

CITY OF FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA  
LINDA W. COX, CITY CLERK  
AMENDED EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

THIS EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT made and entered into this 6<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2021, by and between the CITY OF FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA, a municipal corporation, hereafter referred to as "CITY" and LINDA W. COX, hereafter referred to as "COX".

WHEREAS, CITY desires to secure the services of COX as City Clerk for a minimum of three (3) years from the Effective Date of this agreement and COX desires to accept such position; and

WHEREAS, CITY and COX intend by this Agreement to provide certain benefits and establish certain conditions of employment to which COX has agreed.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the material advantages occurring to the parties and the mutual covenants contained herein, CITY and COX agree with each other as follows:

1. Employment.

COX will render full time professional services to CITY in the capacity of City Clerk of the CITY for the amended term of three (3) years, commencing July 6, 2021 (the "Effective Date"), through July 5, 2024. In the event written notice of termination or notice of non-renewal of this Agreement is not given by either party to the other party ninety (90) days prior to the expiration of the term as hereinabove provided, this Agreement shall automatically renew and continue thereafter on a year-to-year basis.

The City Clerk is recognized as an independent and co-equal Charter Officer, as specified by the Charter of the City of Fort Pierce (See Article V, Section 44). No other Charter Officer shall have any authority or ability to direct, supervise or interfere with the administration or activity of the Office of the City Clerk, including any and all personnel actions or decisions (See Article IV, Section 42 and Article V, Section 43).

COX shall devote all of her time, attention, knowledge and skill, solely and exclusively to the business and interest of the City of Fort Pierce, and the public which it serves. COX will at all times faithfully, industriously, and diligently perform to the best of her ability all duties that may be required of her by virtue of her position as City Clerk, including the performance of all duties set forth in the City Charter, Ordinances, Resolutions, City Policies, and position description, attached hereto and made a part hereof, and to perform other legally permissible and proper duties and functions to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Commission. Nothing herein shall prohibit COX from maintaining membership in or participating in private social or civic endeavors that do not interfere or detract from her performance of the terms of this Agreement. In the event

COX makes formal application for full-time employment elsewhere while serving as City Clerk, she shall be required to provide written notice to the City Commission simultaneously with such application or submittal.

2. Compensation.

In consideration for these services as City Clerk, CITY agrees to pay COX an annual base salary of ONE HUNDRED EIGHT THOUSAND, EIGHT HUNDRED EIGHTY SIX DOLLARS (\$108,886.00) per annum, payable in bi-weekly installments.

The CITY agrees that it will not, at any time during the term of this Agreement, reduce COX's base salary or other financial benefits in a greater percentage than an applicable across the board reduction for all employees of the CITY.

3. Performance Evaluations.

The City Commission shall, on an annual basis, evaluate COX's performance as City Clerk. These performance evaluations shall occur during the calendar month of June of each year, and shall be in such form and content and procedure as the City Commission shall in its discretion determine. These performance reviews shall consider COX's overall performance and efficiency in her duties and job description as City Clerk.

4. Benefits.

In addition to annual compensation specified above, the CITY agrees to provide COX with the following benefits:

(a) COX shall be entitled to receive the same vacation, sick leave, and holiday time as the City Manager. Said benefits shall be defined in the City of Fort Pierce Personnel Rules and Regulations, including provisions governing accrual and payment thereof on termination of employment.

(b) Lease or car allowance at \$350.00 per month, or such other rate agreed upon by the City Commission.

(c) Membership dues to professional associations and societies directly relating to her position as City Clerk, subject to the approval of the City Commission.

(d) Comprehensive health and major medical insurance equal to that which is provided to other City employees.

(e) Retirement benefits as provided to City Employees, and specifically, such benefits applicable to new hires under current ordinances or rules and regulations or as subsequently amended.

5. Termination.

At all times during the term of this Agreement, COX shall be deemed an employee-at-will, and may be terminated at any time, with or without cause. For purposes of this Agreement, termination shall occur upon the happening of any of the following events:

(a) A majority vote of the entire City Commission at a duly authorized public meeting, with or without cause, at the sole discretion of the City Commission.

(b) If the CITY, its citizens, or legislature amends any provision of the Charter or Code substantially changing the form of government directly pertaining to the role, powers, duties, authority and responsibilities of COX as City Clerk, COX shall have the right to declare that such amendments constitute termination; or

(c) If COX resigns following a formal offer to accept resignation made by the majority of the entire City Commission at a duly authorized public meeting.

6. Severance.

Except as provided in this Agreement, severance will be paid to COX when employment is terminated as defined in Paragraph 5 above. Upon termination, all rights, duties and obligations of both parties shall cease except that the CITY shall continue to pay COX her then annual base salary for four (4) consecutive weeks thereafter, and the CITY shall also maintain COX's life insurance and major medical insurance coverage paid up and in effect during such period. COX shall also be compensated for all accrued sick leave and vacation time payable upon termination of employment as provided in the Personnel Rules and Regulations. During any time severance is being paid, COX shall not be required to perform any duties for the City or come to the City.

The severance provisions set forth herein shall not apply and the City shall not be obligated to pay the four (4) weeks severance in the event COX is terminated for cause. "Cause" shall be defined as either conviction of any felony or any misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, commission of any act of fraud involving or affecting the City, willful failure to perform the duties of City Clerk, or material breach by COX of any duties or obligations under this Agreement and failure to cure such failure or breach after receipt of reasonable written notice, then, in that event, CITY shall have no obligation to pay the aggregate severance sum designated in this paragraph.

7. Best Efforts of Employee.

COX agrees that she will at all times faithfully, industriously and to the best of her ability, experience and talents, perform all the duties which may be required of and from her pursuant to the express and implicit terms hereof, to the reasonable satisfaction of CITY. COX further agrees that she will continue her education and training so that she will keep up with or exceed education requirements of her position, and specifically, to use her best and continuous effort to obtain and maintain her City Clerk certification which shall be a mandatory term and condition of her employment under this Agreement. Such duties shall be rendered at Fort Pierce, St. Lucie County, Florida, and at such other places as CITY shall in good faith require, or as the interest, needs or opportunity of CITY shall require.

8. Disability.

If COX is permanently disabled or is otherwise unable to perform her duties because of sickness, accident, injury, mental incapacity or health for a period of either eight (8) successive weeks beyond any accrued sick leave, or for twenty (20) working days over a sixty (60) working day period, CITY shall have the option to terminate this Agreement, subject to the severance pay requirements of Paragraph 6. However, COX shall be compensated for any accrued sick leave, vacation, holidays, and other accrued benefits.

9. Residency.

COX shall, maintain permanent residency within the City of Fort Pierce during her term as City Clerk.

10. Employee At-Will.

COX is an employee-at-will and works at the pleasure of the CITY who may, at any time and without showing cause, terminate this Employment Agreement.

11. Liability Claims.

The CITY shall defend and save harmless COX, but only to the limits of sovereign immunity, against any tort, professional liability claim or demand or other legal claim or action, whether groundless or otherwise, arising out of an alleged act or omission occurring in or arising out of the good faith performance of COX's duties as City Clerk of the City of Fort Pierce. However, this covenant shall not apply to acts outside the scope of COX's employment or services or for claims for punitive damages. The CITY will have the authority to compromise and settle any such claim or suit within the scope of COX's employment and pay the amount of any settlement or judgment rendered thereon. To the maximum extent permitted by law, the CITY and COX shall rely upon the doctrine of sovereign immunity and the provisions of Section 768.28, Florida Statutes, or other applicable law.

12. Voluntary Resignation.

In the event COX voluntarily resigns her position with the CITY, COX shall provide a minimum ninety (90) days written notice unless the parties agree otherwise. Unless such resignation follows a formal offer to accept resignation made by the majority of the entire City Commission as specified in Paragraph 5(c) above, COX shall not be entitled to nor shall the CITY be liable to pay severance if COX resigns.

13. General Provisions.

The following general provisions shall govern this Agreement:

(a) This Agreement shall be governed in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida.

(b) Jurisdiction over any dispute arising under this Agreement, and the venue thereof, shall lie in the Circuit Court of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, in and for St. Lucie County, Florida.

(c) This Agreement shall become effective immediately upon execution, and supersedes and replaces any prior written employment agreement.

(d) This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement and understanding between the parties and contains all of the agreements between them with respect to the subject matter hereof, and supersedes any and all other agreements or contracts, either oral or written, between the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof.

(e) The parties by mutual written agreement may amend any provision of this Agreement during the life of the agreement by document approved and signed with the same formalities as this Agreement. Such amendments will be incorporated and made a part of this Agreement.

(f) The invalidity or partial invalidity of any portion of this Agreement will not affect the validity of any other provision. In the event that any provision of this Agreement is held to be invalid, the remaining provisions shall be deemed to be in full force and effect as if they have been executed by both parties subsequent to the expungement or judicial modification of the invalid provision.

(g) This Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the CITY and the City Commission, its successors and assigns, and shall be binding upon COX, her administrators, executors, legatees, heirs, and assigns.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have hereunto set their hands and seals on the day and year first above written.

CITY OF FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Linda Hudson, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Deputy City Clerk

EMPLOYEE

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Linda W. Cox, City Clerk