I will do a top-down review of my performance and modify any aspects of the position in order to best serve the Commission and the City.

I have not had to work with the media very much, but I am comfortable and confident on television or as a speaker at conferences. I understand the role the City Attorney plays when interacting with the media on the city’s behalf and I am happy to oblige as much or as little media interaction as the City Commission prefers. I do not believe you will find any negative media coverage of any type about me, nor do I believe anyone in any community will contact you with any negative things to say.

Peter Sweeney

In my leisure time, I enjoy spending as much time as possible with my wife and two young sons, which often includes boating and diving offshore of Fort Pierce.

SIX ADJECTIVES OR PHRASES I WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE MYSELF

- Honest
- Respectful
- Adaptable
- Intuitive
- Well-informed/Wide area of knowledge in the law
- Determined

REASON FOR DEPARTING CURRENT POSITION

I have truly enjoyed my time with the City of Palm Bay, but I want to be a City Attorney. The opportunity to guide the legal office of my home town is a dream and I know I have the ability, knowledge and determination to represent the City of Fort Pierce, especially as it is poised to experience unrivaled development and growth in the immediate future.

CURRENT / MOST RECENT SALARY

My current salary is \$133,182, which includes a monthly vehicle allowance.

CB&A Background Checks

**Background Check Summary for
PETER "PETE" JAMES SWEENEY**

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County	
Brevard County, FL	No Records Found
Indian River County, FL	No Records Found
State	
Florida	No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Brevard County, FL	No Records Found
Indian River County, FL	No Records Found
Federal	
Florida	No Records Found

Motor Vehicle

Florida	No Records Found
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Credit

Excellent

Bankruptcy

No Records Found

Education

Confirmed

Employment

Confirmed

Florida Bar Number

Member in Good Standing
Bar #815721

Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C. 1681-1681Y, credit and bankruptcy information are very sensitive and should not be used in the consideration of hiring. The information is included for each candidate because we do not want you to be surprised if third parties raise what they consider to be a concern.

**Background Check Summary for
PETER "PETE" JAMES SWEENEY
Personal Disclosure**

Personal Disclosure Questionnaire

Name of Applicant: Peter Sweeney

The following questions are designed so that we will be able to make full disclosure to our client concerning your background. Please answer them honestly. Cutting corners or misrepresenting your past will result in you being eliminated from all further searches conducted by this firm. We understand that frivolous charges are sometimes made and that charges do not mean you were guilty. We also understand that you may have been wronged and needed to seek compensation. The bottom line is that we want to be certain that our client is fully informed. If you have any questions, please contact us for clarification.

Please explain any yes answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Have you ever been charged or convicted of a felony?
Yes No
2. Have you ever been accused of or have been involved in a domestic violence or abuse incident?
Yes No
3. Have you ever declared bankruptcy or been an owner in a business that did so?
Yes No
4. Have you ever been the subject of a civil rights violation complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
5. Have you ever been the subject of a sexual harassment complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
6. Have you ever been convicted of driving while intoxicated?
Yes No
7. Have you ever sued a current or former employer?
Yes No
8. Do you have a personal My Space, Face Book or other type of Web Page?
Yes No
9. Do you have a personal Twitter Account?
Yes No
10. Is there anything else in your background that, if made public, would cause you, our client or our firm embarrassment if it came to light through the press or any other mechanism?
Yes No
11. Please provide a list of any lawsuits in which you are or have been a party either as plaintiff or defendant.

N/A

Attested to:


Signature of Applicant

Please email this form via PDF DOCUMENT to Lynelle@cb-asso.com or via fax to (888) 539-6531 no later than 5:00 PM PST 11/01/18.

(Note: Please be sure to sign the form with your actual signature if you are sending Fax or PDF Document)

CB&A Reference Notes

**Reference Notes
Peter Sweeney**

Jim Stables – Fire Chief, Johnson City Fire Department, Johnson City, TN 423-483-5829

Mr. Stables is the former Fire Chief in Palm Bay and first met Mr. Sweeney in 2012 when he came on board at the City. Mr. Stables left the City in 2017, however they have remained in contact since that time.

Mr. Sweeney is a collaborator and all of Mr. Stables interactions with him were positive. Many times people in the legal field will take hard lines and not build bridges, but not him. He was instrumental in getting their department set on a solid legal foundation. He is someone who is genuine in finding solutions and not trying to expedite things for his own agenda.

Mr. Sweeney has competence in every aspect of the law and Mr. Stables never had any issues or conflicts with him. He has a good command of the law but he is not frivolous with responses and ensures that they are solidly grounded in the law.

Mr. Sweeney absolutely negotiates well on behalf of the party he is representing. Even though he was tasked with work from several departments in the City he never indicated that he had a heavy workload. Mr. Stables worked with him on negotiations with the Union at the City and he always gave 100% of his attention to the task. He maintained the diligence for the client without being offensive or combative.

While Mr. Stables was in Palm Bay he noticed that Mr. Sweeney was well respected by the elected officials. They worked well together and he is not aware of a time when they decided to go against what he recommended. Additionally, he absolutely worked well with the other department heads and acted as a bridge between them when they collaborated on issues.

Mr. Stables is not aware of Mr. Sweeney being involved in anything controversial personally, but the City Attorney's office went through some turmoil when Mr. Stables was leaving, but Mr. Sweeney was never looked at in regards to those issues. He kept it together for the other staff members during that time. He is not sure exactly what was happening since he was on his way out, but it had to do with some strife with the previous City Attorney, the City Manager, and the Council.

If Mr. Stables was looking to hire a City Attorney he would definitely hire Mr. Sweeney. He is confident that he would do an excellent job in that position.

Words or phrases used to describe Peter Sweeney:

- Friendly,
- Cordial,
- Approachable,
- Professional,
- Always well prepared,
- Highest integrity of anyone in the legal field.

**Reference Notes
Peter Sweeney**

Strengths: A highly collaborative individual who gets along well with others and is a solution finder.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Patricia Smith – City Attorney, City of Palm Bay, FL 850-567-3676

Ms. Smith first met Mr. Sweeney in 2012. At the time she was the most senior attorney under the City Attorney and she hired him. Since her promotion to City Attorney in September 2018 he has reported directly to her.

Mr. Sweeney is very intelligent and quick on his feet. He easily maintains a good rapport with people and his trial skills are most excellent. He is a problem solver who can get the client to a yes in a legal and ethical way. He is willing to stand strong in his convictions but also provides sound advice.

Mr. Sweeney gives excellent recommendations to the elected officials especially in the area of construction law. They currently have a road project which has been somewhat derailed and his background in this area has been relied upon by not only the staff, but also the elected officials. Ms. Smith is not aware of any instances where the Council went against his recommendations.

Mr. Sweeney has a plethora of experience in various areas of the law including constitutional law where he has actually helped do some training throughout the State in regards to home rule power and has participated in activities related to the board of certifications exam. He has also rotated through contracts and has taken care of the majority of it recently regarding vendors, procurement, etc. Additionally, since he has been with the City he has worked with Ms. Smith on growth management dealing with development, redevelopment, and land use.

In regards to working with a homeless population, Mr. Sweeney does have some experience. He worked in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation where they were preparing to do some construction on City property. Unfortunately, a homeless camp was set up on the property, however, he worked with the department making sure signs were posted in a timely fashion to alert the homeless people about the impending construction. By the time the construction was ready to begin they had moved on because the word got out in enough time for them to find a new location.

When it comes to dealing with the public, Mr. Sweeney does an excellent job. Whether it is in Council meetings or with residents in particular districts he cultivates good relationships with people and they tend to like him. Even if they do not receive the answer they want, they feel like they have been heard and respected.

Working well with the elected officials is another area where Mr. Sweeney excels. He has worked with numerous Commissioners on various projects and problems and they consider him to be responsive. Additionally, the City Manager and the staff get along with him. Only once does Ms.

**Reference Notes
Peter Sweeney**

Smith recall an issue with a department head, but that was because this particular individual decided to go ahead on his own with something, loosely telling Mr. Sweeney about it. When the department head was questioned about his actions he told people that Mr. Sweeney said it was okay when it fact he did not. Any tension that arose from that situation was because Mr. Sweeney stood his ground.

Ms. Smith is not aware of any controversies surrounding Mr. Sweeney. He has nothing in his background or conduct that would be of concern to a reasonable person. If she were looking for a City Attorney she would hire him for that position. It will be a natural fit for him and it is only a matter of time before he moves on to bigger and better things.

Words or phrases used to describe Peter Sweeney:

- Outgoing,
- Intelligent,
- Respectful,
- Trustworthy,
- Highly motivated, and
- Ambitious.

Strengths: An intelligent and experienced attorney who gets along well with people.

Weaknesses: Mr. Sweeney tends to be a people pleaser which can be a weakness when some in government have a warped moral compass.

William Capote – Mayor, City of Palm Bay, FL 321-292-0382

Mr. Capote first met Mr. Sweeney when he came to Palm Bay in 2012. He has worked with him as the Mayor the entire time.

Mr. Sweeney is a professional with credibility, character and integrity. He tells people the truth whether they like it or not. That goes a long way in the political world and he does a fine job of educating the Council well from the perspective of the law. He does a wonderful job of keeping the Mayor informed about projects and issues they are working on together.

When it comes to the law, Mr. Sweeney has a firm grasp on several areas. He can answer questions on the spot about what he has knowledge and he holds his own in terms of the law. He knows that he has experience and is well versed in contracts, development, redevelopment, land use, and utilities.

Mr. Sweeney is solutions oriented and responsive. He always gives good recommendations to the Council and Mr. Capote does not know of a time when they as the elected body went against his recommendations.

**Reference Notes
Peter Sweeney**

The City Attorney relies heavily upon Mr. Sweeney in the office. He does a fine job of managing the office while handling the legal affairs of which he is in charge. He has filled in on numerous occasions when the City Attorney is not in the office. During those times he is nothing short of polished and experienced.

Mr. Capote is not aware of any controversies involving Mr. Sweeney. He does not know of any item from his background or conduct that would be considered unflattering by a reasonable person. If he were looking for a City Attorney, he would hire Mr. Sweeney for that position.

Words or phrases used to describe Peter Sweeney:

- Integrity,
- Family man,
- Good character,
- Level headed,
- Thick skin, and
- Good sense of humor.

Strengths: An individual with excellent character and integrity who tells people the truth.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Harry Santiago – Council Member, City of Palm Bay, FL 321-576-2387

Mr. Santiago first met Mr. Sweeney when he was elected in November 2012. They have been working together since that time.

Mr. Sweeney is a wonderful people person with whom Mr. Santiago has never had any issues. He is very knowledgeable in terms of the law and has excellent communication skills. He can convey the complicated intricacies of legal jargon helping him to understand it. Additionally, he has always given good advice when asked and Mr. Santiago is not aware of a time when the elected body decided to go in another direction from his advice.

When Mr. Sweeney has covered a regular or special council meeting he is always prepared and if he does not have the answer he will research it and follow up in a timely manner. He works well with the staff to get the information out as fast as possible to Mr. Santiago and the other Council Members. Furthermore, he is a solution finder and does not merely say that the law does not permit certain things from being done.

Working with the public is another area where Mr. Sweeney shines. He has sat in during Council meetings as the representative of the department and conducted workshops where, in both situations, he has interfaced with the public. He is not confrontational or contentious and does well guiding the Council and the public in doing what is lawful.

**Reference Notes
Peter Sweeney**

From what Mr. Santiago has seen Mr. Sweeney gets along well with the City Manager and the other department heads. He has not heard of any major issues involving him. At times people may not like his answers but he always follows the law and then follows up with solutions on how to get to the end result. Overall, everyone has a very good working relationship with him.

Mr. Santiago does not know of anything embarrassing from Mr. Sweeney's background or conduct that would be of concern. He is not aware of any controversies involving him either. He would definitely hire Mr. Sweeney as a City Attorney if he were looking to fill such a position.

Words or phrases used to describe Peter Sweeney:

- Hardworking,
- Knowledgeable,
- Attorney,
- Solution finder, and
- Will not steer people wrong as far as the law is concerned.

Strengths: A skilled communicator who is knowledgeable in the law and gets along well with others.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Dylan Reingold – County Attorney, Indian River County, FL 772-226-1427

Mr. Reingold first met Mr. Sweeney in 2013. They interact together as local government attorneys bouncing ideas off of each other in a collegial relationship.

Mr. Sweeney is knowledgeable about local government law and is always interested in diving into the law. Every time Mr. Reingold has called him with a question he has been familiar with the issue and has provided guidance and advice on the situation.

Mr. Sweeney is a solutions based individual and is not the type of person to say that the law does not permit something to be done and walk away. Mr. Reingold does not follow politics in Palm Bay and therefore is not aware if the elected body has ever gone in a different direction than that prescribed by Mr. Sweeney.

In terms of experience in various areas of the law, Mr. Sweeney has been exposed to several. Mr. Reingold is quite impressed with the way he analyzes issues below the surface. Most of what they do as municipal attorneys at the end of the day boils down to constitutional law and he definitely has experience in that area. He is also quite knowledgeable and has experience in development, redevelopment, land use, and labor/personnel matters.

Reference Notes
Peter Sweeney

Mr. Reingold is not aware of anything controversial about Mr. Sweeney. He does not know of any unflattering behavior in Mr. Sweeney's background or conduct that would be of concern to any future employer. He would definitely hire Mr. Sweeney as a City Attorney and knows he would do a fine job in such a position.

Words or phrases used to describe Peter Sweeney:

- Knowledgeable,
- Enthusiastic,
- Inquisitive, and
- Dedicated.

Strengths: An extremely knowledgeable attorney who is experienced and gives excellent advice.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Debbie Hunt – Litigation Paralegal, City of Palm Bay, FL 321-301-0690

Ms. Hunt first met Mr. Sweeney in 2012 when he came on board in Palm Bay. She reports to the City Attorney as well as Mr. Sweeney.

Mr. Sweeney has proven to be an excellent teacher and mentor to Ms. Hunt. He has helped her to grow and develop in her position through his extensive knowledge. She has worked with him on numerous cases from torts to construction issues. She appreciates that he provides answers with context and background.

Mr. Sweeney has a superb command of the law which helps him to speak knowledgeably to the Council. He has established and continues to nurture good relationships with the Commissioners and can explain complex litigation issues to his audience in a manner that they can understand. Furthermore, the way he presents arguments in the courtroom are clear and concise to both the judge and the jury.

Ms. Hunt would characterize Mr. Sweeney as responsive. They conduct daily briefings and when she has completed an assignment she is delegated, he is highly responsive with his review or advising her of the next step in the process.

When it comes to giving recommendations to the elected officials Mr. Sweeney does a fantastic job. The elected officials trust him because he is honest with them. If proposed action cannot be taken because of legal constraints then he will offer alternatives to the outlined issues. As far as Ms. Hunt knows the elected officials have never gone against his advice.

Reference Notes
Peter Sweeney

Mr. Sweeney has vast experience in several areas of the law including constitutional law and contracts. He is often called upon by the Florida League of Cities to present about ethics. He also knows about and is experienced in development, redevelopment, and land use. Additionally, he has worked with homeless issues in Palm Bay. He serves as the City Attorney's office liaison with the Brevard County Coalition for the Homeless. He has a working knowledge in that area and has established some good working relationships.

Mr. Sweeney does a fine job of managing the responsibilities in the office as well as the legal caseload for which he is assigned. He has responsibility over the full-time risk manager as well as Ms. Hunt. He is an even keeled supervisor and calm in his approach to issues. If someone makes a mistake or error, they have no problems going to him with the problem and they will figure out a solution. He focuses on how to fix the problem rather than the mistake itself. He has a professional working relationship with everyone in the office and also manages with a good sense of humor.

Because of Mr. Sweeney's responsibilities with the utilities department and providing legal reviews for the police and fire departments he has had the opportunity to interact with residents. He has forged some good relationships and his style is to come away with a good outcome whether it is the originally desired one or not. He is an excellent listener and is extremely respectful to people.

Ms. Hunt is not aware of anything in Mr. Sweeney's background or conduct that would be considered embarrassing or unflattering. He has not been involved in any controversies since she has known him. He would absolutely be a wonderful City Attorney because not only does he have the leadership skills and practical knowledge of the law, but he also has expertise in and out of the courtroom and provides the elected officials with sound advice.

Words or phrases used to describe Peter Sweeney:

- Excellent listener,
- Teacher,
- Mentor,
- Leader,
- Strong interaction with the Council, public, staff, and volunteers, and
- Leads by example.

Strengths: A highly knowledgeable attorney who continues to learn and improve himself, works well with those around him, and is a tremendous mentor.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Reference Notes
Peter Sweeney

Brian Anderson – Council Member, City of Palm Bay, FL 321-408-3817

Mr. Anderson first met Mr. Sweeney prior to being elected in 2015. They have worked together since that time.

Mr. Anderson appreciates that Mr. Sweeney always goes into detail and gives the pros and cons of each situation. He is also available when needed and responsive to questions and requests. Additionally, if he does not feel he is the expert in a certain area he will point people in the right direction and will not give advice about which he is not confident.

Mr. Sweeney is professional and he has never failed to take care of business for Mr. Anderson. Any research he has been asked to do for him has been done quickly and he usually gives his opinion of the matter with the research to back it up.

Mr. Sweeney gives the Council excellent advice and Mr. Anderson does not know of a time when the elected body went in a different direction than the one advised by him. In his particular role right now he does have to follow the direction of the Council, however he stays within the parameters of the law while still trying to find solutions.

When it comes to working with the public Mr. Sweeney does well. He is very approachable, mild mannered, and quite direct with his answers. He is also the same way with Mr. Anderson and the rest of the Council. Sometimes he does not always give them the responses they want, but he is honest and tells them what they need to hear.

Mr. Anderson is not aware of any controversial situations that Mr. Sweeney has become involved with that were caused by him. He has no knowledge of anything from Mr. Sweeney's past history or conduct that would be of concern to anyone. He has never heard anything negative about Mr. Sweeney. He would hire Mr. Sweeney if he were looking to hire a City Attorney and knows that he would do a solid job in that position.

Words or phrases used to describe Peter Sweeney:

- Caring,
- Approachable, and
- Easy to talk to.

Strengths: A professional and available individual who is detail oriented and knowledgeable in his field.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Reference Notes
Peter Sweeney

Terese Jones – City Clerk, City of Palm Bay, FL 321-952-3414

Ms. Jones has known Mr. Sweeney since 2012 when he came to the City. They have worked together as colleagues since that time.

Mr. Sweeney has several strengths, but his main one is that he will give Ms. Jones his opinion immediately but he always double checks to make sure that he gives her the proper answer. He has a very consistent personality and she has never seen him act differently with anyone with whom he has interacted. He is always friendly and open with communication. He is extremely professional even in times of stress and is the person who calms others down.

Mr. Sweeney is a wonderful asset to their organization and he always knows the answers to questions posed to him. If he does not know the answer, he will research it and follow up with the involved parties.

Ms. Jones has seen him at Council meetings and he is always attentive following the conversation ensuring to give good legal advice to the elected body. She is not aware of a time when they did not follow his advice and decided to go in a different direction. He is also flexible and if the law does not allow something that the Council wants to pursue he will advise if they have other options.

When Mr. Sweeney interacts with the public he is approachable and always professional. He has a warmth about him that is welcoming and makes people feel comfortable and at ease. He is equally as friendly and professional with the elected officials and the rest of the staff from what Ms. Jones has seen.

Ms. Jones does not know of any instances where Mr. Sweeney has been involved in any controversies. She is not aware of anything from his past or conduct that would be looked upon as unflattering by anyone. She would most definitely hire him as a City Attorney if she were looking to hire one.

Words or phrases used to describe Peter Sweeney:

- Honest,
- Dependable,
- Responsive,
- Trustworthy,
- Integrity, and
- Professional.

Strengths: A highly professional individual who is an excellent attorney and works well with others.

Weaknesses: None identified.

**Reference Notes
Peter Sweeney**

Andrew Hament – Attorney, Ford Harrison, Melbourne, FL 321-724-5633

Mr. Hament has known Mr. Sweeney since 2012. He serves as the City of Palm Bay’s outside Labor Attorney and when they have an employment or union issue he will assist them.

First and foremost, Mr. Sweeney has excellent analytical skills. Mr. Hament has spoken with him about some fairly complicated issues and he is a good thinker who grasps important facts and then can apply the law to those facts. Secondly, he is very personable and responsive. Furthermore, he has an immense amount of integrity and is always above board in doing the right thing.

Mr. Sweeney is a well-rounded municipal attorney who knows his stuff. He makes good decisions when it comes to dealing with the law and Mr. Hament is not aware of any negative feedback in terms of his recommendations to the elected officials. He does not know if they have ever gone in a different direction than what he has advised. Additionally, he is a problem solver who likes to find a way to get to a solution even if it is not the original path. He does what he can to accomplish the mission.

Mr. Hament can tell that Mr. Sweeney is a good person and that he most likely speaks and interfaces well with the public. Even though he has not seen Mr. Sweeney in that capacity he is certain that Mr. Sweeney would do fine in that area. The former City Attorney always spoke highly of him and was comfortable with letting Mr. Sweeney handle the public meetings in his stead.

Mr. Hament does not know of any controversies surround or involving Mr. Sweeney. He has no knowledge of anything from Mr. Sweeney’s background or conduct that would prove to be an embarrassment to any future employer. He would hire Mr. Sweeney as a City Attorney if he were in a position to hire one.

Words or phrases used to describe Peter Sweeney:

- Analytical,
- Responsive, and
- High integrity.

Strengths: An extremely knowledgeable municipal attorney who is a straight shooter and very analytical.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Prepared by: Heather Linares
Colin Baenziger & Associates

Section 10

CB&A Internet Research

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Sweeney, Peter J.**
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

June 15, 2018

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA
FIFTH DISTRICT

NOT FINAL UNTIL TIME EXPIRES TO FILE MOTION FOR REHEARING AND
DISPOSITION THEREOF IF FILED

BRENDA J. HOLMES, ON BEHALF OF HERSELF AND ALL OTHER PERSONS
SIMILARLY SITUATED,
Appellant,

v. Case No. 5D16-2993

CITY OF PALM BAY AND GATSO USA, INC.,
Appellees.

_____/

Opinion filed June 15, 2018
Non-Final Appeal from the
Circuit Court for Brevard County,
John M. Harris, Judge.

[CB&A Note: The remainder of the case can be read here:
<https://law.justia.com/cases/florida/fifth-district-court-of-appeal/2018/5d16-2993.html>

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Sweeney, Peter J.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Florida Bar News
December 15, 2017

Eight board races set

Eight contested Board of Governors races involving 20 candidates will be on the Bar's March Board of Governors election ballot. Sixteen seats, all but two held by incumbents, were settled without a contested race when the December 15 filing deadline expired. The contested races are:

- In the First Circuit, Charles F. Beall, Jr., Jeremy C. Branning, and Joseph Passeretti, all of Pensacola, filed to replace retiring board member Stephen Echsner.
- In the Third Circuit, Andrew J. Decker IV is challenging incumbent board member Bruce W. Robinson. Both are from Lake City.
- In the Fourth Circuit, Seat 1, Wiley Braxton Gillam IV and Michael Fox Orr, both of Jacksonville, have filed to replace retiring board member Fred D. Franklin, Jr.

- In the 11th Circuit, Seat 3, Maria T. Armas of Miami, Jordan Dresnick of Miami, Alexandra Bach Lagos of Miami, and Patrick Montoya of Coral Gables have filed to replace retiring board member Leslie Lott.
- In the 11th Circuit, Seat 5, Judson Lee Cohen of Miami Lakes and Jeffrey Rynor of Miami Beach filed to replace retiring board member Dennis Kainen.
- In the 13th Circuit Seat 4, Jeffrey Carter Andersen and Paige A. Greenlee, both of Tampa, filed to replace retiring board member Michael Hooker.

- In the 17th Circuit, Seat 4, Hilary Creary of Plantation and Jon Polenberg of Ft. Lauderdale filed to replace retiring board member Jay Cohen.
- In the 18th Circuit, Damon Chase of Lake Mary, **Peter J. Sweeney** of Palm Bay, and James G. Vickaryous of Lake Mary filed to replace retiring board member John Alpizar.

Elected without opposition were Melissa VanSickle of Tallahassee in the Second Circuit, Seat 2; Joshua T. Chilson of Clearwater in the Sixth Circuit, Seat 1; Sam N. Masters of Daytona Beach in the Seventh Circuit, Seat 1; Thomas P. Wert of Orlando in the Ninth Circuit, Seat 1; Wayne L. Helsby of Winter Park in the Ninth Circuit, Seat 3; C. Richard Nail of Lakeland in the 10th Circuit, Seat 1; Roland Sanchez Medina of Miami in the 11th Circuit, Seat 1; John H. Hickey of Miami in the 11th Circuit, Seat 7; Thomas R. Bopp in the 13th Circuit, Seat 1; Michael P. Dickey of Panama City in the 14th Circuit, Seat 1; Rosalyn Sia Baker-Barnes in the 15th Circuit, Seat 1; Robin Bresky of Boca Raton in the 15th Circuit, Seat 3; Jay Kim of Ft. Lauderdale in the 17th Circuit, Seat 1, Laird A. Lile of Naples in the 20th Circuit, Seat 1; Ian Comisky of Philadelphia in Out-of-State, Seat 1; and Brian D. Burgoon of Atlanta in Out-of-State, Seat 4. All but Wert, Dickey, and Baker-Barnes are incumbents.

For the contested races, ballots will be mailed by the Bar's elections company, Election Services Corporation, on or around March 1. Voters again will have the choice of voting online or returning paper ballots, and instructions will be included with the ballots. All ballots must be

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Sweeney, Peter J.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

received prior to midnight March 21. In any runoffs resulting from the March voting, ballots will be mailed around April 2 and must be received prior to midnight, April 23. Five-hundred word platform statements from the candidates in contested races will be published in the February 1 Bar News.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Sweeney, Peter J.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

October 11, 2017

RAFTOPOULOS v. CITY OF PALM BAY

Case No. 6:15-cv-1063-Orl-37KRS.

JOHN RAFTOPOULOS, Plaintiff, v. THE CITY OF PALM BAY, et al., Defendants.

United States District Court, M.D. Florida, Orlando Division.

October 11, 2017.

Editors Note

Applicable Law: 42 U.S.C. § 1983

Cause: 42 U.S.C. § 1983 Prisoner Civil Rights

Nature of Suit: 550 Prisoner: Civil Rights

Source: PACER

Attorney(s) appearing for the Case

John Raftopoulos, Plaintiff, Pro Se.

Steve Mimbs, Defendant, represented by Patricia Maria Rego Chapman , Dean, Ringers, Morgan & Lawton, PA.

Douglas F. Muldoon, Defendant, represented by Andrew Patrick Lannon , City Attorney's Office, Jill E. Jacobs , City Attorney's Office, Patricia Denise Smith , City Attorney's Office, **Peter J. Sweeney, Jr.** , City Attorney's Office & Wendy Lee Fisher , City Attorney's Office.

Mark Richards, Defendant, represented by Andrew Patrick Lannon , City Attorney's Office, Jill E. Jacobs , City Attorney's Office, Patricia Denise Smith , City Attorney's Office, **Peter J. Sweeney, Jr.** , City Attorney's Office & Wendy Lee Fisher , City Attorney's Office.

John Doe Hughes, Defendant, represented by Patricia Maria Rego Chapman , Dean, Ringers, Morgan & Lawton, PA.

Walter Evans, Defendant, represented by Andrew Patrick Lannon , City Attorney's Office, Jill E. Jacobs , City Attorney's Office, Patricia Denise Smith , City Attorney's Office, **Peter J. Sweeney, Jr.** , City Attorney's Office & Wendy Lee Fisher , City Attorney's Office.

[CB&A Note: The remainder of the case can be read here:
<https://www.leagle.com/decision/infdco20171012b54>

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Sweeney, Peter J.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Palm Bay Florida.org
June 26, 2017

Palm Bay Attorneys Recognized as 2017 Florida Legal Elite

Now in its 14th year, Florida Legal Elite presents a prestigious roster of attorneys chosen for recognition by their peers. The 1,080 lawyers listed here exemplify a standard of excellence in their profession and by so doing, have garnered the respect and esteem of their colleagues. Congratulations to City Attorney Andrew Lannon and Deputy City Attorney **Pete Sweeney**. Both were recently named in Florida Trend's 2017 Legal Elite issue.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches

Sweeney, Peter J.

(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Palmbayseat4.com

March 20, 2017

Palm Bay Victory in Protecting Most Vulnerable Citizens

PALM BAY- The City of Palm Bay Attorney's Office is celebrating a win for the city and its residents after a judge ruled in favor of a Palm Bay Code of Ordinance that was originally put in place over 10 years ago. The ordinance in question was enacted to prohibit sexual predators and sexual offenders from making deliveries or working at places where children or vulnerable adults may reside or regularly congregate. "This is a great win for Palm Bay, said Mayor William Capote. "Safety is our number one priority and this case attests to the fact that we will do whatever it takes to make that so."

In 2006 two sexual offenders filed a lawsuit against the city, challenging the 2005 ordinance. Presiding Judge Lisa Davidson, found in favor of Palm Bay however the complainants, referred to as "John Doe", appealed to the Fifth District Court. After more than a decade long legal battle, on March 13th, 2017 the Fifth District Court of Appeal denied the motion, allowing for Palm Bay to finally put in place the ordinance designed with the safety and welfare of the city's most vulnerable citizens in mind.

"Palm Bay is already one of the safest cities in the State of Florida. Because of the prudent decisions of Judges Davidson and Harris at the Eighteenth Circuit and Judges Palmer, Orfinger and Evander at the Fifth District Court of Appeal in the instant case, Palm Bay residents are even safer today, particularly those who are most in need of our protection," said City Attorney Andrew Lannon. The entire case from start to finish was handled in-house by the Palm Bay City Attorney's Office at no expense to Palm Bay taxpayers, in particular Andrew P. Lannon, Esq., B.C.S., Patricia D. Smith, Esq., B.C.S., **Peter J. Sweeney, Jr., Esq., B.C.S.** and Rodney A. Edwards, Esq.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Sweeney, Peter J.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Florida Bar News
September 15, 2016

189 lawyers earn board certification

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Peter J. Sweeney** is listed below]

The Board of Legal Specialization and Education congratulates the 189 lawyers who in 2016 earned Florida Bar board certification, a designation that places them among the only group of Florida lawyers who may use the term “board certified” when referring to their legal credentials. Board certified lawyers are “Evaluated for Professionalism and Tested for Expertise” by The Florida Bar. Board certification evaluates attorneys’ special knowledge, skills, and proficiency in various areas of law and professionalism and ethics in practice. About 5,000 of Florida’s nearly 101,000 lawyers have earned board certification. Florida offers 26 specialty areas for board certification, more than any other state. For more information visit www.FloridaBar.org/certification or call 850-561-5842. Lawyers who earned board certification in 2016:

City, County and Local
Carl Edward Brody, Clearwater
Robert Michael Eschenfelder, Bradenton
Anita Geraci-Carver, Clermont
Amanda Louise Quirke Hand, Miami
Lawsikia Jumoke Hodges, Jacksonville
Kimberly Romano Kopp, Orlando
Arthur J. Grant Lacerte, Kissimmee
Rebecca Clayton Lavie, St. Augustine
Joshua Bernard Moye, Port Charlotte
Nicole C. Nate, Tampa
Thomas F. Pepe, Coral Gables
Abbie Schwaderer Raurell, Miami
Patricia Denise Smith, Palm Bay
Peter J. Sweeney, Palm Bay

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Sweeney, Peter J.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

PalmBayFlorida.org
July 5, 2016

Palm Bay City Attorney's Office Recognized in Florida Trend

Two members of the Palm Bay City Attorney's Office (CAO) were recognized in Florida Trend's Florida Legal Elite 2016 as among the top 1,144 attorneys in Florida and among the top 65 attorneys in Florida employed by municipal, county, state or regional government agencies and non-profit organizations. What is most significant about this recognition is that Palm Bay surpassed all other CAO's of similar size in Florida, with two attorneys from the same office recognized. Hence, for a law office of this size, Palm Bay has the best in the State! Congratulations to Andrew Lannon, **Pete Sweeney**, and the City of Palm Bay Attorney's Office.

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Sweeney, Peter J.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

Prnewswire.com
October 19, 2015

**From Law Firms to Bar Associations to Legal Media and Technology, ".Law" Domain Gains Momentum Throughout the Legal Profession
The Florida Bar, Orrick, Law360 Join Early Adopters As New Domain Opens for Regular Access, October 19**

LOS ANGELES, October 19, 2015 /PRNewswire/ --

Law School Waiver Program Will Provide Accredited Schools With Dedicated .law Domain Name Without Charge

Minds + Machines Group Limited (LSE: MMX), the owner of the new ".law" top-level domain, today announced that beginning October 19, 2015, .law domain names may be applied for by qualified lawyers on a first-come, first-served basis at standard rates. The seven-day Early Access Program, during which .law domain names were priced higher to accommodate initial demand, ended at 1600 UTC on October 19. Antony Van Couvering, CEO of Minds + Machines, commented, "The early interest in .law by the legal community has been outstanding. The legal profession seems to agree with our foundational policy: that every name sold under .law or .abogado must belong to a qualified lawyer and that there is real value in domain names governed by meaningful, verified policies."

Early Adopters Lead the Way

Early adopters of .law domain names include prestigious state associations such as The Florida Bar; leading law firms across the country including Orrick, Skadden, and DLA Piper; the leading legal media outlets Law360 and ALM Media; professional legal organizations such as DRI-The Voice of the Defense Bar, and the American Association for Justice, which is working with .law to ensure its members are aware of this opportunity; and many other firms, organizations, and individuals. "Interest is coming from all corners of the legal profession," Lou Andrezzi, CEO of Dot Law, Inc. said. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to secure names that can help rebrand, expand, or otherwise promote the legal profession. Many of the associations have indicated that, in addition to their own use, they will provide access to the new domain names as part of their membership benefits. Law firms large and small have expressed interest not only in their names but also in practice areas. They see this as an investment to help ensure their position as a leading practice. It is exciting to consider the possibilities."

With over 100,000 members, The Florida Bar is the organization of all lawyers who are licensed by the Supreme Court of Florida to practice law in the state. "As The Florida Bar continues to serve an ever more diverse and engaged constituency, it is important to look for new tools with the potential to help our membership leverage their resources in order to best serve their clients," said **Pete Sweeney**, Chair of The Florida Bar Member Benefits Committee. "We are excited to be among the first organizations to receive the new .law domain names and make them available

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to our members." Orrick is a global law firm focused on serving the technology, energy, infrastructure, and finance sectors. "Law firms are constantly looking for new and more valuable ways to share market insights and content with our clients, and we applaud efforts to innovate in this area," said Orrick Chairman Mitch Zuklie. "We are delighted to be an early recipient of a new .law domain name."

Free Registration Opened Up to Law Schools

In addition, Minds + Machines is proud to announce its law school program, which will provide a .law domain name to accredited law schools, and will waive registration and renewal fees for the domain name. U.S. schools are the first to be afforded this opportunity; outreach to non-U.S. law schools is planned for the near future. "We are proud to announce a program to provide accredited law schools with a dedicated .law domain name, without charge to the school," said Carl Jaeckel, COO of Dot Law, Inc. "For many law schools, their web and email addresses do not reflect that they are a law school or may be long and convoluted, such as 'initials of law school dot initials of university dot edu.' We hope that these new domain names will provide law schools with a tool to easily identify their position in the legal community."

Seton Hall Law School, the only private law school in New Jersey, is a leading law school in the New York metropolitan area. "We are delighted that the .law domain provides Seton Hall Law School with an extraordinary array of new branding opportunities for both the law school and our specialized programs," said Kathleen Boozang, Dean and Professor of Law, Seton Hall Law School. "setonhall.law distinguishes us as a leader in legal education and in the broader legal marketplace, regionally and globally."

About .law and .abogado

.law and .abogado are new restricted top-level domains (TLDs) that aim to promote trust in the professional legal community by creating exclusive online spaces in which lawyers can present themselves in a distinctive and memorable manner. Only qualified lawyers are eligible to secure a .law and/or .abogado domain name. A qualified lawyer is a professional who is licensed to practice law by an approved regulator of legal services in a given jurisdiction. For full eligibility criteria, please see the .law and .abogado Eligibility Policy. More information on .law is available at join.law.

About Minds + Machines

Minds + Machines (LSE: MMX) is a leading owner and operator of new generic top-level domains ("gTLDs") including ".law," and provides registry services to a range of high-profile clients. The Group also provides domain name services to consumers through its wholly owned registrar operations in the U.S. and Europe. For more information on Minds + Machines, please go to <http://investors.mindsandmachines.com>.

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Space Coast Daily
August 5, 2015

**City of Palm Bay Attorney’s Office Raises Bar On Professional Standards
Makes Palm Bay one of most professional offices**

Author: Space Coast Daily

BREVARD COUNTY • PALM BAY, FLORIDA – The coveted title of “Board Certified” attorney now belongs to all three full-time attorneys within the City Attorney’s Office. The achievement makes Palm Bay one of the most professional and ethical offices in the State of Florida. The city attorneys join only 7 percent of eligible Florida Bar member attorneys in the state who share the certification, which is the highest recognition a practicing attorney can receive.

Andrew P. Lannon is double board certified in Business Litigation and City, County & Local Government Law. Patricia D. Smith is board certified in State & Federal Government & Administrative Practice. **Pete Sweeney** is board certified in Construction Law. “That is very impressive,” said Councilman Jeff Bailey. “Each department member’s commitment to excellence and professionalism should be commended.” Patricia Smith became board certified in State & Federal Government & Administrative Practice. There are only 93 board certified attorneys in this area; there are 87,803 attorneys licensed to practice law in Florida. She was appointed secretary of the Brevard County Association for Women Lawyers (BCAWL), re-appointed to the Eminent Domain Committee of the Florida Bar, re-appointed to the Traffic Court Rules Committee of the Florida Bar and gave a presentation at the Florida Municipal Attorneys Association’s 34th Annual Seminar.

Pete Sweeney received AV® Preeminent peer review rating by Martindale-Hubbell®, the highest possible rating in both legal ability and ethical standards. He was re-appointed chairman of the Member Benefits Standing Committee of the Florida Bar. This is based on a personal selection by the President of the Florida Bar, Ramon Abadin, and is unprecedented for this committee. He was also re-appointed to serve on the 19th Judicial Circuit Committee for the Unlicensed Practice of Law. He also gave a presentation at the Florida Bar’s City, County and Local Government Law Sections 38th Annual Local Government Law in Florida Conference to all of the city and county attorneys’ offices in Florida.

This presentation was selected for publication in the Stetson Law Review’s Local Government Law Symposium, the premier local government law publication in Florida. **Sweeney** is board certified in Construction Law. There are only 360 board certified attorneys in this area; there are 87,803 attorneys licensed to practice law in Florida.

Andrew Lannon is recognized as one of the top 1,131 attorneys licensed to practice law in Florida in Florida Trend’s Florida Legal Elite 2015. He became Board Certified by the Florida Bar in Business Litigation and is now a Board Certified Specialist in both Business Litigation and City, County and Local Government Law. There are only 255 board certified attorneys in

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Business Litigation and 262 board certified attorneys in City, County & Local Government Law. He is one of only two attorneys that is board certified in both areas in the State of Florida. There are 87,803 attorneys licensed to practice law in Florida.

Lannon was appointed to the Executive Council of the City, County and Local Government Law Section of the Florida Bar. Lannon has been recommended by the Florida Bar to be a member of the 18th Judicial Circuit's Judicial Nominating Commission and is currently waiting on appointment from Governor Rick Scott. Lannon was re-appointed Secretary/Treasurer of the Vassar B. Carlton American Inn of Court. He gave 2 presentations at the Florida Bar's City, County and Local Government Law Sections 38th Annual Local Government Law in Florida Conference to all of the city and county attorneys' offices in Florida.

One of these presentations was selected for publication in the Stetson Law Review's Local Government Law Symposium, the premier local government law publication in Florida. He was also asked to present at the 41st Annual Public Employment Labor Relations Forum in October. Lannon is currently appointed to the Eminent Domain Committee of the Florida Bar. Other staff members within the City Attorney's Office are also highly qualified. Debra Hunt became a Florida Registered Paralegal, one of only 5,135 in Florida. Lindsey Pike became a Florida Registered Paralegal, one of only 5,135 in Florida.

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Legal Fuel - <https://www.legalfuel.com/florida-bar-winter-meeting-peter-sweeney-on-technology-and-member-benefits/>
January 28, 2015

Florida Bar Winter Meeting: Peter Sweeney on Technology and Member Benefits

Florida Bar Podcast host Adriana Linares interviews **Peter Sweeney**, Deputy City Attorney of Palm Bay, Florida, at the 2015 Winter Meeting of The Florida Bar. As the chairman of the Member Benefits Committee of the Florida Bar, **Sweeney** discusses adding technological tools like Clio and Rocket Matter to member benefits and the vetting process of these tools. Also a member of the The Unlicensed Practice of Law (UPL) Committee, he examines the problem of people needing legal aid and how to adequately meet these needs within the confines of the law. In addition to being Deputy City Attorney, **Peter Sweeney** is board certified in Construction Law by the Florida Bar.

CB&A Note: To listen to the interview, follow this link - <https://www.legalfuel.com/florida-bar-winter-meeting-peter-sweeney-on-technology-and-member-benefits/>

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Brevard Business News
September 2, 2013

Palm Bay City Attorney’s Office among elite experts in field, Lannon and Sweeney Jr. earn board certification

PALM BAY — Attorney Andrew Lannon and Deputy City Attorney **Pete Sweeney Jr.** recently became board certified by the Florida Bar in the specialized areas of city, county and local government and also construction law. This ranks them among the top 2 percent of practicing attorneys in the state of Florida, and they are considered among the top experts in their specialized fields. **Sweeney** received board certification in construction law, and Lannon in city, county and local government law. Both passed a rigorous six-hour examination after more than eight weeks of study and preparation for the highly coveted credentials. Only six percent of eligible Florida Bar members, roughly 4,600 lawyers, are board certified. The certification is valid for five years, during which time the attorney must continue to practice law and attend Florida Bar-approved continuing legal-education courses.

“The City of Palm Bay is very fortunate to have such a highly credentialed and experienced legal staff,” said City Manager Sue Hann. “I appreciate the very capable team in the City Attorney’s Office and the city is extremely proud to now have two board-certified attorneys representing Palm Bay.” Lannon was appointed city attorney in 2011. In 2012 and 2013, he was selected as Florida Trend’s “Florida Legal Elite.” He was also recognized in 2013 as one of the top 1,228 attorneys out of the 96,512 attorneys licensed to practice law in Florida and as one of the top 61 attorneys in the state employed by municipal, county, state or regional government agencies and nonprofit organizations. Lannon is AV-rated by Martindale-Hubbell, the highest possible rating in both legal ability and ethical standards given by this renowned attorney rating service.

Sweeney joined the City Attorney’s Office in October 2012. He earned his law degree with honors in 2004 from Florida State University. **Sweeney** is now one of only 318 attorneys out of the 96,512 attorneys licensed to practice law in Florida to achieve board certification in construction law. He is admitted to practice law in all courts in the state of Florida as well as the U.S. District Courts for both the Middle, and Southern Districts of Florida. They work closely with Patricia Denise Smith who joined the City Attorney’s Office in August 2011 as a deputy city attorney. Smith’s focus with the city has been Palm Bay City Attorney’s Office among elite experts in field, Lannon and **Sweeney Jr.** earn board certification litigation and police-liability matters. She started her career in the Public Defender’s Office for the 19th Judicial Circuit defending over 45 jury and non-jury cases.

Smith subsequently accepted the assistant general counsel position with the Florida Department of Health prosecuting health-care licensure cases. Smith is admitted to practice in the U.S. District Courts in the Northern, Middle and Southern Districts of Florida and in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. The Palm Bay City Attorney’s Office is currently handling 276 active litigation cases involving everything from foreclosures, construction projects and contracts to labor relations and other civil matters that “potentially put the taxpayers at risk.”

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February 17, 2012

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA
FIFTH DISTRICT JANUARY TERM 2012

LAUFEN, INC. AND JAMES JACKSON,
Appellant,

v. CASE NO. 5D10-1888

THOMAS ANDREW AND CONSTANTINA
ANDREW,
Appellee.

Opinion filed February 17, 2012
Appeal from the Circuit Court
for Brevard County,
Robert Wohn, Jr., Judge.
Peter J. Sweeney, Jr., of Vocelle & Berg,
LLP, Vero Beach, for Appellant.
Allan P. Whitehead, of Frese, Hansen,
Anderson, Anderson, Heuston &
Whitehead, P.A., Melbourne, for Appellee.

[CB&A Note: The remainder of the case can be read here:
<http://www.5dca.org/Opinions/Opin2012/021312/5D10-1888.op.pdf>

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July 12, 2006

DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA
FOURTH DISTRICT

July Term 2006

COLLEEN E. NEELD, f/k/a COLLEEN N. WILMOTH,
Appellant,
v.
THE NEW PIPER AIRCRAFT, INC., a foreign corporation,
Appellee.

No. 4D05-3589
[July 12, 2006]
PER CURIAM.
Affirmed.
WARNER, KLEIN and GROSS, JJ., concur.

* * *

Appeal from the Circuit Court for the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit,
Indian River County; Robert A. Hawley, Judge; L.T. Case No. 02-57
CA17.
Peter J. Sweeney, Jr. of Clem, Vocelle & Berg LLP, Vero Beach, for
appellant.
Andrew S. Hament and Alec D. Russell of GrayRobinson, P.A.,
Melbourne, for appellee.
Not final until disposition of timely filed motion for rehearing.

[CB&A Note: The remainder of the case can be read here:
<https://www.4dca.org/content/download/157740/1395321/file/4D05-3589.pca.pdf>

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(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

June 15, 2005

Havens v. Chambliss, 906 So. 2d 318 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 2005)
District Court of Appeal of Florida
Filed: June 15th, 2005

Precedential Status: Precedential

Citations: 906 So. 2d 318

Docket Number: 4D04-3147

Author: Barry J. Stone

906 So. 2d 318 (2005)
Daniel S. HAVENS and Cynthia Havens, Individually and as Husband and Wife, Appellants,
v.
Hendry CHAMBLISS, Appellee.
No. 4D04-3147.
District Court of Appeal of Florida, Fourth District.

June 15, 2005.

*319 **Peter J. Sweeney, Jr.** of Clem, Vocelle & Berg, LLP, Vero Beach, for appellants.

Garrison M. Dundas of Brennan, Hayskar, Walker, Schwerer, Dundas & McCain, P.A., Fort
Pierce, for appellee.

STONE, J.

[CB&A Note: The remainder of the case can be read here:

<https://www.courtlistener.com/opinion/1951595/havens-v-chambliss/>

Research Compiled by: Tammie Browder
Colin Baenziger & Associates