



To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

From: Peter J. Sweeney, City Attorney

Subject: Annual Performance Evaluation

Date: June 8, 2020

As part of my annual performance evaluation, please allow this memorandum to reflect on several of the operational and personal successes this Office has enjoyed over the last year. As you know, I began my tenure as the City Attorney for the City of Fort Pierce on January 7, 2019. In the last eighteen months, this office has been re-established and re-positioned to best serve the needs of the City Commission and the City of Fort Pierce. In the last eighteen months, I have accomplished or directed the following successful actions:

- Hiring of a new Assistant City Attorney, Tanya Earley. Ms. Earley is a veteran trial attorney, with more than a decade of experience as an Assistant State Attorney in both Miami-Dade and Osceola counties. She has been working on matters related to the Police Department, Planning, Code Enforcement and the Building Department, with supporting roles to other departments as necessary. These duties include providing counsel and attendance at several boards, including the Planning Board, the Historic Preservation Board, Special Magistrate Hearings (both Code Enforcement and Building Department) and the Board of Adjustment. She has been an incredible asset to this Office and to the City of Fort Pierce at large.
- The Office has provided and will continue to provide regular and as-needed training to multiple departments, including the Police Department, Planning, Code Enforcement and the Building Department. The Office has also provided necessary training on the Public Records Act and the Sunshine Law to several boards and committees of the City, in order to ensure compliance with both Florida laws.
- I have continued to revise and simplify processing and tracking of Request for Legal Services ("RLS"). As a result, this Office has processed nearly 320 RLS in calendar year 2019. We are on track for a similar number for 2020, although the COVID-19 pandemic appears to be diminishing the requests to some degree. For comparison, the City Attorney's Office processed 175 RLS in all of 2018.

- Working in conjunction with all departments and the City Clerk, we have successfully and comprehensively updated the City's Code of Ordinances. This has been a nearly year-long process, and the newly revised Code of Ordinances is expected within the next 60 days. This is the compilation and completion of a code overhaul which last occurred in 1983. It will also serve as the baseline for evaluation of the Charter of the City of Fort Pierce, as the City Commission directed during strategic planning earlier this year.
- Finally, I was selected to Florida Trend Magazine's "Legal Elite" for Government and Non-Profit attorneys. I was one of only 63 attorneys selected in that category and the only attorney selected on the Treasure Coast.

As I stated last year, I believe I have fostered an environment in the City Attorney's Office that is professional, efficient, dedicated and readily available to provide top-notch legal counsel and advice to the City Commission, the Charter Officers and the Department Heads, as necessary. I remain committed to developing and modernizing the City Attorney's Office by continuing to meet several future goals, including:

- Continued legal development of in-house staff, by attending and participating in Continuing Legal Education seminars and conferences.
- Achieving and maintaining standards of professional excellence, such as Board Certifications, National accreditation acknowledgement and peer-reviewed State recognition.
- Continued efficiency gains in processing of Requests for Legal Services, while never sacrificing "speed for accuracy", as there is no tolerance for incompetent legal advice or counsel.
- Outreach educational efforts regarding fundamental municipal government legal issues, such the Public Records Act, the Sunshine Law and the Florida Ethics Code, by providing training and teaching to team members of the City of Fort Pierce, be it at the City Commission level or Department level (always as appropriate).

Thank you again for your faith and trust in me to be your City Attorney. I look forward to continuing in this position and serving you and this great City, and I am most appreciative of your feedback, comments and suggestions.