

CITY ATTORNEY – CITY OF NORTH PORT

SEMIFINALIST CANDIDATE REVIEW

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

SEMIFINALIST BRIEFING BOOK

This briefing book has been prepared for the exclusive use of the City of North Port.

All contents herein are proprietary information owned by SGR and any release of names or other information contained herein can reasonably be predicted to cause damage to the persons contained herein.

No names, or other information contained herein, may be released or revealed in any way without the approval of SGR.





July 22, 2025

CONFIDENTIAL AND PROPRIETARY

Honorable Mayor Phil Stokes and City Commission
4970 City Hall Boulevard
North Port, FL 34286

Dear Mayor Stokes and City Commission:

I am pleased to provide you with this confidential briefing book on the semifinalist candidates to become the City of North Port's next City Attorney. Please recall that this information is still highly confidential.

Behind each tab is the candidate's cover letter, resume, response to the questionnaire, and any other supplemental materials provided by the candidate.

Behind this letter, but in front of the tabs, is the Triage Scoring Form. This form should be used to assign a 1, 2, or 3 to each candidate. Those who you definitely would like to see continue in the process should be assigned a 1, those you may want to continue a 2, and those you definitely have no interest in seeing continue in the process a 3.

Please note that separate from the briefing book, we have also provided a website link (via email) for accessing and viewing the online video interviews for each candidate.

Our goal at the next meeting will be to determine which candidates will move on to the next level in the process. If you can come to the next meeting with the Triage Scoring Form completed, our time spent will be much more efficient.

Please feel free to call me at any time if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas Thomas
Senior Vice President, SGR
DouglasThomas@GovernmentResource.com
Cell: 863-860-9314

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SEMIFINALIST BRIEFING BOOK

I. Position Profile Brochure

II. Triage Scoring Form

III. Semifinalist Candidate Materials*

Tab 1:	Andriene Treasure
Tab 2:	Cynthia (Cindy) Orndoff
Tab 3:	David (Matt) Raulerson
Tab 4:	Jennifer Manton
Tab 5:	John Anastasio
Tab 6:	Keith Merritt
Tab 7:	Michael Fuino
Tab 8:	Regina Kardash

*Recorded video interviews are accessible online.



CITY ATTORNEY



THE COMMUNITY

Conveniently located on the west coast of Florida between Tampa and Fort Myers, the City of North Port is a vibrant, up-and-coming community and home to 94,700 residents, with a median age in their 40s. North Port anticipates its population growing to 250,000 at build out (Developnorthportfl.gov). Covering 104 square miles, North Port is the largest city in Sarasota County and is accessible via I-75 and Tamiami Trail. The City offers excellent connectivity with easy access to six international and municipal airports. North Port is one of the fastest-growing cities in Florida, with active residential, commercial, and economic development. As a result, the population has increased rapidly over a relatively short time.

Incorporated in 1959, the City of North Port is relatively young. Residents and visitors enjoy the high quality of life the area's warm climate offers year-round, as well as the many cultural and recreational activities that abound in North Port. The City is within driving distance to most of the region's award-winning, internationally known beaches including Stump Pass State Park, Siesta Key, and several other beaches on Manasota, Casey, and Longboat Keys. North Port is also home to the renowned Warm Mineral Springs Park, listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the only natural warm spring in Florida. The spring maintains an average temperature of 85 degrees and purportedly contains one of the highest mineral contents of any natural spring.

North Port is home to three beautiful natural springs, 80 miles of freshwater canals, nine miles of the Myakkahatchee Creek, and portions of the Myakka River. Popular local activities in the area include boating, canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, golfing, nature walks, birdwatching, and horseback riding. Additionally, the City has over 400 acres of parks and green space and two indoor community centers. The Myakka State Forest is also fully located within the North Port corporate boundaries.

The City is continually working to offer a wide variety of amenities for residents and visitors while at the same time preserving the small-town charm that defines North Port. The North Port Aquatic Center opened in 2019, and the Atlanta Braves Spring Training Facility experienced its inaugural season in 2020. North Port has a robust arts community with

BUSINESS & CAREERS

- #2 Best State for Small Business in the U.S.
Simplify LLC 2024
- Best City in U.S. for Young Entrepreneurs
Moneyrates
- Top 25 City in U.S. for Business and Careers
Forbes
- Best Place for Manufacturing in Tampa Bay
Southern Business & Development
- Top 10 Medium-Sized City for Working Women
Nerdwallet
- Best National Workplace for Commuters
National Center for Transit Research - USF

FAMILY

- Top 20 City in the Nation for Home Buyers
Forbes
- Best Place on Florida's Gulf Coast to Raise a Family
Smartasset
- 2nd Overall Safest City in Florida
Safehome.org

EDUCATION

- Top 5 Florida School Districts
Niche.com
- Top 100 City in the U.S. for Education
Forbes

LIFESTYLE

- Top 3 City in the U.S. for Well-being
Gallup
- 2nd Fastest Growing City in the U.S.
Quickenloans 2023
- Top U.S. Growth City in 2023
UHaul 2023
- 14th Happiest Place in the U.S.
National Geographic
- Playful City USA
8 consecutive years
Humana Foundation

GOVERNMENT

- #1 Up and Coming Small City in the U.S.
MoneyGeek 2024
- Top 10 Digital City in Class
Center for Digital Government

THE COMMUNITY *continued*

the North Port Art Center and the North Port Performing Arts Center, one of the largest theaters in Sarasota County. The City also hosts numerous family-friendly celebrations and festivals, including Flashlight Egg Hunts, Fourth of July Freedom Festival, Trick or Treat at City Hall, and the Poinsettia Parade and Festival.

North Port is a well-educated community, with 90% of the residents having a high school diploma and over 25% having a bachelor's degree or higher. Area students are served by the Sarasota County School District, over which consists of six elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools. The new Wellen Park High School is also currently in the planning stages and is scheduled to open for the 2026 school year. The Pine View School mixes traditional classroom learning with independent study, mini-courses, and ungraded classes and was rated the #1 High School in Florida and #18 in the nation by US News and World Report. The Imagine School - North Port also provide education opportunities for K-12 grades. A pair of new Sarasota Memorial Hospitals in North Port are scheduled to break ground in 2025. One location will be off Interstate 75 at North Sumter Boulevard, and the other at Wallen Park. For those seeking higher education, the area offers Ringling College of Art and Design, Keiser University, State College of Florida, Suncoast Technical College, Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida SouthWestern State College, and University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee.

Major employers within the City of North Port include Sarasota County Schools, the City of North Port, North Port Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, King Plastic, Adams Brothers Cabinetry, and Euro Wall. Other large area employers include Sarasota Memorial Hospital, Stonewall Logistics/Amazon, Venice Regional Bayfront/Englewood Community Hospital, Helios Technologies, PGT Innovations, Doctors Hospital of Sarasota, Tervis, Walmart, Publix Supermarkets, Costco, and Lowes Home Center.

North Port has a median household income of \$78,000 and a median home price of \$227,400 and the North Port MSA was rated the 6th Best Performing City in the nation by the Milken Institute. North Port's largest ethnicity populations are comprised of White (79.4%), Black of African American (5.24%), White-Hispanic (5.3%), Multiracial-Non-Hispanic (3.3%), Multiracial-Hispanic (3.1%), and Asian (1.6%). (Source: DATA USA)



MOTTO

"A city where you can Achieve Anything."

VISION

An innovative, friendly, engaging, and sustainable community where residents, businesses, and visitors flourish.

MISSION

To provide exceptional service to our entire community for the continuous enrichment of quality of life through transparency, engagement, and respect.

GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION

The City of North Port operates under a Commission-Manager form of government. The City Commission consists of five members, who are elected at large to one of the five Commission District Seats in which they reside. Commissioners serve four-year staggered terms and may not be elected to the office more than twice. The Commission selects the ceremonial Mayor and Vice Mayor from its members annually. The current Commission composition includes two first-term, newly elected Commissioners, one re-elected Commissioner, one Commissioner in the second year of their first term, and one Commissioner serving in the second half of their second term. The City Commission hires and supervises the three Charter Officers: City Manager, City Attorney, and City Clerk.

North Port's rapid growth and progress have attracted new departmental leadership and fresh ideas throughout the City, contributing to an energized and collaborative staff of roughly 900 employees, with positions in the Police and Fire Departments covered by collective bargaining agreements. North Port's proposed FY2025 overall budget is \$285 million (General Fund \$88.5 million) which is supported by an operating property tax rate of 3.7667 per \$1,000 of assessed taxable valuation. The City's current long-term issuer ratings are Aa3/No Outlook from Moody's, AA/Stable from S&P, and AA/Stable from Fitch.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We are dedicated to the highest ethical standards and accept ownership for our conduct and obligations.

INTEGRITY

We maintain the public's trust through honest, transparent, respectful, and equitable behavior.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

We provide outstanding customer relations through compassion, professionalism, and purpose by building connections. We strive to make a positive difference with our residents, businesses, visitors, internal staff, and with those we serve.

TEAMWORK

We promote working collaboratively to achieve efficient and effective results.

EMPOWERED EMPLOYEES

We embrace an inclusive work environment by empowering employees to act through supportive leadership, mutual respect, trust, ownership, and open communications.

DIVERSITY

We embrace our community's differences and life experiences by encouraging inclusiveness.

INNOVATION

We foster an environment that stimulates new and innovative approaches to achieve efficiencies and exceptional outcomes.



ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The City of North Port is growing at more than twice the rate of Sarasota County and Florida statewide. As the City meets the challenges associated with rapid growth and strategically prepares for future growth, the City Attorney's Office is instrumental in providing legal counsel for the City Commission and City boards and committees. In addition to delivering all legal services for the City, the office retains and manages the representation of outside special counsel at the City Attorney's discretion, largely in the areas of major litigation and specialized matters. The City Attorney's Office also assesses unmet and potential legal needs.

The City Attorney's Office consists of eight full-time employees, including the City Attorney, Deputy City Attorney, two Assistant City Attorneys, the Police Legal Advisor, two Paralegals, and one Business Services Coordinator, and is supported with a total proposed FY 2025 departmental budget of \$1,886,690

PHILOSOPHY

The City Attorney's Office is committed to providing effective and timely legal representation and advice to the City Commission, City administration, and City boards and committees. Team members frequently collaborate to deliver the best possible work product. The office is completely paperless and employs the latest technology to manage files. The work of the City Attorney's Office directly impacts the City and its internal processes, and demand for legal services continues to increase in scope and quantity.

CORE SERVICES

Legislative Acts and Legal Instruments

- Draft and review all ordinances, resolutions, contracts, interlocal agreements, deeds, leases, and other legal instruments in compliance with the City Charter and upon request of the City Commission and City Administration.

Advisory Services

- Provide legal analysis and guidance in establishing administrative policy and making top-level management decisions.
- Research and prepare legal opinions upon request of the City Commission and City administration.
- Attend all meetings and workshops of the City Commission, Planning and Zoning Advisory Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Charter Review Advisory Board to render advice on legal issues and questions of law.

Claims and Litigation

- Provide ethical and competent litigation representation in county, state, and federal courts.
- Manage all litigation assigned to special litigation counsel.



ABOUT THE POSITION

Appointed by the City Commission, the City Attorney Serves as legal advisor and counsel for the City Commission and City Manager, as well as City staff. The position also provides legal counsel and advice to City Boards and Commissions and coordinates City Attorney's Office representation at their meetings as necessary. The City Attorney performs their duties with broad latitude and is self-directed. Direct reports to the City Attorney include the following positions: Deputy City Attorney, two Assistant City Attorneys, the Police Legal Advisor, two Paralegals, and one Business Services Coordinator.

A summary of the essential functions of the City Attorney includes the following:

- Advises the City Commission, City Manager, City staff and City boards relative to legal matters affecting the City.
- Attends City Commission meetings and workshops as well as other meetings as needed.
- Enforces and makes recommendations regarding City policies and procedures.
- Responds to and addresses sensitive and complex inquiries and complaints.
- Responds to requests of the City Manager and elected officials for information and interpretation.
- Prepares or directs the preparation of legal opinions, ordinances, resolutions, contracts, leases, and other legal documents.
- Oversees the preparation and representation of the City in all civil, judicial, and administrative proceedings, including trials, appeals, arbitration, quasi-judicial proceedings, and mediation.
- Studies and keeps abreast of court decisions, administrative decisions, legislation, and problems pertaining to local government laws and other related matters.
- Provides guidance to and reviews the work of Assistant City Attorneys.
- Retains and oversees the work of outside counsel and legal specialists hired by the City.
- Plans, organizes, directs, and reviews the operations and activities of the City Attorney's Office; establishes work priorities, monitors work progress, develops and monitors departmental operating budgets, and approves purchases and expenditures.
- Performs management duties of the City Attorney's Office, including but not limited to completing employee performance evaluations; identifying and addressing staff conflicts and deficiencies; reviewing and recommending discipline, termination, promotion, or other employee status changes; enforcing personnel rules and regulations and work behavior standards firmly and impartially.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

GROWTH MANAGEMENT & RELATED ISSUES

North Port is recognized as one of the fastest growing, high-quality of life areas in Florida, and is experiencing a transformation in new developments including residential, multi-family, commercial, industrial, and health care related facilities and services. As a young City, North Port is only approximately 45% built out, and ideally, the successor City Attorney bring experience in the areas of land use and planning, economic development agreements, As part of this growth, North Port ideally seeks a City Attorney who has a background in land use/zoning, development agreements including dedication of utility assets, roads, drainage, ROW, conservation and parkland easement, interlocal agreements, financing instruments, and similar areas that often accompany high-growth communities.

FAST PACED, CROSS FUNCTIONAL OFFICE

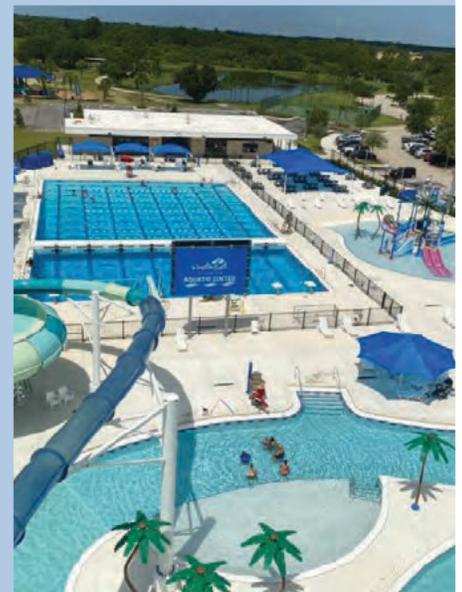
The City Attorney's Office is recognized as a high-performing Department which provides a consistent level and style of work product. The Office is comprised of diverse team members who espouse a culture that encourages collaboration, teamwork, brainstorming, and cross functional feedback as they carry out their tasks. The Department is close knit and celebrates events, holidays, successes, and personal milestones as a group.

SERVICE TO THE CITY COMMISSION & CITY DEPARTMENTS:

Although primarily representing the City Commission and the City entity, the City Attorney also provides legal support to all City Departments in the delivery of municipal services in the areas of intergovernmental agreements, purchasing/procurement, public records, contract terms and conditions, ordinance and resolution preparation, etc. A City Attorney who has a history of working collaboratively with both the Governing Body and operating Departments is desired.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

The City is experiencing significant economic development and redevelopment activity in response to the desire to diversify the community's economy and tax base. As such, candidates that have experience in drafting contemporary economic development agreements with developers and development partners that include such items as incentives, impact fee credits/waivers, and development standards would be considered a plus.



IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City of North Port seeks an ethical, decisive, strategic, and values-driven servant leader to be its next City Attorney. The ideal candidate will be a results-driven leader who can maintain an environment of credibility, integrity, and trust and can foster positive and productive relationships with the City Commission, City Manager, Department Staff, and external stakeholders. The successful candidate should possess highly effective Board skills to assist the City Commission through the decision-making process, being politically savvy but never political. Fully informing Commissioners in the most appropriate and timely manner and creating a close, positive, trusting, productive, and lasting relationship with all members of the governing body will be important.

The ideal candidate should be a confident and dynamic Attorney with a high level of emotional intelligence and who possesses advanced interpersonal skills and a proactive, transparent, and collaborative management style. The individual should be an effective communicator and public speaker and be comfortable when speaking with individuals at all socio-economic and educational levels. The candidate should be comfortable operating under Florida's "Government in the Sunshine Act" and broad Public Records Act operating environments.

The next City Attorney will be a skilled problem solver with excellent negotiation skills and a demonstrated track record of creative and entrepreneurial legal and policy solutions. They will be open minded and willing to consider "outside the box" strategies to resolve issues and challenges. Candidates that can provide holistic analysis of the legal pros and cons associated with various options and strategies for the City Commission's consideration are desired.

The chosen candidate will be adept at handling numerous files in diverse practice areas, be detail-oriented, have excellent writing skills, be a self-starter, and work well in a collaborative environment. The City Attorney should have considerable knowledge of the principles, methods, materials, and practices of legal research, in addition to substantive knowledge of relevant state and federal law and their application to the essential functions and services provided by the City of North Port.

A skilled delegator who is comfortable in managing the big picture, the selected candidate will empower team members and have the ability to lead the personnel in the City Attorney's Office and serve as a coach and mentor. Experience in growth management, land use, code enforcement, public procurement, development agreements, legislative priorities, and public records would be a plus. Lastly, someone who has a sense of humor and works well in a team-oriented environment is strongly desired.

The successful candidate will be skilled in conducting research on complex legal issues and drafting sound legal opinions and will be able to analyze and define problems, identify alternative solutions and outlining degrees of risks of various strategies, and implement recommendations in support of goals. Someone who can interpret and apply legal principles and precedents in addressing complex legal problems is desired.

The ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, is essential. The City Attorney must have the ability and experience to review and draft resolutions, ordinances, contracts, leases, and other legal documents. The City Attorney's Office is completely paperless and utilizes an electronic case-management system, so the successful candidate should be comfortable using contemporary technology platforms.

The successful candidate must have the ability to work well with the legal team and earn the trust and respect of the various department staff that they will serve. Experience in public procurement and finance would be a plus, as is someone who can foresee potential consequences of new and changing programs and policies on other City operations. The ability to maintain effective professional relationships through contact and cooperation and the ability to learn and utilize new skills and information to improve job performance and efficiency will be paramount.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

A Juris Doctor degree from an accredited law school is required, along with a minimum of eight (8) to ten (10) years of work experience as a practicing attorney, a substantial amount of which has been in the practice of local government law or a related field, such as land use and zoning, labor and employment, real estate, litigation and appeals, administrative hearing, eminent domain, procurement/public finance, public records, and Sunshine Law. At least three (3) to five (5) years of experience in land use, procurement, and/or local government law is preferred. A comparable amount of relevant training, education and/or experience may be substituted for the above qualifications. The selected candidate must be an attorney eligible to practice law in Florida with an active Florida Bar license and in good standing with the Florida Bar at the time of appointment. City-County Local Government Law Board Certified by the Florida Bar preferred.



COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The City of North Port offers a competitive starting salary range of \$190,000 - \$220,000, depending on qualifications and experience. The City provides a generous benefits program including health, dental, and life insurance and paid vacation, sick leave, and other professional development assistance. The City participates in the Florida Retirement System (FRS) at a 3% employee deposit rate with additional contributions from the City.

Per the City Charter, the City Attorney is currently required to reside within the corporate boundaries of North Port within six (6) months of appointment and maintain residency throughout their tenure.



APPLICATION PROCESS

[Please apply online](#)

For more information on this position contact:

Doug Thomas, Executive Vice President
DouglasThomas@GovernmentResource.com
863-860-9314



The City of North Port is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in its workforce. Applicants selected as finalists for this position will be subject to a comprehensive background check.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Pursuant to Florida law, all applications are a public record once submitted and available for disclosure upon receipt of a public records request, however, public record requests regarding candidates are not expected for this position during the recruitment process.



RESOURCES

City of North Port
northportfl.gov

North Port Area Chamber of Commerce
northportareachamber.com

Develop North Port
developnorthportfl.gov

City Attorney's Office
northportfl.gov/City-Government/City-Leadership/City-Attorney

Wellen Park
wellenpark.com

North Port Police Department
northportfl.gov/City-Services-and-Safety/Emergency-Services/Police

Fire Rescue
northportfl.gov/City-Services-and-Safety/Emergency-Services/Fire-Rescue

North Port Social Media



CITY OF NORTH PORT

CITY ATTORNEY CANDIDATE REVIEW

TRIAGE SCORING FORM

Andriene Treasure	1	2	3
Cynthia (Cindy) Orndoff	1	2	3
David (Matt) Raulerson	1	2	3
Jennifer Mantoni	1	2	3
John Anastasio	1	2	3
Keith Merritt	1	2	3
Michael Fuino	1	2	3
Regina Kardash	1	2	3

Instructions:

In the space beside each candidate, simply circle a 1, 2 or 3 to each candidate. "1" designates a candidate that you DEFINITELY would like to continue to the next step of the process; "2" designates a candidate you MIGHT want to continue to the next step of the process, and "3" designates a candidate that you DO NOT want to continue in the process.



ANDRIENE TREASURE



ANDRIENE C. TREASURE, ESQ.

andrienetreasure@gmail.com



City of North Port
4970 City Hall Boulevard
North Port, FL 34286

June 30, 2025

Attention Recruitment: City Attorney Position

I am extremely interested in the City Attorney, City of North Port, Florida position posted on your agency's website. I have been a member of the Florida Bar, in good standing, for 24 years. My practice and professional experience include, but not limited to, being a government lawyer (both state and local) for 14 years; being an in-house legal counsel for ChildNet, Inc., a non-profit community-based care organization and subcontractor for the Department of Children and Families, for 6 years; and being an attorney for two statewide non-profit organizations for 3 years. My passion is public service; especially providing legal services to governmental organizations, Board Members, management, and staff members involved in local and state governments.

I have substantial legal experience in the practice areas of Municipal Law, Corporate Compliance, Public Office governance, Employment Law, Risk Management, Ethics, Public Records, Real Estate, Litigation, Contracts, Land Use, Foreclosure, Bankruptcy, Procurement, Sunshine Law, Mediation, Worker's Compensation, Administrative Law, and Juvenile/Child Welfare systems. In my current and past practices, I offer excellent research, writing, litigation, and advocacy skills as well as the ability to work well under pressure, while maintaining voluminous workloads. I provide continuous legal analysis, including applying federal and state laws, case law, administrative codes, local ordinances, and agency policies and procedures in all my professional experiences.

My professional skills include critical thinking, sound decision making, intent listening, and accurate application of legal principles to presented facts. These qualities combined with my flexibility and dedication will allow me to make valuable contributions to the mission of the City of North Port.

Sincerely,

Andriene C. Treasure, Esq.

Professional Summary

Highly qualified and accomplished attorney offering 24 years of legal experience in an array of areas, including municipal law, government regulation and compliance, public records, sunshine law, litigation, in-house legal counsel, risk management, contract law, corporate law, foreclosure, landlord/tenant evictions, mediations, employment law, procurement, transactions, worker’s compensation, corporate governance, and child advocacy and social services. Expert knowledge in analyzing statutes, case law, ordinances, organizational policies and procedures, and providing legal research and writing. Dedicated attorney delivering zealous legal representation to clients while maintaining a voluminous workload.

Accomplishments

- Attorney and member of the Florida Bar, in good standing, since 2001.
- Assistant City Attorney for the City West Palm Beach, Legal Counsel for ChildNet, Inc., Senior Attorney for the Department of Children and Families, Assistant City Attorney for the City of Riviera Beach, Assistant County Attorney for Broward County, and Staff Attorney for the esteemed judiciary of the 15th Circuit Court, Palm Beach County.
- Substantial amount of work experience in the areas of Government, Risk Management, Ethics, Public Records, Sunshine Law, Litigation, Contracts, Corporate governance, Foreclosures, and Land Use.
- Strong advocate for children deemed dependent due to abuse, abandonment, and neglect involved in the foster care system and adoption process.

Skills and Knowledge

Regulatory Compliance
In House Legal Experience
Legal Research and Writing
Government Relations

Risk Management
Creative and Critical Thinking
Litigation
Conflict Resolution

Education

J.D.: December 2000
St. Thomas University School of Law - Miami, Florida
Bachelor of Arts: Political Science, 1995
Florida Atlantic University - Boca Raton, Florida

Work History

Assistant City Attorney, 3/23 to present.

City of West Palm Beach, West Palm Beach, Florida

Provide legal counsel and litigation representation for the City of West Palm Beach through the City Attorney’s Office.

Litigate foreclosures, breach of contracts, constitutional challenges to ordinances, bid protests, property damages, declaratory and injunctive relief actions brought against the City, and coordinate litigation with outside counsel.

Prosecute all municipal ordinance violation cases.

Review and perform complex legal research in Federal, State, local laws, city ordinances, and court decisions in preparation to provide legal guidance to staff in the day-to-day operation of selected municipal departments including, but not limited to, code enforcement, police, public utilities, human resources, finance, public works, procurement, and city administration.

Attend City Commission board meetings.

Provide legal opinions and solutions regarding issues relating to the litigation team's caseload management meetings, including Worker's Compensation, Employment and Personal Injury cases.
Evaluate findings and develop strategies and arguments in preparation for hearings and mediations.
Act as attorney for several municipal boards including Code Enforcement, Nuisance Abatement, Planning and Zoning, and Employee Pension Boards.

Attorney, 8/22-3/23

Florida Rural Legal Services- West Palm Beach, Florida.

Provided legal representation to clients in Landlord/Tenant evictions.
Worked in collaboration with Palm Beach County Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) in providing eviction intervention and homelessness prevention.
Attended motion hearings, mediations, and negotiated and drafted settlement agreements relating to landlord/tenant eviction cases.

Attorney, 6/21 to 7/22

YWCA-West Palm Beach, Florida.

Provided legal counsel and litigation representation to the agency's domestic violence shelter participants and survivors.
Developed strategies and arguments in preparation for presentation of cases for Injunctions for Protection.
Lead counsel on bench trials.
Provided statutory interpretations and case law analysis.
Provided leadership and assisted the organization with legal guidance to attain the agency's mission and business goals in Palm Beach County under the Victims of Crimes Act (VOCA) grant.

Assistant County Attorney, 2/21 to 5/21

Broward County Attorney's Office- Broward County, Florida.

Drafted resolutions, contracts and other legal documents and correspondence for the Human and Social Services Department for Broward County.
Assisted with drafting public contracts, memorandums of understanding, personal service contracts, and interlocal agreements.
Supervised assigned legal and clerical staff which included training and work evaluation.
Assisted the Human and Social Services Department with public records compliance and responding to public records requests.

Director of Compliance, Government Relations, and Licensing, 3/19 to 2/20

The Learning Experience Inc.-Deerfield Beach, Florida.

Provided supervisory leadership and management for the Compliance, Government Relations and Licensing Department.
Supervised staff in attaining efficiency and expertise in the day-to-day operations of the company's regulatory obligations in licensing over 230 childcare centers and quality assurance operations within the centers.
Provided analysis and recommendations to the company's CEO and executive leadership in accomplishing successful legal, operation and ethical compliance with Federal, State and local government rules and regulations.
Provided the company with lobbying efforts and community networking in furtherance of government relations and legislative affairs.

Legal Counsel, 12/2013 to 3/2019

ChildNet Inc.-West Palm Beach, Florida.

Assisted the Chief Legal Officer in providing all the essential functions as legal advisor to ChildNet's Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officer, executive directors, executive management team and company staff in all legal matters.

Provided leadership and assisted the organization as primary legal counsel to meet ChildNet's mission and business goals in Palm Beach County.
Interpret laws, judicial rulings, DCF regulations and ChildNet policies and procedures.
Worked with management and staff to resolve pre-litigation disputes and case staffings.
Responded to Public Records Requests.
Provided legal counsel and coordination regarding ChildNet's risk management processes.
Acted as liaison and community involvement with major community stakeholders-DCF, Judiciary, Guardian Ad Litem Program, Legal Aid Society, Children Legal Services and numerous service providers.

Senior Attorney, 01/2010 to 11/2013 and 01/2003 to 01/2005

Department of Children and Families-West Palm Beach, and Tallahassee, Florida.

Developed strategies and arguments in preparation for presentation of cases.
Litigated key evidence during dependency trials, termination of parental rights trials and motion hearings.
Assisted in supervising junior attorneys and paralegals.
Participated in court ordered Mediations and Depositions.
Explained available courses of action and possible repercussions of cases to dependency case managers and DCF Child Protective Investigators.
Researched and drafted motions, petitions, litigation pleadings and legal briefs for cases.
Lead counsel on over 20 bench trials.
Litigated high-volume caseloads (85 cases monthly) in a populous and demanding circuit.
Provided statutory interpretations and case law analysis.

Assistant City Attorney, 01/2005 to 01/2008

City of Riviera Beach- Riviera Beach, Florida.

Assisted the City Attorney as legal advisor to and for, the municipality and all its officers and city departments in matters relating to their official duties.
Acted as lead attorney to the Planning and Zoning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustments. Drafted and defended city ordinances and resolutions.
Served as legal counsel to the city in its day-to-day operations.
Interpreted laws, rulings and regulations for the city's mayor, city council members, department heads and staff.
Monitored outside counsel and litigation processes, work product and billing.
Drafted memorandum of law and interpreted Attorney General's opinions for client.
Drafted two high profile city ordinances for the city mayor and city council, which subsequently became local laws.
Negotiated and reviewed numerous city contracts.
Worked with management and staff to resolve pre-litigation disputes.
Reviewed and addressed employee Human Resources concerns regarding demotion, termination and EEOC claims.
Addressed strategic issues of public policy pertaining to the city and its citizens.
Processed Public Records Requests.
Monitored statutory and regulatory compliance.

Staff Attorney, 12/2001 to 11/2003

15th Judicial Circuit Court, Palm Beach County-West Palm Beach, Florida.

Prepared memorandum of law, case summaries and conducted legal research for the circuit court's 52 judges; attended hearings and trials to assist the judges with their decision-making process. Drafted orders and final judgements for the judges.

**City Attorney
North Port, Florida
Semifinalist Questionnaire**

Please return to: DelenaFranklin@GovernmentResource.com
Due NLT Sunday, July 20, 2025 @ 11:00 PM Central Time

Full Name (first, middle, last): Andriene Camille Treasure
Maiden Name(s), if any: N/A
Nickname(s), if any: N/A

Cell: [REDACTED]

Home: Same

Please answer each of the following questions completely and thoroughly.

1. For your last three positions, please list:
 - a. Job Title
 - b. Organization and Location
 - c. Scope of Responsibilities/Services Provided

Answer: a) Assistant City Attorney

The City of West Palm Beach, West Palm Beach, Florida

Provide legal counsel and litigation representation for the City of West Palm Beach through the City Attorney's Office. Litigate foreclosures, breach of contracts, constitutional challenges to ordinances, procurement matters, property damages, garnishments, negligence claims, declaratory and injunctive relief actions brought against the City, and coordinate litigation with outside counsel. Prosecute all municipal ordinance violation cases. Review and perform complex legal research in Federal, State, local laws, city ordinances, and court decisions in preparation to provide legal guidance to staff in the day-to-day operation of selected municipal departments including, but not limited to, code enforcement, public utilities, police department, human resources, finance, public works, procurement, and city administration. Attend City Commission board meetings. Provide legal opinions and solutions regarding issues relating to the litigation team's caseload management, including worker's compensation, employment and personal injury cases. Evaluate findings and develop strategies and arguments in preparation for court hearings, mediations and arbitrations. Act as attorney for several municipal boards including Code Enforcement, Nuisance Abatement, Planning and Zoning, and Employee Pension Boards.

b) Attorney

Florida Rural Legal Services, Inc., Palm Beach County, Florida

Provided legal representation to clients in Landlord/Tenant evictions. Worked in collaboration with Palm Beach County Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) in providing eviction intervention and homelessness prevention. Attended motion hearings, mediations, and negotiated and drafted settlement agreements relating to landlord/tenant eviction cases.

c) Attorney

YWCA, Inc., Palm Beach County, Florida

Provided legal counsel and litigation representation to the agency's domestic violence shelter participants and survivors. Developed strategies and arguments in preparation for presentation of cases for Injunctions for Protection. Lead counsel on bench trials. Provided statutory interpretations and case law analysis. Provided leadership and assisted the organization with legal guidance to attain the agency's mission and business goals in Palm Beach County under the Victims of Crimes Act (VOCA) grant.

2. Please describe why you left your last three positions. Additionally, are there any gaps in excess of two weeks in your employment history including any short-term (i.e., approximately 1-year or less) posts that may have occurred in your career? If so, please explain in detail.

Answer: Yes, the first gap occurred when I had my first and only child. I took two years off 2008-2010 to be a stay-at-home mom, caring for my daughter and working within the family home. The second gap in my long-distinguished career occurred from 2020-2021. I was recruited by an international franchise corporation- the Learning Experience, Inc., as its Director of Licensing, Government Relations, and Compliance. The corporation terminated the position on the cusp of the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020. The corporation made numerous layoffs. I had one short term post- as a County Attorney for Broward County (February 2021 to May 2021). The Broward County position was purely transactional; contract negotiations, drafting and review. While I enjoy legal transactional work, the position became unchallenging as reviewing contracts was my only task. I left the last three positions for continued career advancement opportunities.

3. Do you currently possess an active Florida Bar license? If so, please attach a copy of your credentials. Also, include any special credentials or Board Certifications you may currently possess.

Answer: Yes, I have a Florida bar license and have been a member since 2001. I recently started the process in the hopes of attaining Board Certification in City, County and Local Government law.

4. Have you had any ethics or grievance filings against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.

Answer: No

5. Have you had any malpractice suits against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.

Answer: No

6. Please list any client that you currently represent that could cause a potential conflict of interest with the City of North Port, Florida. If applicable, please describe how you would resolve any current or future potential conflicts of interest.

Answer: None to my knowledge.

7. Have you or your firm represented any client in the past 10 years against the City of North Port, Florida or one of its employees? If so, please describe in detail.

Answer: No

8. Please describe any experience you may have in Land Use, Planning & Zoning, Economic Development Agreements, Procurement, Contracts, Environmental Permitting, Easements & Eminent Domain, Public Records, Ordinance Drafting, Interlocal Agreements, and Florida Local Government Law.

Answer: I obtained significant amounts of experience in Land Use and Planning and Zoning matters while working for three separate municipalities. I currently work with the Planning and Zoning staff, and I am one of the attorneys on the Planning and Zoning boards. Additionally, I am a committee member for the Palm Beach County Bar Association Land Use Committee. I have also attained experience while working as the Assistant City Attorney for the Planning and Zoning Department for the City of Riviera Beach and being the attorney for the city's Planning and Zoning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustments. I have drafted several Ordinances, Contracts, and Interlocal Agreements in all my municipal practices. I also have handled numerous Public Records requests and provided numerous legal guidance on Public Records requests in both my local government, state, and non-profit entities I have worked with and for. I have provided legal representation in procurement matters and eminent domain issues for both the City of Riviera Beach and currently for the City of West Palm Beach.

9. If selected as the next City Attorney for North Port, what do you believe will be your greatest challenges as you move into the position?

Answer: The City Attorney's position is an ideal position given my legal professional experience and the array of legal services I can provide, coupled with my passion for public service. However, the greatest challenge is relocating to a new city and the challenges accompanying any relocation. Nevertheless, I am looking forward to relocating to North Port from Palm Beach County.

10. Describe your philosophy regarding the role the City Attorney plays with the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, the senior leadership of the City, and the various standing Boards & Commissions.

Answer: The role of the City Attorney, like all employees of the City of North Port, is to uphold the mission and operations of the City. The City Attorney will exemplify this mission by delivering competent and professional legal services. The City Attorney is appointed and reports directly to the Commission, however, acts in collaboration and partnership with other team members, including the Mayor, City Manager, senior leadership, and city staff in carrying out the day-to-day operations of the City. My philosophy is working in collaboration, partnership, and teamwork to meet the successful operations of the Commission and city business. Understanding that the position is a Commission appointed position with the primary responsibility of fulfilling the Commission's responsibilities and leadership to set the City's policies, programs and budget.

11. Tell us about the volume of work you currently manage on a regular basis and how varied your responsibilities may be. If you are presently in private practice, how many clients do you currently service?

Answer: I currently serve as one of the assistant city attorneys for the City of West Palm Beach and I thoroughly enjoy the diverse legal practice in various areas of law. Providing legal services to a city of over 150, 000 citizens allow me to learn and provide an array of legal services and functions as indicated in my answer to question number 1. While the work is voluminous, I enjoy all the practice areas that come with being a lawyer for a municipality. I work very closely with the City Attorney to provide legal counsel on the day-to-day operations of the City.

12. How do you keep up to date on state and federal legislation, and how would you communicate changes in legislation and other legal questions related to administrative and operational issues with both the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, and staff of the City of North Port?

Answer: I get updates on legislation in a variety of ways; subscriptions to legal publications and updates, daily legal research on issues that arise in local government practice, robust legal discussions with colleagues, participation in CLE courses, and membership with local Bar Associations. I will disseminate the information in a timely manner using a variety of means (emails, newsletters, memos, training, etc.) depending on the timeliness and urgency in which knowledge of the information is necessary.

13. Please describe your experience of working in or for a fast-paced growth community. What do you believe are the unique challenges the City Attorney's Office will likely face in such an environment?

Answer: All my legal experiences working for municipalities and local governments in West Palm Beach, Broward County, and City of Riviera Beach are fast paced growth communities. Local government law is generally fast paced, and the City Attorney's Office will be called upon to provide legal services and guidance in an array of legal practice to all the City Departments as growth impacts the City as a whole.

14. Describe the most complex or controversial lawsuit or open records request you have been involved with and the outcome.

Answer: I have been in a couple of high-profile cases that have gone up to the Fourth District Court of Appeals and the Florida Supreme Court. Currently there is a case that is up to the Florida 4th District Court of Appeals that I worked on regarding the topic of attorney's fees.

15. Do you take the time to educate a Board of Directors/Governing Body, Departmental Staff, or members of a Board/Commission about the legal implications and circumstances when asked to provide your legal opinion on a matter? If so, how do you accomplish that?

Answer: Yes, I strongly believe in effective communication, continuing education on legal matters and responses to legal inquiries. I often use a variety of different means to disseminate legal information; especially, the means that are most effective for the recipient. Memorializing information, by memorandum, emails, newsletter, and handouts, is key.

16. The City Attorney's Office consists of eight full-time employees, including the City Attorney, Deputy City Attorney, two Assistant City Attorneys, the Police Legal Advisor, two Paralegals, and one Business Services Coordinator. How comfortable are you in working in a smaller department where it is expected that you will largely undertake your own legal research, draft documents, and working collaboratively with a small office team?

Answer: Being a government attorney and public servant, I am very comfortable and accustomed to working within legal departments with minimal staff and resources. I also enjoy working independently. Additionally, being a government lawyer has taught me to provide excellent legal work with minimal resources.

17. Tell us about your experience in managing outside legal counsel with litigation, risk management cases, and other specialized matters.

Answer: I have significant experience in managing outside counsel for the past 24 years. A substantial part of my work experience includes managing outside counsels retained by government agencies or companies. Managing outside counsel requires collaboration and accountability as well as minimizing the costs associated with litigation.

18. Describe your management style in five bullet points of five words or less for each bullet point.

- Answer: i) servant leadership and effective communication**
- ii) accountability and empowerment**
 - iii) open-minded and respectful**
 - iv) promote efficiency and establishing processes**
 - v) results oriented while incorporating humor**

19. When we conduct a comprehensive background investigation and reference checks, what will we find that may warrant explanation or that could be of concern to the City of North Port?

Answer: Nothing that I can recall.

20. Are you currently involved in any other employment searches and if so, what is your status and associated timetables involved in those searches?

Answer: None currently

21. What will we find in an Internet search of press coverage that may be controversial or of concern to the City of North Port? Please provide whatever explanation you think is appropriate to help us understand what we will find.

Answer: Nothing I can recall.

22. Please provide your desired compensation range and related benefit package if you are ultimately selected as the final candidate for this position. If you are selected and offered an acceptable compensation and benefits package, what concerns or hesitations do you have that would have to be resolved before you would be ready to accept the position? How soon would you be available to start work following the negotiation and acceptance of a final package?

Answer: Salary range \$200,000-220,000. Ideally, topics for negotiations would include top-tier executive benefits, car allowance, phone allowance, merit increases like other district employees, deferred compensation benefits, top-tier FRS benefits, PTO accruals and payouts in. I do not foresee any matters that would stall my acceptance of the position. However, given relocation is a factor, I would anticipate being available 30-40 days from finalization of the contract to start employment.

23. What are the three most important questions you have for the North Port Mayor & City Commission as part of your consideration of the City Attorney position?

Answer: a) What are the three most important legal services you rely on that are provided by the City Attorney's Office?

b) What are three areas of improvement would you welcome from the City Attorney's office?

c) As a Commission, individually and collectively, do you envision the City Attorney's Office expanding to provide more in-house legal representation?

CYNTHIA (CINDY) ORNDOFF



DR. CYNTHIA J. WILSON ORNDOFF, ESQ.

June 26, 2025

1425 Reynard Drive; Fort Myers, FL 33919
239-989-7229; cindyorndoff@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern:

Please consider this my formal application to become the City of North Port's Attorney. Four decades of professional experience, education, research, and affiliations have all prepared me for this position. As a servant leader, I am ethical, decisive and strategic.

Below is a summary of my qualifications.

- **Legal Expertise:** After having served as a civil engineering construction manager and then as a civil engineering faculty member, each for a decade, it became apparent that there was a need for legal expertise in civil engineering and engineering management. This sparked my studying the law and becoming a licensed attorney in 2014. I have an extremely strong background in law, land use and zoning, eminent domain, Sunshine Law, civil engineering, and construction. I am also knowledgeable in labor and employment law, as well as litigation and administrative hearings. Being a member of the Florida Bar Government Advocacy Committee enhances my preparation.
- **Civil Engineering and Engineering Management University Faculty:** I have taught laws at the University level focusing on land use, zoning and eminent domain at the undergraduate and graduate levels, even prior to becoming an attorney. Importantly, my more than five years of experience in land use, planning and land acquisition will be extremely valuable. Additionally, I have expertise in technical writing, project management, codes, regulations, asset management, infrastructure security, construction cost estimating, planning, scheduling, environmental policy, contracts, specifications, safety, etc. as well as transportation, geotechnical, surveying, construction and sustainability. My academic work has involved a considerable amount of collaborative and cross-disciplinary research including economics, statistics, as well as public and business administration. I developed the entire Surveying Management curriculum for Everglades University.
- **Leadership:** I previously served as Assistant to the Dean of Academic Programs in the College of Engineering at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) and welcome the opportunity to participate in administrative activities. My understanding of academic administration coupled with my familiarity with civil engineering and management, have prepared me for a wide variety of administrative responsibilities in academia. I have served on many college and campus-wide committees. The leadership positions I have held include the past Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee on Leadership and Management (CLM) as well as the past Vice-Chair of the Committee on Engineering Management and Business Practices for the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). As the committee envoy for the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Committee for the Transportation Research Board (TRB), I have worked with various public and private entities to discover the technology and business opportunities available to them. My expertise in developing alliances and cooperation between

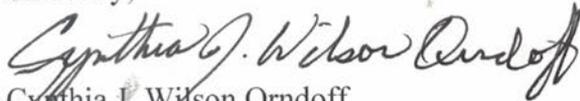
business, academic, and political representatives was enhanced by serving on economic development and strategic planning initiatives.

My experience in law, land use and planning, stewardship, as well as the use of public resources, coupled with my familiarity and academic research in policy, and public administration bring together a unique mixture of expertise tailor-made for this position. The breadth of my career has included work with federal, state, and local agencies. I am committed to using my numerous affiliations, professional networks, alliances, and experience to foster alliances with the legal community, government entities, consultants, and industry.

Regarded as maintaining high ethical standards, I always strive to be a servant leader. I have earned national recognition regarding information sharing, agency integration, strategic planning, asset management, and construction. I am well prepared to be your next City Attorney. I am confident that I will be an asset to the City of North Port.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cynthia J. Wilson Orndoff". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Cynthia J. Wilson Orndoff
Ph.D., Esq.

CYNTHIA JANE WILSON ORNDOFF, PH.D., ESQUIRE

1425 Reynard Drive; Fort Myers, FL 33919

239 989 7229; cindyornloff@gmail.com

ATTORNEY – CIVIL ENGINEER – PROFESSOR – ENTREPRENEUR

Overview: As an engineer with decades of experience, I have a wealth of knowledge in strategic planning, resource acquisition, integration, and implementation particularly as it relates to managing processes related to reporting strategies for complex organizations. I have earned national recognition with regard to communication, information sharing, organizational change, stakeholder interaction, asset management, and project management. After serving as a manager and then as a faculty member, it became apparent that my executive aptitude could be of great benefit to businesses and organizations if combined with legal expertise. This sparked my study of the law and becoming a licensed attorney. I am also a licensed Florida General Contractor. Currently, I am both a business owner, business consultant and faculty. It is my desire to use my executive aptitude to be of maximum service while using my gifts and abilities to address challenging problems and be a great benefit to businesses and organizations.

Education:

Jurist Doctorate (J.D.), Ave Maria Law School, Naples, Florida, 2014

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), Civil Engineering, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, 2001.

Master of Science (M.S.), Civil Engineering, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, 1997.

Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Civil Engineering, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, 1984.

Professional Experience:

PROFESSOR

2021 – PRESENT

CIVIL ENGINEERING & LAW

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

Cross-disciplinary educational delivery. Developed integrated cutting-edge research into regarding stakeholder consensus building focusing on conflict management, asset management, and policy.

Courses Taught

◆ Engineering Law ◆ Law for Engineers ◆ Professionalism ◆ Six Sigma

CONSULTANT & CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MEDIATOR

2018 – PRESENT

Assist contractors and owners in resolution of construction project disputes and matters of law.

- ◆ Advise clients in matters of labor and employment law. ◆ Instruct clients in land use and zoning.
- ◆ Instruct clients in eminent domain matters. ◆ Guide clients with Florida Sunshine Law concerns.
- ◆ When necessary, recommend litigation including appeals. ◆ Participated in administrative hearings.

GENERAL COUNSEL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

2018 – PRESENT

CONSTRUCTION COMPANY OWNER

CINDY'S KITCHEN & BATH, LLC

- ◆ Develop project proposals, budgets and schedules. ◆ Recruit and supervise all workers.
- ◆ Responsible for all business legal matters. ◆ Adhere to all regulatory matters and compliance issues.
- ◆ Secure all necessary permits. ◆ Handle all client communication. ◆ Maintain all business documentation.

PROFESSOR

2015 – PRESENT

LAW & MANAGEMENT (CONSTRUCTION/PROJECT/SURVEYING)

EVERGLADES UNIVERSITY

Built on Associate Professor experience. Researched and presented on cross-disciplinary aspects of asset management, land use planning, zoning, regulatory and policy. Developed integrated cutting-edge research into educational delivery regarding sustainability, entrepreneurship and cost analysis as well as leadership and management skills.

Courses Taught

- ◆ Land Tenure and Legal Considerations ◆ Legal Aspects in Construction ◆ Construction Law ◆ Project Management
- ◆ Construction Management ◆ LEED Certification ◆ Surveying Legal Environment ◆ Land Surveying and Mapping
- ◆ OSHA Standards ◆ Building Codes ◆ Building Construction Drawing ◆ Construction Scheduling
- ◆ Construction Cost Estimating ◆ Strategic Management of Construction Organizations ◆ Route Surveying

Summer 2025

Courses Taught (continued)

- ◆ GPS Surveying ◆ Instrumentation in Surveying ◆ Surveying Standards and Specifications
- ◆ Geoinformatics, Remote Sensing and GIS ◆ Construction Ethics ◆ Construction Scheduling and Planning Strategy
- ◆ Fundamentals of Surveying ◆ Advanced Construction Estimating ◆ Concrete Design in Construction
- ◆ Construction Techniques of Superstructures ◆ Soils in Construction ◆ Masonry Design ◆ Foundations & Equipment
- ◆ Soil Mechanics ◆ Statics and Strengths of Materials ◆ Mechanical Heating, Cooling, and Electrical Systems

BUSINESS LAW & CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT

2010 – PRESENT

Advise businesses in enhancing leadership by improving efficiency and processes. Particular expertise in land use planning, zoning, regulatory, public policy, code compliance, administrative proceedings, eminent domain, federal, state and local reporting requirements.

- ◆ Assist in locating and hiring construction personnel including Construction Managers.
 - ◆ Develop training for regulatory compliance (including ADA requirements).
 - ◆ Predicted significant cost savings, lower risk assessment and improved safety.
- ◆ Counsel clients as to asset and risk management improvements particularly in the area of safety.
 - ◆ Evaluate complex documentation practices to improve coordination and administration.
 - ◆ Drafted and submitted motions and briefs to Florida Courts.
- ◆ Surveying Legal Environment ◆ Land Surveying and Mapping ◆ Instrumentation In Surveying ◆ GPS Surveying
- ◆ Surveying Standards and Specifications ◆ Fundamentals of Surveying ◆ Land Tenure and Legal Considerations
- ◆ Geoinformatics GPS, Remote Sensing and GIS ◆ Mechanical Heating, Cooling, and Electrical Systems

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

2006 TO 2010

ENVIRONMENTAL & CIVIL ENGINEERING

FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY

Built on Assistant Professor experience. Researched and presented cross-disciplinary aspects of sustainability, business strategies, regulatory and policy influences, impacts and consequences. Charged with program delivery of various aspects of engineering and environmental education. Integrated cutting-edge research into educational delivery regarding sustainability, entrepreneurship and cost analysis methodology as well as leadership and management skills. Responsible for ABET accreditation. Expanded expertise:

- ◆ Energy Conversion & Conservation ◆ Sustainable Infrastructure Systems ◆ Transportation Engineering
- ◆ Engineering Computer Graphics (CADD) ◆ Service Learning in Engineering ◆ Surveying and Geomatics
- ◆ Problem Solving and Design for Engineers ◆ Entrepreneurship in Engineering ◆ Service Learning in Engineering

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

2001 TO 2006

CIVIL & ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI - COLUMBIA

Trained students in civil engineering concepts, principles and practices and the linkage with other engineering disciplines. Spearheaded education and research in asset management, operational planning, and risk management. Enhance construction management regarding standards, methods, practices, techniques, materials and equipment. Forged advancement in leadership, governmental accounting, contract law and contract administration. Taught health, safety and environmental requirements in regard to standards, regulations and technical orders. Taught students to analyze, interpret and apply general engineering rules and procedures for differing situations, in order to recommend effective solutions. Expertise in:

- ◆ Construction Management ◆ Quality Control & Management ◆ Engineering Leadership & Ethics
- ◆ Engineering Management ◆ Transportation Planning ◆ Transportation Systems Engineering
- ◆ Infrastructure Management ◆ Contract Law

ASSISTANT TO THE DEAN

1997 TO 2001

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN (UIUC)

- ◆ Advised engineering undergraduate students
- ◆ Assisted with ABET accreditation
- ◆ Supervised all fifty-three engineering societies
- ◆ Participated in curriculum development

**RESEARCH ASSISTANT
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL ENGINEERING**

**1995 TO 1997
UIUC**

- ◆ Developed new database technology tools
- ◆ Researched, tested and provided policy guidance for construction materials

**PROJECT MANAGER & CIVIL ENGINEER
LAND USE & CONSTRUCTION**

**1984 TO 1994
STATE OF ILLINOIS**

- ◆ Managed construction projects and surveys
- ◆ Supervised project planning and land acquisition
- ◆ Prepared Plats and Plans for Recording Including for Eminent Domain
- ◆ Outside Agency Communications & Coordination
- ◆ Scheduling
- ◆ Construction Documentation
- ◆ Construction Drawings
- ◆ OSHA Standards
- ◆ Project Management
- ◆ Soil Testing
- ◆ Contract Administration
- ◆ Safety
- ◆ Budgeting
- ◆ Pay Schedules
- ◆ Ethics
- ◆ Surveying
- ◆ Zoning and Code Compliance

Professional Highlights:

Earned national recognition with regard to communication, information sharing, organizational change, strategic planning, multiple stakeholder group interaction, asset and project management.

- By Nature
 - ▶ Leadership and entrepreneurial distinctiveness with character and integrity
 - ▶ Multidimensional global thinker who accurately anticipates future outcomes
 - ▶ Ability to assemble diverse pieces of information to envision likely impacts
- Personal Strengths
 - ▶ Advanced technical experience with the capability to manage people
 - ▶ High level management skills with the ability to bring about multi-agency synergism
 - ▶ Multi-parameter project management within time and budget constraints
 - ▶ Experience with multi-level policies and regulations
 - ▶ Expertise in team building, stakeholder management and professional etiquette
- Aptitude
 - ▶ Innovative thinking and problem solving in the presence of multiple conflicting factors
 - ▶ Ability to effectively work directly with clients, superintendents, trades, subcontractors, vendors, architects, engineers, designers and suppliers.
 - ▶ Assessment of interpersonal relations with ability to negotiate and arbitrate
 - ▶ Lifelong learner, currently focusing on remediation and cleanup of contaminated properties.

Registrations:

FEMA Flood Adjuster Training, 2024.

FL Property Adjuster, 2024.

Florida General Contractor, 2019.

OSHA 30-Hour, 2018

Florida Bar, Member, 2014.

RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Continuing Education:

LegalUp, Ethics For Attorneys

Florida General Contractor Business & Finance Exam

Florida General Contractor Project Management Exam

Florida General Contractor Contract Administration Exam

Florida Bar, Basic Settlement and ADR

Florida Bar, Basic Business Litigation

Florida Bar, Basic Labor and Employment

Florida Bar, Construction Law: Advanced Issues and Answers

Florida Bar, Connecting in the Digital Age

Florida Bar, Wills, Trusts and Estates

Florida Bar, Ethics

Florida Bar, Technology

RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Continuing Education: *(continued)*

Florida Bar, Tax Law

Florida Bar, Elder Law

Florida Bar, Practicing with Professionalism

Preventing Discrimination and Sexual Violence: Title IX, VAWA and Clery Act, 2016

Carlson, Carlson Fundamentals, Carlson Survey, and Carlson SurvCE

Honors & Awards:

Florida Gulf Coast University & Florida SouthWestern State, The John Scott Dailey Florida Institute of Government, Leadership Enrichment Program, 2016-2017.

Florida Gulf Coast University, Faculty Senate, Professional Development Award, 2007, 2009 and 2010.

21st Century 2000 Outstanding Intellectuals, IBC, Cambridge, England, 2001.

Graduate College On-Campus Dissertation Research Grant, UIUC Graduate College, 2001.

Fellow, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, UIUC, 2000-2001.

Vessa Notchev Fellowship, Graduate Women in Science, 2000.

Trent R. Dame & William W. Moore Fellowship, American Society of Civil Engineering (ASCE), 2000.

Helene M. Overly Memorial Scholarship, Women's Transportation Seminar, 1999.

Methodist Church Student Scholarship, Mahomet United Methodist Church, 1998 and 1999.

Statewide Scholarship Competition Recipient, Illinois Association of Highway Engineers, 1998.

National Science Foundation SURGE Fellowship, College of Engineering & Dept. Civil Engineering, UIUC, 1998-2001.

Eisenhower Graduate Research Fellowship, Federal Highway Administration, 1998.

Departmental Achievement Awards, UIUC Department of Civil Engineering, 1998.

American Association of Public Works Scholarship, 1998, 2000.

Verdell Frazier Young Award, 1998, 1999, and 2000.

Conference Proceedings & Publications:

Orndoff C., Construction 3D Applications With Drones, *International Annual Conference of the American Society of Engineering Management*, October 2019.

Orndoff C., Mallak I. Schott, E., Lyth D., Engineering an Alliance Between WMU and FSW, *International Annual Conference of the American Society of Engineering Management*, presenting October 2018.

Orndoff C., Schott, E., Rewards Of An Engineering Prerequisite Assignment, *Society of Engineering Education (ASEE) Annual Conference*, presenting June 2018.

Orndoff C., Schott, E., An Overview of Changing Product Development Philosophies, *International Annual Conference of the American Society of Engineering Management*, October 2017.

Schott, E., Wilson Orndoff C., Pre-Engineering Options at Florida Community and State Colleges, *American Society of Engineering Education (ASEE) Annual Conference*, May 2017.

Schott, E., Wilson Orndoff C., A Unique Application of a Distribution and Inventory Problem With Set-Up Costs Model, *International Annual Conference of the American Society of Engineering Management*, October 2016.

Orndoff C., Papkov G., and Bledsoe, C., Impacts of 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), *ASCE Journal of Professional Issues in Engineering Education & Practice*, January 2012.

Hazar M., Steward R. Jr., Chang C., Orndoff C, Zeng Y., Ho M., LeDuc P., and Cheng C., Modulating Material Interfaces through Biologically-Inspired Intermediates, *Applied Physics Letters*, December 2011.

Orndoff C., Papkov G., Behney M., and Lubart J., Defining The Problem: Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program Impediments Identified By Recent Survey Of Program Administrators, *Public Works Management & Policy*, April 2011.

Orndoff C., Solar Panel Renewable Energy Inductive Learning, *Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) International Symposium on Electronics and the Environment (ISEE) Conference, IEEE International Symposium on Sustainable Systems and Technology (ISSST)*, May 2010.

Orndoff C., Public Institution Fast Tracking of Solar Panel Array Implementation, *Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) International Symposium on Electronics and the Environment (ISEE) Conference*, May 2009.

Conference Proceedings & Publications: (continued)

- Orndoff C., Developing A Practical Applicable Course In Sustainability – An Engineering Challenge, *American Society of Engineering Education Annual Conference*, May 2008.
- Orndoff C., A Student Overview In Practical Sustainability, *American Society of Engineering Education (ASEE) Conference*, May 2008.
- Orndoff C., Sustainability: Educating Informally, *Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) International Symposium on Electronics and the Environment (ISEE) Conference*, May 2008.
- O'Neill R, Geiger C, Csavina K, Orndoff C., Making Statics Dynamic! Combining Lecture and Laboratory Into An Interdisciplinary, Problem-Based, Active Learning Environment. *American Society of Engineering Education Annual Conference Proceedings*, AC 2007-1827, July 2007.
- Zidek L, Orndoff C, Blanchard S. Using Entrepreneurship and Service-Learning to Increase Engineering Awareness in High School., *American Society of Engineering Education Annual Conference Proceedings*, AC 2007-542, July 2007.
- Orndoff C., A Promising New Tool for Stakeholder Interaction. *Journal of Architectural Engineering*, 2005.
- Wilson Orndoff C., Citizen-Based Priorities In Transportation: A Study In Customer Focus. *Public Works Management & Policy*, 2003.
- Vasudevan R., Orndoff C., Internet-Based Bridge Management Systems Using GIS, Transportation Research Committee On Bridge Management Systems (A3C17), 9th International Bridge Management Conference, 2003.
- Wilson Orndoff C., Customer Focus in Highway Transportation Asset Management, Doctoral Dissertation, UIUC, 2001.
- Wilson C, Darter M., Development of Bike Path Management System for UIUC, *Transportation Research Board*, 1998.

Technical Reports:

- Orndoff C., Cole County GASB 34 and Asset Management Development and Implementation Final Report, 2004.
- Orndoff C., Cole County Condition Assessment, 2003.
- Orndoff C., Cole County Asset Management Program, 2003.
- Darter M., Wilson C., Interstate 80 Pavement Rehabilitation Corridor Study, Project IHR-540, *Illinois Cooperative Highway Research Program*, 1999.

Professional Past & Current Affiliations:

- Florida Bar Government Advocacy Committee
- Lee County Association of Women Lawyers (LCAWL)
- American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)
- National Academy of Science (NAS) Transportation Research Board (TRB)
- Florida Bar
- American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE)
- Association of General Contractors (AGC)
- American Public Works Association (APWA)
- American Bar Association (ABA)
- Federalist Society
- The Infrastructure Security Partnership
- Infrastructure Security for the Built Environment
- ASCE Construction Institute
- ASCE Transportation and Development Institute
- Phi Alpha Delta Legal Honor Society (PAD)
- Ave Maria International Law Journal, Associate Editor
- NAS TRB Disadvantaged Business Enterprises
- Fund for American Studies Research Council
- ASCE Committee on Sustainability
- Collier Building Industry Association, Green Building for Commercial and Residential Builders
- ASCE Green Building and Sustainable Development
- Graduate Women in Science
- Rural Partners
- Women's Transportation Seminar
- Institute of Transportation Engineers

Professional Past & Current Affiliations: (continued)

Carlson Training on Carlson Fundamentals, Carlson Survey, and Carlson SurvCE
National Science Foundation (NSF) Teaching Sustainability In The Classroom

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:**Service & Volunteer:**

Consortium for Mathematics and its Applications (COMAP), Judge, 2018-Present.

ABC40(3) Asset Management Implementation Subcommittee National Academy of Science's (NAS) Transportation Research Board (TRB), Friend, 2018.

International Annual Conference of the American Society of Engineering Management, Emerging Issues, Construction Management, Track Chair, 2018.

Florida Bar, Government and Public Policy Advocacy Committee, 2017-present.

International Annual Conference of the American Society of Engineering Management, Legal Issues, Professional Conduct and Ethics in Engineering Management, Session Chair, 2017.

Everglades University Online Division, Developed and Implemented Surveying Management Online Curriculum Including Nine Online Courses, 2017.

Fund for American Studies, Research Council, 2013.

Ave Maria International Law Journal, Associate Editor, 2012-2013.

NAS TRB Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Committee, Member, 1999-2013.

American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Committee on Sustainability Ex-Officio Member, 2008-2012.

Collier Building Industry Association, Green Building for Commercial and Residential Builders, Participant, 2008.

American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Green Building and Sustainable Development, Participant, 2008.

National Science Foundation (NSF) Teaching Sustainability In The Classroom, Participant, 2007.

American Society for Engineering Educators (ASEE) Engineering and Public Policy Committee, Vice Chair for Administration, 2006-2007.

Infrastructure Security for the Built Environment, University Contact, 2003-2006.

American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Engineering Management and Leadership Committee, Past Chair, 2005-2006.

Chair, 2004-2005.

Vice-Chair, 2003-2004.

ASCE Engineering Management and Business Practices Committee, Vice-Chair, 2003.

Member, 2002.

ASCE Engineering Management and Business Practices Committee, Vice-Chair, 2003.

Regional Economic Development, Strategic Planning; IL Dept. of Commerce & Community Affairs, 2000.

St. Louis Town Hall Meeting on Homeland Security

Organized by the council for Excellence in Government, St. Louis University

Participant, 2003.

Transportation Research Board (TRB) Asset Management Task Force , Member, 2001-2006.

East Central Illinois Regional Economic Development

Strategic Planning Session Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs

Member, 2000.

NAS TRB NCHRP, New Services for American Association of State and Transportation Officials Website, Advisor, NCHRP 20-56, 2001-2004.

Civil Engineering Research Foundation

Building Futures Council, Executive Program Series

Participant, 2001.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Service & Volunteer: (continued)

National Science Foundation (NSF): Division of Civil and Mechanical Systems

Workshop for the Advancement and Retention of Underrepresented and Minority Engineering Educators Participant, 2001.

TRB Strategic Management Committee Friend

1999-2001.

Review Panels:

National Academy of Science's (NAS) Transportation Research Board (TRB) National

Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP,) Effective Transportation Asset Management Practices at State DOTs, Regional Organizations, and Local Agencies NCHRP 08-113, Panel Advisor, 2017-present.

NAS TRB ABC40, Transportation Asset Management,

Reviewer, 2010-2011.

NSA TRB Implementing Race-Neutral Measures in State Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Programs (NCHRP 20-05/Topic 41-08),

Panel Member, 2010.

NSF Course Curriculum & Innovation

Reviewer, 2007 & 2009.

ASEE Annual Conference Energy Conversion & Conservation Division

Reviewer, 2008.

ASEE Annual Conference Engineering and Public Policy Committee

Reviewer, 2007-2008.

ASEE Annual Conference Engineering Management Committee

Reviewer, 2007.

ASCE Journal of Infrastructure Systems

Reviewer, 2005.

ASCE Leadership in Management & Engineering (LME)

Guest Editor, 2004.

American Public Works Association, Public Works Management & Policy Journal

Reviewer, 2003.

University Committees:

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU):

FGCU Center for Sustainability, Member, 2008.

U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering Faculty Handbook Committee and Peer Review Committee, Chair, 2007-2008.

Lutgert College of Business Peer Review Committee Member, 2007-2008.

U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering Executive Leadership Team, 2006.

Whitaker Center Leadership Team, 2006-2008.

Lutgert College of Business Curriculum Committee, 2006.

U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering Curriculum Committee, 2006.

University of Missouri-Columbia:

College of Engineering Affirmative Action Committee, Member 2001-2006.

Civil and Environment Engineering (CEE) Curriculum Committee, Member, 2001-2002.

CEE, Missouri Department of Transportation Corridor Study, Member, 2002.

ASCE, Student Chapter Faculty Advisor, 2001

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign:

College of Engineering Academic Programs, Representative, 2000.

College of Engineering Dean's External Affairs Advisory Board, Member, 2000-2001.

Provost of the University of Illinois' Work/Life Advisory Group, Member, 2000.

Educational Technologies Board, Member, 1997-1999.

Graduate Student Senator, 1997-1998.

Extension/Continuing Education and Presentations:

ACSE:

Government Accounting Standards Board Statement 34 (GASB34) Continuing Education Course, 2002-2003.

Asset Management & GASB34: Continuing Education Course Instructor, 2003.

ASCE Faculty Advisor Training Workshop, Reston, VA, 2002.

ASCE Exceed Workshop, University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, 2002.

Missouri Department of Transportation: *GASB 34 Training Course, 2003.*

University of Missouri-Columbia:

Campus Writing Program Workshop, 2003.

Public Works, Zoning, and City Planning: Missouri International Training Institute, 2002.

Communication Workshop, 2002.

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs Workshop, 2001.

APWA: *Development and Implementation of GASB34 and Asset Management for Local and Regional Public Works Agencies, 2001.*

NSF and UIUC *Graduate College Science Engineering Scholars Program, 2000.*

National Transportation Asset Management 4th Annual Conference: *Using and Integrating Data & Leveraging Resources, 2001.*

Transportation Research Board: *Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Committee Coordinator and Presiding Session Officer of Technology and Business DBE Opportunities, 2001.*

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign:

Faculty Roles in Enhancing Student Development, 2001.

Preparing Faculty for the Future, 2000.

Grant & Proposal Writing, 1998.

Engineering Open House, 1998.

**City Attorney
North Port, Florida
Semifinalist Questionnaire**

Please return to: DelenaFranklin@GovernmentResource.com
Due NLT Sunday, July 20, 2025 @ 11:00 PM Central Time

Full Name (first, middle, last): Cynthia Jane Wilson Orndoff
Maiden Name(s), if any: Orndoff
Nickname(s), if any: Cindy

Cell: (239) 989-7229

Home: N/A

Please answer each of the following questions completely and thoroughly.

1. For your last three positions, please list:
 - I. Online Adjunct Faculty (Professor)
Liberty University – Fort Myers, Florida
Teaching and Service
 - II. Online Adjunct Faculty (Professor)
Everglades University – Fort Myers, Florida
Teaching and Service
 - III. Judicial Clerk
Lee County 20th Judicial Circuit – Fort Myers, Florida
Assist the Judge with research, writing and other tasks as assigned.
2. Please describe why you left your last three positions. Additionally, are there any gaps in excess of two weeks in your employment history including any short-term (i.e., approximately 1-year or less) posts that may have occurred in your career? If so, please explain in detail.

I still currently hold positions with both Liberty University and Everglades University.
I graduated from Ave Maria Law School and as was not eligible to be a Judicial Clerk anymore.
3. Do you currently possess an active Florida Bar license? If so, please attach a copy of your credentials. Also, include any special credentials or Board Certifications you may currently possess.

Yes.

4. Have you had any ethics or grievance filings against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.

No.

5. Have you had any malpractice suits against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.

No.

6. Please list any client that you currently represent that could cause a potential conflict of interest with the City of North Port, Florida. If applicable, please describe how you would resolve any current or future potential conflicts of interest.

N/A

7. Have you or your firm represented any client in the past 10 years against the City of North Port, Florida or one of its employees? If so, please describe in detail.

No.

8. Please describe any experience you may have in Land Use, Planning & Zoning, Economic Development Agreements, Procurement, Contracts, Environmental Permitting, Easements & Eminent Domain, Public Records, Ordinance Drafting, Interlocal Agreements, and Florida Local Government Law.

Below is a summary of my qualifications.

- **Legal Expertise:** After having served as a civil engineering construction manager and then as a civil engineering faculty member, each for a decade, it became apparent that there was a need for legal expertise in civil engineering and engineering management. This sparked my studying the law and becoming a licensed attorney in 2014. I have an extremely strong background in law, land use and zoning, eminent domain, Sunshine Law, civil engineering, and construction. I am also knowledgeable in labor and employment law, as well as litigation and administrative hearings. Being a member of the Florida Bar Government Advocacy Committee enhances my preparation.
- **Civil Engineering and Engineering Management University Faculty:** I have taught laws at the University level focusing on land use, zoning and eminent domain at the undergraduate and graduate levels, even prior to becoming an attorney. Importantly, my more than five years of experience in land use, planning and land acquisition will be extremely valuable. Additionally, I have expertise in technical writing, project management, codes, regulations, asset management, infrastructure security, construction cost estimating, planning, scheduling, environmental policy, contracts, specifications, safety, etc. as well as transportation, geotechnical, surveying, construction and sustainability. My academic work has involved a considerable amount of collaborative and cross-disciplinary research including economics, statistics, as well as public and business administration. I developed the entire Surveying Management curriculum for Everglades University.

- **Leadership:** I previously served as Assistant to the Dean of Academic Programs in the College of Engineering at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) and welcome the opportunity to participate in administrative activities. My understanding of academic administration coupled with my familiarity with civil engineering and management, have prepared me for a wide variety of administrative responsibilities in academia. I have served on many college and campus-wide committees. The leadership positions I have held include the past Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee on Leadership and Management (CLM) as well as the past Vice-Chair of the Committee on Engineering Management and Business Practices for the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). As the committee envoy for the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Committee for the Transportation Research Board (TRB), I have worked with various public and private entities to discover the technology and business opportunities available to them. My expertise in developing alliances and cooperation between business, academic, and political representatives was enhanced by serving on economic development and strategic planning initiatives.

My experience in law, land use and planning, stewardship, as well as the use of public resources, coupled with my familiarity and academic research in policy, and public administration bring together a unique mixture of expertise tailor-made for this position. The breadth of my career has included work with federal, state, and local agencies. I am committed to using my numerous affiliations, professional networks, alliances, and experience to foster alliances with the legal community, government entities, consultants, and industry.

9. If selected as the next City Attorney for North Port, what do you believe will be your greatest challenges as you move into the position?

I do not have any experience with procurement.

10. Describe your philosophy regarding the role the City Attorney plays with the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, the senior leadership of the City, and the various standing Boards & Commissions.

Serve as legal counsel to the City Commission, City Manager, city staff, as well as Boards and Committees in an ethical, decisive, strategic, and values-driven manner as a servant leader. Additionally, represent the City in all legal and administrative actions.

11. Tell us about the volume of work you currently manage on a regular basis and how varied your responsibilities may be. If you are presently in private practice, how many clients do you currently service?

My usual teaching load is 4 to 5 courses per month. Sometimes more if there is a need.

12. How do you keep up to date on state and federal legislation, and how would you communicate changes in legislation and other legal questions related to administrative and operational issues with both the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, and staff of the City of North Port?

Continuing Legal Education is a valuable way to keep abreast of changes to state and federal legislation. I also receive email updates and am a member of the Florida Bar Government Advocacy Committee. Additionally, the Florida Association of Women Lawyers is a valuable resource.

Notifying the North Port Mayor, City Commission, City Manager, and staff via email has the value of immediacy and availability of easy reference. When possible, presenting the information at meetings and training sessions would allow for a more in-depth approach while offering the ability for questions to be addressed.

13. Please describe your experience of working in or for a fast-paced growth community. What do you believe are the unique challenges the City Attorney's Office will likely face in such an environment?

While I do not have experience working in or for a fast-paced growth community, I certainly live in one. Based on this and my experience as a Civil Engineer, Certified General Contractor and Professor who teaches Construction Management, Survey Management, Sustainability, Emergency Management, etc. I believe the unique challenges the City Attorney's Office faces would likely involve code enforcement, environmental issues, hurricane impacts, traffic growth, contract enforcement, open records requests and personnel issues.

14. Describe the most complex or controversial lawsuit or open records request you have been involved with and the outcome.

N/A

15. Do you take the time to educate a Board of Directors/Governing Body, Departmental Staff, or members of a Board/Commission about the legal implications and circumstances when asked to provide your legal opinion on a matter? If so, how do you accomplish that?

I would do so if selected. I would provide a written response to all relevant City Officials.

16. The City Attorney's Office consists of eight full-time employees, including the City Attorney, Deputy City Attorney, two Assistant City Attorneys, the Police Legal Advisor, two Paralegals, and one Business Services Coordinator. How comfortable are you in working in a smaller department where it is expected that you will largely undertake your own legal research, draft documents, and working collaboratively with a small office team?

I am comfortable.

17. Tell us about your experience in managing outside legal counsel with litigation, risk management cases, and other specialized matters.

When I worked as an engineer, there were many outside consultants whose contracts I was involved with their management.

18. Describe your management style in five bullet points of five words or less for each bullet point.

19. When we conduct a comprehensive background investigation and reference checks, what will we find that may warrant explanation or that could be of concern to the City of North Port?

Nothing that I am aware of.

20. Are you currently involved in any other employment searches and if so, what is your status and associated timetables involved in those searches?

No.

21. What will we find in an Internet search of press coverage that may be controversial or of concern to the City of North Port? Please provide whatever explanation you think is appropriate to help us understand what we will find.

When working for Florida Gulf Coast University I filed an Administrative Law complaint against the Whitaker School of Engineering. Both the University and the School were very young institutions. There were growing pains that everyone was experiencing. While I would not file such an action now, the experience did propel me to become an attorney.

22. Please provide your desired compensation range and related benefit package if you are ultimately selected as the final candidate for this position. If you are selected and offered an acceptable compensation and benefits package, what concerns or hesitations do you have that would have to be resolved before you would be ready to accept the position? How soon would you be available to start work following the negotiation and acceptance of a final package?

The range of compensation that was advertised in the announcement and the benefits package that the previous City Attorney received. I would be available immediately.

23. What are the three most important questions you have for the North Port Mayor & City Commission as part of your consideration of the City Attorney position?

1. What are the three primary challenges facing North Port currently?
2. Are there any current major legal challenges facing North Port?
3. Is the City Attorney required to remain in North Port during a declared hurricane mandatory evacuation?



Florida Bar Links

- Floridabar.org
- Member Benefits
- LegalFuel: The Practice Resource Center
- Legal Accelerator

External Links

- Fastcase
- Florida Lawyers Helpline
- On Demand Courses



My Profile

My Account



1425 Reynard Dr
Fort Myers, FL 33919-2205
United States

Email: cindyorndoff@gmail.com
Personal URL: 113625

Member in Good Standing

My Fees

Pay My Fees

My Invoices

No invoice lines found

My Scheduled Payments

No scheduled payments found

Upcoming Meetings

- 03/10/2025 Administrative Law Sponsorship Packages
- 06/18/2025 2025-2026 Leadership Academy Sponsorship Packages
- 06/25/2025 Annual Convention 2025 - Judicial Luncheon

DAVID (MATT) RAULERSON



D. Matthew Raulerson

mattraulerson@gmail.com

June 16, 2025

Doug Thomas, Executive Vice President
Strategic Government Resources
DouglasThomas@GovernmentResource.com

Dear Mr. Thomas,

I am writing to express my strong interest in the City Attorney position with the City of North Port. With over a decade of legal experience in Florida—focused on local government law, litigation, land use, and contract negotiation—I am confident in my ability to provide the strategic legal guidance and collaborative leadership necessary for this dynamic and fast-growing municipality.

As the current County Attorney for Hendry County, I serve as chief legal advisor to the Board of County Commissioners, guiding elected officials and senior management through complex legal challenges. My responsibilities include drafting ordinances and legislation, providing employment and collective bargaining counsel, and representing the County in union-related proceedings. Previously, as Assistant County Attorney for Highlands County, I provided legal support to multiple departments including Code Enforcement, Procurement, and Human Resources, and regularly handled litigation and legislative drafting.

My background also includes managing my own law firm focused on litigation, commercial disputes, and real property matters, giving me a broad legal foundation and a practical, solutions-driven mindset. Throughout my career, I have built a reputation for integrity, responsiveness, and professionalism—qualities aligned with the City of North Port's core values of accountability, innovation, and exceptional customer service.

D. Matthew Raulerson

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]; mattraulerson@gmail.com

North Port's rapid development and forward-looking governance present exciting opportunities. I bring deep experience in land use, development agreements, public procurement, and local legislation—all critical to supporting a community that is less than halfway built out. I am adept at managing internal legal teams and outside counsel, ensuring efficient, ethical, and effective legal representation in alignment with organizational goals.

I am a proud member of the Florida Bar, admitted to both the Middle and Southern Federal Districts of Florida, and I actively serve on the Florida Bar Governmental and Public Policy Advocacy Committee. I would welcome the opportunity to contribute my skills and experience to North Port's continued success and am prepared to relocate in accordance with the residency requirement outlined in the Charter.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to the opportunity to further discuss how I can support the City of North Port as its next City Attorney.

Sincerely,

D. Matthew Raulerson

D. Matthew Raulerson

D. Matthew Raulerson

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]; matraulerson@gmail.com

EDUCATION/ADMISSION

Ave Maria School of Law – Naples, Florida

J.D., May 2013

- GPA 3.34/4.0; Class Rank 35/159; Fall 2011, Fall 2012 Dean's Honor Roll
- Florida Bar Admission June 2014; Bar Number 110630
- Admitted to Middle and Southern Federal Districts of Florida
- Florida Bar Governmental and Public Policy Advocacy Committee Member

Florida State University – Tallahassee, Florida

B.S., Political Science, May 1989

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Hendry County Board of County Commissioners-LaBelle, Florida

County Attorney

March 2023-Present

- Providing Legal Opinions to the Board of County Commissioners
- Representation of the Board and Management in all legal matters
- Drafting contracts, Resolutions, Ordinances and Legislation on behalf of the County
- Participation in the Disciplinary process and legal opinions in Employment law
- Representation of Management Negotiations in the Collective Bargaining process
- Representation of the County in Union related legal proceedings

Highlands County Attorney's Office-Sebring, Florida

Assistant County Attorney II, Municipal Law

August 2020-March 2023

- Litigation on behalf of the County
- Contract Drafting and Review
- Drafting Ordinances and Resolutions
- Legal Representation for all County Departments including Supervisor of Elections, Procurement, Human Resources, Economic Development, and Code Enforcement

Heartland Law, PLLC-Naples, Florida

Managing Member, Law Firm focused on representing people and small businesses in Florida.

July 2017-August 2020

- Commercial Litigation: Contract Disputes, Commercial Real Estate Disputes, Construction and Construction Defects, Property Insurance Disputes
- Consumer Defense Litigation including debt defense and foreclosure defense.
- Consumer Actions against unlawful debt collection, class actions in state and federal courts.
- Real Property: Residential and Commercial Transactions, Contracts, Title Work and Closings

Goldstein, Buckley, Cechman, Rice & Purtz, P.A.-Fort Myers, Florida

Associate Attorney, Civil Litigation in Commercial Law, Consumer Law, Bankruptcy, and Real Property

April 2015- July 2017

- Commercial Advocacy and Litigation: Contract Disputes, Commercial Real Estate Disputes, Construction and Construction Defects, Property Insurance Disputes
- Development and expansion of existing Consumer Litigation division to add FDCPA, CFPB, FCCPA, FCRA and TCPA cases in state and federal courts.
- Bankruptcy: Chapters 7 and 13

D. Matthew Raulerson

mattraulerson@gmail.com

- Real Property: Transactions, Contracts, Title Work and Closings

Alliance Legal Group, P.L.-Sarasota, Florida

Managing Attorney, Fair Debt Collection Division, September 2014-April 2015

- Development and management of new litigation division for FDCPA, CFPB, FCCPA, FCRA and TCPA cases in state and federal courts.
- Pretrial Analysis of prospective cases; Frequent Client communication for verification of claims and to determine potential damages for court and forum selection.
- Pre-Trial Litigation and motion practice, successful settlement negotiations
- Hands on Discovery and Deposition activity

Viles & Beckman, L.L.C.- Fort Myers, Florida

Associate Attorney, September 2013-September 2014

- Managing and operating new division focused on violations of state and federal debt collection laws, FDCPA and FCCPA individual and class actions
- Pre-Trial Litigation and motion practice, settlement negotiations and trial preparation in state and federal court
- Development, management and oversight of plaintiff labor law division for all federal FLSA cases
- Trial Experience in foreclosure defense and fair debt collection cases

Lucarelli, Beavin and Quinn, P.A. – Naples, Florida

Law Clerk, May 2012 – September 2013

- Prepared and wrote pretrial and post judgment Motions in Dissolution of Marriage and Child Custody Matters
- Researched and wrote Motions and memoranda in Foreclosure Defense proceedings.
- Personal Injury Pre-Litigation Research, Motion Practice and Participation in Mediation and Arbitration Proceedings for commercial civil litigation

United States Attorney's Office, Fort Myers Division – Fort Myers, Florida

Legal Intern, September 2012 – December 2012

- Researched and wrote Dispositive Motions to Dismiss and for Summary Judgment for defendant, United States, in a medical malpractice action
- Researched and prepared Prosecution Memorandum for authorization to prosecute a human smuggling operation
- Observed trials including one of a six defendant conspiracy to traffic in drugs

Office of the Collier County Attorney – Naples, FL

Legal Extern, August 2011 – August 2012

- Reviewed and revised procurement contracts and procedures.
- Researched the applicability of sovereign immunity for permitting and inspections and prepare corresponding memorandum
- Researched and proposed resolutions for time tolling issues for properties no longer benefitting from Municipal Services Taxing Unit
- Researched and collaborated on an appellate brief for appeal of administrative order

**City Attorney
North Port, Florida
Semifinalist Questionnaire**

Please return to: DelenaFranklin@GovernmentResource.com
Due NLT Sunday, July 20, 2025 @ 11:00 PM Central Time

Full Name (first, middle, last): David Matthew Raulerson
Maiden Name(s), if any: _____
Nickname(s), if any: Matt

Cell:
Home: N/A

Please answer each of the following questions completely and thoroughly.

1. For your last three positions, please list:
 - a. Job Title
 - b. Organization and Location
 - c. Scope of Responsibilities/Services Provided

Title: County Attorney

Organization and Location:

**Hendry County Board of County Commissioners, LaBelle, Florida,
March 2023-Present**

- **Providing Legal Opinions to the Board of County Commissioners**
- **Representation of the Board and Management in all legal matters**
- **Drafting contracts, Resolutions, Ordinances and Legislation on behalf of the County**
- **Participation in the Disciplinary process and legal opinions in Employment law**
- **Representation of Management Negotiations in the Collective Bargaining process**
- **Representation of the County in Union related legal proceedings**

Title: Assistant County Attorney

Organization and Location:

**Highlands County Board of County Commissioners, Sebring, Florida
August 2020-March 2023**

- **Litigation on behalf of the County**
- **Contract Drafting and Review**
- **Drafting Ordinances and Resolutions**
- **Legal Representation for all County Departments including Supervisor of Elections, Procurement, Human Resources, Economic Development, and Code Enforcement**

Title: Managing Member/Owner

Organization and Location: Heartland Law, PLLC, Fort Myers, Florida

July 2017-August 2020

- **Commercial Litigation: Contract Disputes, Commercial Real Estate Disputes, Construction and Construction Defects, Property Insurance Disputes**
- **Consumer Defense Litigation including debt defense and foreclosure defense.**
- **Consumer Actions against unlawful debt collection, class actions in state and federal courts.**
- **Real Property: Residential and Commercial Transactions, Contracts, Title Work and Closings**

2. Please describe why you left your last three positions. Additionally, are there any gaps in excess of two weeks in your employment history including any short-term (i.e., approximately 1-year or less) posts that may have occurred in your career? If so, please explain in detail.

I left Goldstein Buckley because I had no interest in Plaintiff's Personal Injury Law and to open my own solo firm.

I left Heartland Law, PLLC because I had an interest in local government law since I was a law clerk at the Collier County Attorney's Office and the opportunity occurred at the right time in my career path.

I left Highlands County as an Assistant County Attorney to become the County Attorney in Hendry County.

There are no gaps in my employment.

3. Do you currently possess an active Florida Bar license? If so, please attach a copy of your credentials. Also, include any special credentials or Board Certifications you may currently possess.

Yes.

4. Have you had any ethics or grievance filings against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.

No

5. Have you had any malpractice suits against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.

No

6. Please list any client that you currently represent that could cause a potential conflict of interest with the City of North Port, Florida. If applicable, please describe how you would resolve any current or future potential conflicts of interest.

There are no clients or cases that would pose a conflict with the City of North Port. While it is difficult to imagine that a conflict would occur, should a conflict arise in the future, I would disclose the conflict immediately and recuse myself from any conflicted matters to maintain the highest ethical standard.

7. Have you or your firm represented any client in the past 10 years against the City of North Port, Florida or one of its employees? If so, please describe in detail.

No

8. Please describe any experience you may have in Land Use, Planning & Zoning, Economic Development Agreements, Procurement, Contracts, Environmental Permitting, Easements & Eminent Domain, Public Records, Ordinance Drafting, Interlocal Agreements, and Florida Local Government Law.

Representation of the Planning and Zoning Department and the Local Planning Agency are essential parts of my current responsibilities. I draft and approve amendments to the Land Development Code and advise as to proposed changes to address growth and legislative changes.

Oversight of the Procurement Process is a regular part of my duties. I review and approve solicitation documents, awards and disputes up to and including litigation. I have been involved in litigation regarding a contract and debarment dispute in Highlands County. My background in construction law and litigation is instructive in these matters.

Much of my day-to-day activity is drafting, approving and negotiating contracts, including large complex matters and interlocal agreements with municipalities and districts within the County.

Due to the nature of the riverfront County I currently represent, I have become familiar with environmental permitting issues and compliance.

I am knowledgeable of the requirements of Florida Statutes Chapters 73 and 74 pertaining to Eminent Domain, as well as regulatory takings issues under the United States and Florida Constitution and the Bert Harris Act.

Reviewing public records requests and responses is routine. Compliance with Florida's Sunshine Law is an essential aspect of my department.

I represent the canvassing board and have regularly attended canvassing board meetings to provide guidance where needed.

If you consider my time as a law clerk with Collier County, I have five years of exclusive experience in government law.

9. If selected as the next City Attorney for North Port, what do you believe will be your greatest challenges as you move into the position?

The biggest challenge for a City Attorney is to effectively support the objectives of the City Commission, and providing sound legal advice, along with understanding the unique, and nuanced relationship of an elected body conducting business in the sunshine.

10. Describe your philosophy regarding the role the City Attorney plays with the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, the senior leadership of the City, and the various standing Boards & Commissions.

The City Attorney should act as a key advisor, providing sound legal advice to the City Commissioners, the City Administrator and City Departments. The role requires ensuring legal compliance, facilitating informed decision-making and supporting the governance process with integrity and transparency.

11. Tell us about the volume of work you currently manage on a regular basis and how varied your responsibilities may be. If you are presently in private practice, how many clients do you currently service?

I am the only attorney for Hendry County. All legal matters pass through my office. I manage the many facets of the position by staying highly organized and prioritizing the more urgent matters. I handle everything from drafting, and negotiating contracts, to Human Resource matters, Union matters, Code Enforcement and Code Enforcement Lien Foreclosures, Land Use, and directing outside counsel on litigation cases.

12. How do you keep up to date on state and federal legislation, and how would you communicate changes in legislation and other legal questions related to administrative and operational issues with both the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, and staff of the City of North Port?

My active participation in the Florida Association of County Attorneys and my appointment to the Florida Bar's Government Advocacy Committee keep me aware of legislative proposals and changes affecting Local Governments. I would become active in the Florida League of Cities through the Florida Municipal Attorneys Association. I would communicate these proposals and changes through regular briefings, written updates and engaging staff to address proposed legislation with the legislative delegation prior to its enactment.

13. Please describe your experience of working in or for a fast-paced growth community. What do you believe are the unique challenges the City Attorney's Office will likely face in such an environment?

Growth and Development management is a crucial part of City Government law. It requires a thoughtful approach to manage rapid development, while ensuring regulatory compliance and balancing public interest with private sector growth and addressing increased demand for service and infrastructure.

14. Describe the most complex or controversial lawsuit or open records request you have been involved with and the outcome.

I represented an individual client in a federal lawsuit against Bank of America and three credit reporting agencies for breach of contract and violations of state and federal law. The negotiated resolution was a great outcome for my client and vindicated her consumer rights.

I recently achieved a negotiated settlement on a land use matter involving one of the larger landowners in Florida.

15. Do you take the time to educate a Board of Directors/Governing Body, Departmental Staff, or members of a Board/Commission about the legal implications and circumstances when asked to provide your legal opinion on a matter? If so, how do you accomplish that?

Yes. I believe it is the City Attorney's responsibility to advise the Commission of matters which may have adverse legal consequences. I would prefer to communicate these concerns outside of a public meeting. But, if needed I could communicate the concerns in the sunshine without adding to the potential legal exposure. Because of my career before becoming an attorney, I have the ability to convey complex legal matters in layman's terms that non-lawyers can relate to and understand.

16. The City Attorney's Office consists of eight full-time employees, including the City Attorney, Deputy City Attorney, two Assistant City Attorneys, the Police Legal Advisor, two Paralegals, and one Business Services Coordinator. How comfortable are you in working in a smaller department where it is expected that you will largely undertake your own legal research, draft documents, and working collaboratively with a small office team?

In my current position, I conduct my own legal research, and draft contracts, ordinances and resolutions. I have lead smaller legal teams such as the consumer law division of Alliance Legal Group and in my non-legal career, I managed as many as two hundred employees and manager.

17. Tell us about your experience in managing outside legal counsel with litigation, risk management cases, and other specialized matters.

18. Describe your management style in five bullet points of five words or less for each bullet point.

- **Decisive**

- **Transparent**
- **Collaborative**
- **Strategic**
- **Supportive**

19. When we conduct a comprehensive background investigation and reference checks, what will we find that may warrant explanation or that could be of concern to the City of North Port?

There are no concerns in my background that would be of issue to a future employer.

20. Are you currently involved in any other employment searches and if so, what is your status and associated timetables involved in those searches?

Not Presently

21. What will we find in an Internet search of press coverage that may be controversial or of concern to the City of North Port? Please provide whatever explanation you think is appropriate to help us understand what we will find.

There is nothing that you would find in an internet search or press coverage that would adversely affect my candidacy.

22. Please provide your desired compensation range and related benefit package if you are ultimately selected as the final candidate for this position. If you are selected and offered an acceptable compensation and benefits package, what concerns or hesitations do you have that would have to be resolved before you would be ready to accept the position? How soon would you be available to start work following the negotiation and acceptance of a final package?

My current compensation package includes a base salary, health benefits, FRS Senior Management Service class pension benefits and automobile allowance. My desired compensation for the position is within the range provided. My contract requires that I provide a thirty (30) day notice to my current employer.

23. What are the three most important questions you have for the North Port Mayor & City Commission as part of your consideration of the City Attorney position?

- 1. What are the Commission's goals and priorities for the City Attorney's Office for the next five years?**
- 2. How does the Commission envision the role of the City Attorney in advancing the city's strategic initiatives?**
- 3. How can the City Attorney's Office better support the City Administrator and City Departments to improve efficiency and implement government objectives?**

JENNIFER MANTONI



JENNIFER MANTONI

1829 Pepper Grass Drive • North Port, Florida 34289 • (C) (301) 641-0452 •
jlm@mantonilegal.com

COVER LETTER

June 29, 2025

Via Online Application Submission

Re: Application for City Attorney Opportunity - North Port, Florida

Dear Doug Thomas:

In response to your June 18, 2025 email, please accept my application for the City Attorney opportunity for the City of North Port, Florida. I am confident that the City Attorney position aligns perfectly with my professional aspirations and that my background qualifies me for this role.

My legal career has focused on civil litigation matters that directly impact community members, which uniquely qualifies me for this position. I have eleven years of general civil litigation experience throughout Florida, predominantly in Sarasota and Charlotte counties. This experience has allowed me to handle all aspects of litigation, with a specialization in real estate and land use, construction litigation, and all facets of commercial and residential landlord/tenant law.

In addition to my law degree, I hold an M.A. and B.A. in philosophy—a discipline that cultivates ethics, strong communication, collaboration, writing, and analytical skills. As a result of my educational background in philosophy and law, combined with my professional experience as a civil litigation attorney, I have a refined ability to facilitate creative approaches to achieve targeted objectives. I thrive in both external and internal working relationships and can succeed independently as well as a member of a cohesive organization.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,



Jennifer Mantoni, Esq.

JENNIFER MANTONI

1829 Pepper Grass Drive • North Port, Florida 34289 • (C) (301) 641-0452 • jlm@mantonilegal.com

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Florida licensed attorney with 11 years of civil litigation experience, specializing in real estate, land use, construction, commercial and residential landlord/tenant litigation. My commitment to the City of North Port, both personally and professionally, drives my desire to transition my experience and leadership into the public sector. Throughout my career as an employee and business owner, I have consistently succeeded due to my attention to detail, ability to synthesize complex information, natural leadership skills, and dedication to team success. I am adept at thriving in environments that demand both independent, decisive action and effective collaboration within a cohesive team. I am also known for being self-motivated, ethical, reliable, dedicated, efficient, detail-oriented, and hardworking. I am confident that my skills and experience align perfectly with the requirements of the City Attorney role.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

MANTONI LEGAL, P.A., Managing Attorney, Owner Port Charlotte, Florida
Real Estate / Construction / General Civil Litigation Lead Attorney December 2017 – Present

Establish the law firm's legal structure and organizational objectives. Develop, manage, and make decisions for the firm. Cultivate and maintain a positive reputation for the firm. Evaluate and facilitate legal compliance, financial planning and strategy, implement decision-making, customer focus, build relationships and manage profitability. Full-time practice as lead civil litigation counsel.

KEVIN JURSKINSKI AND ASSOCIATES, P.A. Ft. Myers, Florida
Civil Litigation Attorney August 2017 – December 2017

Take and defend depositions, draft pleadings, motions, argue substantive and dispositive motions in court, handle all aspects of discovery, prepare settlement agreements, engage in settlement negotiations and attend mediations. Manage and direct case strategies in compliance with proper internal (operational) and external (legal) procedures. Manage case files in accordance with Florida law and other legal/administrative procedures. Research legal concepts and develop innovative case strategies and case plans for complex litigation files. Outline short-term and long-term case objectives and monitor the progress of the files. Maintain high-quality work and efficient performance.

BECKER AND POLIAKOFF, P.A. Ft. Myers, Florida
Construction Litigation Attorney June 2016 – August 2017

Manage and lead initiatives on complex legal files. Prepare complex, multi-party construction defect cases for trial, mediation and arbitration. Perform extensive document review, prepare and effectuate discovery plans. Manage all phases of litigation, including draft motions/pleadings, argue motions in court, handle all aspects of discovery, engage in settlement negotiations and attend mediations. Conduct research, apply knowledge of laws and provide guidance on how to proceed with cases. Analyze applicable federal and state statutes along with case law and other legal precedent to determine strengths and weaknesses of cases. Review state statutes and case law to determine best approaches in attaining a judgment in court and to best counter legal arguments.

MARTIN AEQUITAS, P.A. Tampa, Florida
Litigation / Managing Attorney September 2014 – January 2016

Promoted to managing associate after a few months of joining the firm. Supervise legal assistants, plan work assignments, administer tasks and workload, direct case management responsibilities in a high volume, fast-paced environment, and manage the day-to-day operations of the firm. Assist employees in prioritizing workloads. Manage and direct case strategies by delegating tasks to paralegals and support staff. Outline short-term and long-term case objectives and monitor the progress of the files. Maintain high-quality work and

performance. Proofread and revise the work of paralegals and support staff to ensure compliance with statutory, regulatory, and procedural requirements. Counsel and instruct employees on work and administrative matters. Answer operational and procedural questions for clients and staff. Recommend proper employee placement and provide guidance on employee development.

CERTIFICATIONS / LICENSES

FLORIDA LICENSED ATTORNEY Member in Good Standing	Florida State Courts October 2014 – Present
MARYLAND LICENSED ATTORNEY Member in Good Standing	Maryland State Courts March 2021 – Present
SUPREME COURT OF FLORIDA CERTIFIED Circuit & County Court Mediator	Florida July 2021 – Present
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY’S OFFICE, MIDDLE DISTRICT Certified Legal Intern	Jacksonville, Florida
STATE ATTORNEY’S OFFICE, FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT Certified Legal Intern	Jacksonville, Florida
STATE OF MARYLAND Courtroom Clerk	Rockville, Maryland

EDUCATION

FLORIDA COASTAL SCHOOL OF LAW Juris Doctor Merit-Based Scholarship, Recipient	Jacksonville, Florida January 2012 – May 2014
FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY Master of Arts, Philosophy G.P.A.: 3.86; National Dean’s List of Scholars; Golden Key Honor Society, Member; Published Thesis	Boca Raton, Florida September 2009 – May 2011
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA Bachelor of Arts, Philosophy, Technical Writing minor	Tampa, Florida September 2003 – May 2007

AWARDS / RELATED LICENSES

- Best of Charlotte Winner 2019
- Super Lawyers Rising Star since 2021
- AVVO Client’s Choice Award
- Certified Who’s Who Top Attorney
- 5 Star rated on AVVO
- 4.7 Star rated on Google
- Florida Licensed REALTOR ®

**City Attorney
North Port, Florida
Semifinalist Questionnaire**

Please return to: DelenaFranklin@GovernmentResource.com
Due NLT Sunday, July 20, 2025 @ 11:00 PM Central Time

Full Name (first, middle, last): JENNIFER LYNN MANTONI
Maiden Name(s), if any: N/A
Nickname(s), if any: N/A

Cell: (301) 641-0452
Home: Same as cell

Please answer each of the following questions completely and thoroughly.

1. For your last three positions, please list:

Job Title	Organization and Location	Scope of Responsibilities/Services Provided
Managing Attorney, Owner	MANTONI LEGAL, P.A. , Port Charlotte, FL with offices in Ft. Myers, FL and Sarasota, FL	Manage, supervise, and perform all phases of litigation for a general civil practice law firm with specialized focus on real estate, construction, business disputes, as well as commercial and residential landlord/tenant matters. Supervise and monitor progress of Of Counsel attorneys and support staff. Oversee the firm's daily operations by managing all aspects of the firm's finances, business development, and client relations. Maintain knowledge of and compliance with new laws and changing legislation.
Civil Litigation Attorney	KEVIN JURINSKI AND ASSOCIATES, P.A. , Ft. Myers, FL	Take and defend depositions, draft pleadings, motions, argue substantive and dispositive motions in court, handle all aspects of discovery, prepare settlement agreements, engage in settlement negotiations and attend mediations. Manage and direct case strategies in compliance with proper internal (operational) and external (legal) procedures. Manage case files in accordance with Florida law and other legal/administrative procedures. Research legal concepts and develop innovative case strategies and case plans for complex litigation files. Outline short-term and long-term case objectives and monitor the progress of the files. Maintain high-quality work and efficient performance.
Construction Litigation	BECKER AND POLIAKOFF,	Manage and lead initiatives on complex legal files. Prepare complex, multi-party construction defect cases

Attorney	P.A., Ft. Myers, FL	for trial, mediation and arbitration. Perform extensive document review, prepare and effectuate discovery plans. Manage all phases of litigation, including draft motions/pleadings, argue motions in court, handle all aspects of discovery, engage in settlement negotiations and attend mediations. Conduct research, apply knowledge of laws and provide guidance on how to proceed with cases. Analyze applicable federal and state statutes along with case law and other legal precedent to determine strengths and weaknesses of cases. Review state statutes and case law to determine best approaches in attaining a judgment in court and to best counter legal arguments.
----------	---------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

2. Please describe why you left your last three positions. Additionally, are there any gaps in excess of two weeks in your employment history including any short-term (i.e., approximately 1-year or less) posts that may have occurred in your career? If so, please explain in detail.

Mantoni Legal, P.A. is currently fully operational and I continue to serve as its owner/lead attorney since 2017.

I resigned from Kevin Jursinski and Associates, P.A., due to personal reasons; specifically, my then-husband, who was 100% disabled, was experiencing unexpected and unique struggles that required me to work closer to home in Port Charlotte, FL. I resigned from that position after approximately four months. To my knowledge, the firm was understanding of my situation, and we have since mutually referred cases and clients to each other. I am no longer married.

I resigned from Becker and Poliakoff, P.A. and went to Kevin Jursinski and Associates, P.A., to gain more hands-on courtroom experience within a mid-size law firm environment. At Becker & Poliakoff, P.A., I had the opportunity to work on highly complex construction litigation matters. This experience provided me with extensive knowledge of procedural aspects related to multifaceted legal issues. However, I was eager to gain more practical, day-to-day litigation experience in the courtroom. Additionally, a significant litigation matter, primarily handled by the Fort Lauderdale office, required my involvement due to my strong performance. While this was a compliment to my work, the frequent travel between Fort Myers (my residence) and Fort Lauderdale, combined with the personal financial burden of travel expenses due to salary constraints, made it difficult for me to continue.

3. Do you currently possess an active Florida Bar license? If so, please attach a copy of your credentials. Also, include any special credentials or Board Certifications you may currently possess.

Yes. Attached.

4. Have you had any ethics or grievance filings against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.

No.

5. Have you had any malpractice suits against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.

No.

6. Please list any client that you currently represent that could cause a potential conflict of interest with the City of North Port, Florida. If applicable, please describe how you would resolve any current or future potential conflicts of interest.

None to my knowledge.

7. Have you or your firm represented any client in the past 10 years against the City of North Port, Florida or one of its employees? If so, please describe in detail.

I represented a client in an appeal of a trespass warning issued by the City of North Port police department before a hearing officer. The issue presented was whether the trespass warning was properly issued. I argued that it was not. I prevailed and the trespass warning was dismissed. This occurred in 2022.

8. Please describe any experience you may have in Land Use, Planning & Zoning, Economic Development Agreements, Procurement, Contracts, Environmental Permitting, Easements & Eminent Domain, Public Records, Ordinance Drafting, Interlocal Agreements, and Florida Local Government Law.

I have experience dealing in a variety of real estate related matters from a transactional and litigation standpoint. I have regularly dealt with boundary disputes and worked with local surveyors and related experts to determine property rights. I've dealt with adverse possession claims and often refer to the public records and official records to locate and review documents relevant to a particular matter. I've also trained staff on making public records requests and conducting records requests.

I have strong contacts with attorneys who specialize in land use, planning and zoning matters and have conferred with them on a variety of issues. I routinely draft contracts

on a variety of matters consisting of real estate, procurement, business, leasing, development, as well as commercial and residential construction matters, to name a few.

I represent mobile home park owners throughout the state of Florida and private parties with real estate portfolios. For that reason have represented clients in administrative hearings and in code violation disputes in numerous counties throughout the State.

Further, I have handled disputes between home owners and home owner associations regarding compliance with and potential violations of development orders due to improper use of drainage easements and conservative easements, non-compliance with environmental resource permits, and the like. I've also dealt with the Southwest Florida Water Management District on multiple different matters.

9. If selected as the next City Attorney for North Port, what do you believe will be your greatest challenges as you move into the position?

Transitioning away from my paralegal with whom I respect and admire greatly and ensuring that she has an adequate transition plan.

10. Describe your philosophy regarding the role the City Attorney plays with the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, the senior leadership of the City, and the various standing Boards & Commissions.

Be involved, listen, and conduct your own due diligence. Be decisive but informed. Work as a unit, an effective team – a unified objective is the ideal. But, even in the face of opposing opinions and/or directives, recognize the importance of knowing when to follow and knowing when to lead and always stay compliant with whatever controlling authority is at play.

11. Tell us about the volume of work you currently manage on a regular basis and how varied your responsibilities may be. If you are presently in private practice, how many clients do you currently service?

I currently service approximately 65 clients, many of whom have multiple ongoing matters. This is the workload on a regular basis. These matters span various phases. Some are in pre-litigation, others are non-litigation transactional matters, many are actively being litigated, and some are post-judgment.

Focusing on the cases themselves, my responsibilities are extremely varied. My role requires a comprehensive understanding of each case's current status and projected trajectory. This allows me to effectively manage the procedural flow of all cases, ensuring that deadlines are met and expectations are consistently achieved.

Beyond case management, my responsibilities are even further varied, because my responsibilities extend to ensuring the firm's profitability, managing expenses and salaries, overseeing the budget, and monitoring staff performance. Each of these tasks requires significant attention and expertise.

I effectively manage and integrate these diverse responsibilities, which has resulted in a high client satisfaction rating, a strong client base, and consistent year-over-year profitability growth for the firm.

12. How do you keep up to date on state and federal legislation, and how would you communicate changes in legislation and other legal questions related to administrative and operational issues with both the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, and staff of the City of North Port?

I keep up to date on state and federal legislation by attending meetings, conducting research, engaging in continuing education, and by making an effort to stay informed.

I would communicate changes by engaging in briefings by way of short memorandums combined, as needed, with explanatory meetings which are effective methods to simplify complex matters into manageable parts. Using those meetings as an opportunity to provide real world examples of how the changes could impact current policies/regulations or future decisions is an effective tool.

13. Please describe your experience of working in or for a fast-paced growth community. What do you believe are the unique challenges the City Attorney's Office will likely face in such an environment?

I grew up in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, and I've lived in Tampa, Ft. Lauderdale, Jacksonville, Ft. Myers, Port Charlotte and, most recently, North Port, Florida. I've moved throughout Florida to challenge myself by pursuing multiple higher level degrees, and also gaining experience in the work force. I obtained my B.A in Tampa at USF, my M.A. in Ft. Lauderdale at FAU, and my J.D. in Jacksonville at FCSL. After law school, I worked at several law firms (including my own) along the West coast of Florida, planting roots in the North Port area with my daughter.

I've thrived academically and professionally in fast paced cultures and communities and such an environment does not intimidate or overwhelm me. As a private practice lawyer for over a decade, I'm constantly balancing the demands of dozens of people and hundreds of tasks at any given moment. I'm accustomed to fast paced high demand environments and can do so calmly, efficiently, and with precision.

I think a unique challenge the City Attorney's Office will have to face in such an environment is going to be serving as an active participant in the City's growth by implementing and enforcing rules/regulations that are not overly restrictive, but also ensuring that the community is not suffering as a result. For example, as construction companies receive higher demands for projects, they leverage down work, but doing so improperly, can result in unlicensed contracting which I've seen irreparably harm members of the community.

In my opinion, controlled growth is important to maintain quality. That is a central principle of my law firm. People appreciate honest projections, targeted objectives, and

realistic expectations - you earn trust and confidence that way and by extension loyalty and dedication. All those principles result in growth, financial, economic and otherwise.

14. Describe the most complex or controversial lawsuit or open records request you have been involved with and the outcome.

The majority of my cases are complex and controversial but the conflict is between opposing private parties. The cases we most often do open records requests for involve claims against unlicensed contractors and the work performed by them. I have been involved in such cases and have later seen the contractor against whom I've litigated subject to criminal charges. My involvement usually ends when the economic crimes division is engaged with the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office. Most of my lawsuits involving claims of unlicensed contracting have occurred in Charlotte County, Florida.

15. Do you take the time to educate a Board of Directors/Governing Body, Departmental Staff, or members of a Board/Commission about the legal implications and circumstances when asked to provide your legal opinion on a matter? If so, how do you accomplish that?

On an everyday basis I have direct dialogue with my staff regarding the changes to laws, policies, and regulations that impact our decision making and case strategies. I have a certain client base that prefers to discuss legislative changes that impact the variety of matters I handle on their behalf. I also facilitate conferences with certain realtors and real estate brokerage firms to answer questions they have regarding legislative changes and/or everyday questions they run into.

16. The City Attorney's Office consists of eight full-time employees, including the City Attorney, Deputy City Attorney, two Assistant City Attorneys, the Police Legal Advisor, two Paralegals, and one Business Services Coordinator. How comfortable are you in working in a smaller department where it is expected that you will largely undertake your own legal research, draft documents, and working collaboratively with a small office team?

The environment described is my preference and the professional atmosphere I've been engaged in since becoming an attorney. I find that a closer network and a more hands-on approach keeps people engaged, efficient, informed, and more productive. I regularly conduct my own research, draft my own documents, and am always working collaboratively with my team.

17. Tell us about your experience in managing outside legal counsel with litigation, risk management cases, and other specialized matters.

To better manage the needs of my law firm and client base, I've developed relationships with several Of Counsel attorneys who sometimes assist with research, strategy discussions, and/or drafting of motions/pleadings on complex litigation matters. As part

of this delegation of duties, I oversee and supervise the work to ensure quality is maintained, deadlines are met, and client expectations are satisfied. Provided the complexity and specialized nature of the construction litigation matters I handle, I've also developed relationships with experts of whom I have to consult, delegate and supervise. As part of the consultation work and strategy discussions we are always factoring risk and costs in light of the targeted objective. At times, I have several attorneys, multiple experts, and employees that I'm managing simultaneously. The multifaceted role of performing, managing, and delegating to create an effective team is one of my strong suits.

18. Describe your management style in five bullet points of five words or less for each bullet point.

- Honest
- Hard working
- Attentive to detail
- Decisive
- Fair

19. When we conduct a comprehensive background investigation and reference checks, what will we find that may warrant explanation or that could be of concern to the City of North Port?

You may find an expunged underage drinking charge that occurred, I think, over 20 years ago, while I was in college. Upon applying to law school I had to un-expunge and then re-expunge the record as part of the Florida Bar's background investigation. It was never an issue for the Bar, they simply require you to un-expunge any records.

My former employers, Jursinski and Becker, may not be thrilled that I left after a relatively short time, but with that said, they also would probably be understanding of the reasons why.

20. Are you currently involved in any other employment searches and if so, what is your status and associated timetables involved in those searches?

No.

21. What will we find in an Internet search of press coverage that may be controversial or of concern to the City of North Port? Please provide whatever explanation you think is appropriate to help us understand what we will find.

Nothing.

22. Please provide your desired compensation range and related benefit package if you are ultimately selected as the final candidate for this position. If you are selected and offered an acceptable compensation and benefits package, what concerns or hesitations do you have that would have to be resolved before you would be ready to accept the position? How soon would you be available to start work following the negotiation and acceptance of a final package?

I would require the highest salary and benefits package offered.

We would need to discuss and agree on a transition plan from my private practice to the new role as the City Attorney and establish a time-frame for the transition that would be fair to my clients and paralegal. Depending on the available options to transition, I could see a complete transition occur within approximately two months. This is my main concern, and the approximate availability to start following acceptance. I believe a quicker transition would be possible but the details would need to be discussed.

23. What are the three most important questions you have for the North Port Mayor & City Commission as part of your consideration of the City Attorney position?

- a) What are the realities of a work life balance given the demands of the position?
- b) What are the expectations to be involved in social media, if any?
- c) What did the prior City Attorney or Interim City Attorney dislike most about the position?



The Florida Bar

651 East Jefferson Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2300

Joshua E. Doyle
Executive Director

850/561-5600
www.FLORIDABAR.org

State of Florida)
County of Leon)

In Re: 0113342
Jennifer Lynn Mantoni
Mantoni Legal, P.A.
18245 Paulson Dr
Port Charlotte, FL 33954-1019

I CERTIFY THE FOLLOWING:

I am the custodian of membership records of The Florida Bar.

Membership records of The Florida Bar indicate that The Florida Bar member listed above was admitted to practice law in the state of Florida on **October 8, 2014**.

The Florida Bar member above is an active member in good standing of The Florida Bar who is eligible to practice law in the state of Florida.

Dated this 20th day of **July, 2025**.

Cynthia B. Jackson, CFO
Administration Division
The Florida Bar

PG:R10
CTM-358261



Supreme Court of Maryland

Annapolis, MD



CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING

STATE OF MARYLAND, ss:

I, Gregory Hilton, Clerk of the Supreme Court of Maryland, do hereby certify that on the twenty-sixth day of March, 2021,

Jennifer Lynn Mantoni

having first taken and subscribed the oath prescribed by the Constitution and Laws of this State, was admitted as an attorney of said Court, is now in good standing, and as such is entitled to practice law in any of the Courts of said State, subject to the Rules of Court. This certificate of good standing is valid through the eighteenth day of September, 2025.



In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand as Clerk, and affixed the Seal of the Supreme Court of Maryland, this twentieth day of July, 2025.

Gregory Hilton

Clerk of the Supreme Court of Maryland



Jennifer Mantoni <jlm@mantonilegal.com>

Mediator Renewal Approved

1 message

Dawn Burlison <BurlisoD@flcourts.org>
To: "jlm@mantonilegal.com" <jlm@mantonilegal.com>

Mon, Jul 24, 2023 at 3:28 PM

Dispute Resolution Center



CERTIFICATE OF RENEWAL

JENNIFER LYNN MANTONI

This verifies that the above named individual
has been renewed as a Certified County and Circuit Mediator
to 7/2/2025.

Certificate No: 39634 CR

JOHN ANASTASIO



John J. Anastasio
Counselor-At-Law

E-mail: John@psllaw.net

If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we should find in each man's life, sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility.

- Longfellow

19 June 2025

Doug Thomas

Executive Vice President
Strategic Government Resources
DouglasThomas@GovernmentResource.com

**Re: North Port City Attorney
Job Number: 201401847**

Dear Mr. Thomas and Members of the Selection Committee:

I write to express my interest in serving as the next City Attorney for North Port. As a career municipal attorney with over four decades of experience advising elected officials, navigating high-stakes litigation, and shaping legal operations for cities experiencing rapid growth, I offer the depth of perspective and steadiness of leadership that aligns with North Port's values, priorities, and strategic direction.

Throughout my career, I have consistently served at the intersection of law, governance, and public service. I have defended city officials in complex Sunshine Law and First Amendment litigation, authored operational blueprints for municipal legal offices, and represented cities and agencies in matters involving land use, procurement, code enforcement, and economic development. I understand what it means to counsel a governing body not just with legal accuracy but with political awareness and institutional insight. That awareness extends to fostering unity, empowering staff, and maintaining public trust—principles that clearly guide the North Port Commission.

My experience spans service as personal counsel to a mayor during city-wide legal challenges, as special prosecutor in police misconduct cases, and as municipal attorney to several cities and authorities. I am comfortable managing large legal teams or serving as the lone advisor. I bring a philosophy of transparent communication and collaborative engagement, which I believe is essential for working constructively with your Commission, Manager, and department leadership.

What draws me to North Port is not only its accelerated growth and the complexity that accompanies it, but also the spirit of innovation and integrity reflected in your Strategic Vision Plan. The City's commitment to proactive governance, fiscal clarity, and environmental resilience mirrors the type of legal framework I have spent my

Page 2

19 June 2025

Doug Thomas and Members of the Selection Committee

RE: North Port City Attorney

career developing and defending. From land use easements and impact fee disputes to public-private utility transfers and Charter-level counsel, I have led legal strategies that anticipate growth while protecting public interests.

I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you further about the ways I can contribute to North Port's continued success. Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cordially,

John J. Anastasio

Enclosed:

Resume

JOHN J. ANASTASIO

john@psllaw.net

SUMMARY

Seasoned Municipal Attorney with 40+ Years of Legal Service to Government.

Strategic legal advisor with more than four decades of experience representing cities, elected officials, agencies, and boards across all facets of local government law. Skilled in litigation, policy drafting, governance counsel, and operational legal planning. Extensive experience in land use, code enforcement, Sunshine Law, employee discipline, procurement, and intergovernmental coordination.

Municipal & Administrative Law

- Code drafting, ordinance enforcement, quasi-judicial hearings, annexation law, Charter officer legal issues

Land Use, Planning & Growth Management

- Development agreements, zoning approvals, impact fees, interlocal utility dedications, conservation easements

Governance & Public Integrity

- Sunshine Law, ethics and voting conflicts, public records litigation, First Amendment issues, Board counsel

Labor & Employment Law

- Ch. 112 discipline, labor arbitration, PERC proceedings, ADA, FMLA, OSHA, grievance hearings

Litigation & Risk Management

- Section 1983, defamation, tort claims, public records litigation, law enforcement discipline, federal appeals

Strategic Legal Operations

- Legal department startup plans, regulatory frameworks, multi-million dollar settlements, emergency management

EXPERIENCE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LAW EXPERIENCES:

CEO, Law Offices of John J. Anastasio

Delivered comprehensive legal counsel to city officials, employees, and agencies, covering legislative, contractual, regulatory, and litigation matters. Focused on local government law with an emphasis on cost-effective solutions and risk management in

high-growth environments. Key achievements and responsibilities include:

- Collaborated with municipal leadership to resolve complex land use, code enforcement, and employment matters using innovative litigation and negotiation strategies tailored to public priorities.
- Resolved real property and contract disputes through arbitration, mediation, and negotiated settlements in partnership with city attorneys and public manager.
- Advised elected officials on sensitive public interest issues, including regulation of sober homes and animal control ordinances, balancing legal mandates with political and community consideration.

Counsel to the Honorable Joann Faiella

Mayor, City of Port Saint Lucie

Commissioner, Saint Lucie Fire District

Served as daily counsel to the Mayor and Fire Commissioner, providing legal guidance on zoning, redevelopment, Sunshine Law compliance, and public records obligations.

- Provided counsel on labor discipline, quasi-judicial zoning hearings, and controversial land use matters involving group homes and community opposition.
- Defended Mayor in public records and Sunshine Law litigation, achieving full dismissal of all claims through effective pretrial strategy.
- Managed legal issues relating to facilities siting, procurement contracts, software licensing, and ethics compliance for both the City and Fire District.

Municipal Attorney's Office

Young Dorsey & Fisher

Represented five municipalities and a municipal utilities authority as lead attorney under Senator John Dorsey. Served as Special Counsel to Parsippany on labor and employment matters.

- Delivered legal advice during public meetings and represented municipalities in matters involving zoning, redevelopment, police discipline, eminent domain, utility rate setting, and tax appeals.
- Drafted ordinances and resolutions and ensured compliance with public records and open meetings laws.
- Advised on construction disputes, labor law, public employment issues, and affordable housing litigation.

Attorney for the statutory Mount Arlington, Municipal Investigating Committee

Directed a statutory police department investigation for the Mount Arlington governing body. Developed procedures for confidential hearings, drafted formal charges, and ensured compliance with statutory due process requirements.

Special Prosecutor for Mount Arlington

Prosecuted municipal code violations against the Police Chief and two officers, securing disciplinary outcomes through evidentiary hearings and administrative findings.

Authority Attorney for the Dover Housing Authority

Served as legal counsel to the Dover Housing Authority, managing Section 8, affordable housing programs, and associated liability and regulatory compliance issues.

New Jersey Superior Court - Eminent Domaine Commissioner

Appointed by the Superior Court as an Eminent Domain Commissioner to determine just compensation in condemnation proceedings through legal and valuation analysis.

SELECTED LEGAL ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Represented clients in over 100 appellate matters before state and federal courts, resulting in multiple published opinions across constitutional law, local government discipline, and real property foreclosure.
- Successfully defended elected officials in high-profile public records and Sunshine Law litigation, including full dismissal of all claims against a sitting mayor.
- Authored operational blueprints for city attorney and general counsel offices in Florida municipalities and colleges, including Delray Beach, Indiantown, and Indian River State College.
- Directed an administrative rule challenge before the Florida Division of Administrative Hearings that led to the statewide revision of public records retention procedures.
- Prosecuted law enforcement misconduct as a special municipal prosecutor, handling statutory investigative proceedings through disciplinary outcomes.
- Appointed as Guardian ad Litem in a multi-million-dollar child settlement case, resulting in a court-ordered \$250,000 reduction in attorney fees to protect the minor's interest.

- Drafted interlocal agreements, development conditions, and impact fee policies for growth-focused municipalities navigating rapid expansion and land dedication disputes.
- Filed a petition for Writ of Certiorari to the United States Supreme Court and served as a member of the Florida Supreme Court's E-service Committee.

SKILLS & CORE COMPETENCIES

Legal Domains

Municipal & Administrative Law

- Code drafting, ordinance enforcement, Charter compliance, interlocal agreements
- Public records and Sunshine Law interpretation and litigation
- Quasi-judicial proceedings and regulatory compliance

Land Use, Growth & Infrastructure

- Development agreements, zoning approvals, annexation law
- Impact fees, utility dedications, conservation easements, site selection
- Coordination with planners and engineers in high-growth cities

Public Integrity & Governance

- Board counsel and executive legal advisory
- Ethics and voting conflicts, First Amendment litigation
- Policy development, governmental transparency, emergency management

Labor & Employment Law

- Chapter 112 discipline, PERC proceedings, collective bargaining
- ADA, FMLA, FLSA, EEOC, OSHA, HIPAA compliance
- Grievance resolution and arbitration

Litigation & Appellate Practice

- Section 1983 claims, defamation, civil rights, eminent domain
- Administrative law hearings, appellate advocacy
- Sunshine Law defense, public official representation

Strategic Legal Operations

- Legal department startup planning
- Operational policy frameworks and blueprint authorship
- Emergency management (Stafford Act), crisis law response

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor, Seton Hall University

Bachelor of Arts in Government with a minor in Labor Relations, Seton Hall University

Master of Public Administration Program (discontinued), New York University

Board Certification (planned) – City, County & Local Government Law

PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT & RECOGNITION

- **Florida Bar Leadership**
Traffic Rules Committee (Chair, multiple terms)
Rules of Judicial Administration Committee
Member, City, County & Local Government Law Section
Member, Environmental & Land Use Section
- **Pro Bono & Public Service**
Multiple awards – Florida Rural Legal Services
Statewide pro bono nominee
- **Policy & Technical Affiliations**
Military Operations Research Society (MORS)
Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)
Supreme Court E-Service Committee – Former Member
Saint Lucie County Republican Executive Committee

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Florida Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit
- United States Supreme Court
- Middle, Northern, and Southern Federal District Courts in Florida
- U.S. Court Southern District of Florida (Member of Arbitrator Panel)

**City Attorney
North Port, Florida
Semifinalist Questionnaire**

Please return to: DelenaFranklin@GovernmentResource.com
Due NLT Sunday, July 20, 2025 @ 11:00 PM Central Time

Full Name (first, middle, last): John J. Anastasio
Maiden Name(s), if any: N/A
Nickname(s), if any: N/A

Cell: [REDACTED]
Office: [REDACTED]

Please answer each of the following questions completely and thoroughly.

1. For your last three positions, please list:
N/A. In private practice.
2. Please describe why you left your last three positions. Additionally, are there any gaps in excess of two weeks in your employment history including any short-term (i.e., approximately 1-year or less) posts that may have occurred in your career? If so, please explain in detail.
N/A. But, the reason I am migrating from private practice to government service is for both a change, and to make a difference by employing my experience in the service of local government.
3. Do you currently possess an active Florida Bar license? If so, please attach a copy of your credentials. Also, include any special credentials or Board Certifications you may currently possess.
Yes. Florida Bar # 0722367. (See Florida Bar Lawyer Directory for verification.)
4. Have you had any ethics or grievance filings against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.
Yes. Several Bar grievances in the 1990s.
5. Have you had any malpractice suits against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.
1989 in a bankruptcy matter. Went to trial, with a jury verdict in my favor.
6. Please list any client that you currently represent that could cause a potential conflict of interest with the City of North Port, Florida. If applicable, please describe how you would resolve any current or future potential conflicts of interest.
None.

7. Have you or your firm represented any client in the past 10 years against the City of North Port, Florida or one of its employees? If so, please describe in detail.

No.

8. Please describe any experience you may have in Land Use, Planning & Zoning, Economic Development Agreements, Procurement, Contracts, Environmental Permitting, Easements & Eminent Domain, Public Records, Ordinance Drafting, Interlocal Agreements, and Florida Local Government Law.

Experience in all the above over the last several decades.

9. If selected as the next City Attorney for North Port, what do you believe will be your greatest challenges as you move into the position?

1) Rapidly establishing trust with the governing body. 2) Top-down review of the City Charter, Ordinances, land development regulations, and City Policies and Procedures. 3) Developing relations with City Staff. 4) Establishing a Contract Lifecycle Management System for the City. 5) Establishing City Attorney Office legal operations, that are aligned with the City's Strategic Plan, and governing body priorities.

10. Describe your philosophy regarding the role the City Attorney plays with the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, the senior leadership of the City, and the various standing Boards & Commissions.

The City Attorney's primary service is to that of the governing body. Acting as a trusted advisor both to the governing body as a whole, and to each governing body member. In the case of a conflict between governing body members, to provide support for everyone, while mediating differences, acting as the grease that keeps the governing body members working together, to the maximum extent possible. As to City staff, Boards and Committees, the City Attorney should first and foremost be a teacher, continuously educating to prevent legal problems from arising. A City Attorney should be constantly horizon scanning the City's legal and political environment, to anticipate problems, and advise staff, Committees and Boards, to prevent problems.

11. Tell us about the volume of work you currently manage on a regular basis and how varied your responsibilities may be. If you are presently in private practice, how many clients do you currently service?

My client base has ranged from a high of 200 to the current low of about 20 clients. The reduction is in preparation for shifting to government service.

12. How do you keep up to date on state and federal legislation, and how would you communicate changes in legislation and other legal questions related to administrative and operational issues with both the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, and staff of the City of North Port?

My legal research, and legislative and administrative law updates, has for years been computerized, and AI driven, providing real time updates. In addition, I receive and read daily case updates from the Florida Supreme Court, the United State Supreme Court, and the United States Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals

13. Please describe your experience of working in or for a fast-paced growth community. What do you believe are the unique challenges the City Attorney's Office will likely face in such an environment?

I was involved with the representation of the Mayor of the City of Port Saint Lucie, which has had its population quadruple in the last 30 years. (60,000 to 250,000) In a fast paced-growth environment, the primary challenge is to be true to the City's Strategic Plan, governing body priorities, and the intent of the Comprehensive Plan. New and shiny projects should be consistent with the foregoing, not an exception. The city Attorney should be constantly and diplomatically reminding the governing body, staff, citizens and developers, that their plans should be aligned with the foregoing.

14. Describe the most complex or controversial lawsuit or open records request you have been involved with and the outcome.

I invalidated the entire public records retention system for the State of Florida, resulting readoption of the entire system.

15. Do you take the time to educate a Board of Directors/Governing Body, Departmental Staff, or members of a Board/Commission about the legal implications and circumstances when asked to provide your legal opinion on a matter? If so, how do you accomplish that?

No. Education of the governing body and staff is an ongoing process, part of core competencies in Legal Operations, before an issue arises. As to individual issue education, the City Attorney should be preparing each governing body member for each meeting and each issue ahead of time, so that each member feels confident and competent to address the legal issues before them. It should be rare that the City Attorney has to be asked a question at a meeting, if they have done their job.

16. The City Attorney's Office consists of eight full-time employees, including the City Attorney, Deputy City Attorney, two Assistant City Attorneys, the Police Legal Advisor, two Paralegals, and one Business Services Coordinator. How comfortable are you in working in a smaller department where it is expected that you will largely undertake your own legal research, draft documents, and working collaboratively with a small office team?

I have always enjoyed doing legal research and document drafting, as much as I enjoy standing before a jury or an appellate panel. The City Attorney's office is not eight full time employees. It is a team. Everyone should be aligned and pulling the work forward together, including the City Attorney. A leader should not lead from behind, not leave from the front, but lead from the side moving with their team.

17. Tell us about your experience in managing outside legal counsel with litigation, risk management cases, and other specialized matters.

I have had experience in the management of outside counsel in various types of litigations. There are three primary goals in the legal operations core competency of outside counsel management. 1) Control of legal spending. 2) Providing a clear and continuous monitoring of matters, to ensure the City Attorney/governing body original intent is being accomplished. 3) In the case of specialized outside counsel, making sure that an Assistant City Attorney is also assigned to the matter, and participates actively. In this way, the City gets the benefit not only of litigation support, but also of further education of City Attorney staff, to reduce future reliance on outside counsel.

18. Describe your management style in five bullet points of five words or less for each bullet point.

Mission command.

- Train, test, trust staff.
- Clearly communicate the commander's intent.
- Let your staff do its job.
- Constant debriefings to learn what works and what does not.
- Learn from mistakes, communicate those lessons throughout the City.

19. When we conduct a comprehensive background investigation and reference checks, what will we find that may warrant explanation or that could be of concern to the City of North Port?

25 year plus old Bar grievances.

20. Are you currently involved in any other employment searches and if so, what is your status and associated timetables involved in those searches?

Yes. Currently pending searches. 60-day timeline. Should not interfere with the interviews for North Port set for August 20, 2025.

21. What will we find in an Internet search of press coverage that may be controversial or of concern to the City of North Port? Please provide whatever explanation you think is appropriate to help us understand what we will find.

Nothing comes to mind.

22. Please provide your desired compensation range and related benefit package if you are ultimately selected as the final candidate for this position. If you are selected and offered an acceptable compensation and benefits package, what concerns or hesitations do you have that would have to be resolved before you would be ready to accept the position? How soon would you be available to start work following the negotiation and acceptance of a final package?

Compensation desired is within the stated range. No concerns as to the package at this time. Can start within 5-10 business days of contract acceptance.

23. What are the three most important questions you have for the North Port Mayor & City Commission as part of your consideration of the City Attorney position?

1. What is the culture within the North Port City government?
2. How does each governing body member treat well grounded legal advice, that may conflict with their personal governmental/political goals and agendas?
3. What does each governing body member want to see in the City Attorney after 12 months, that would make each happy with their selection of me as City Attorney.

KEITH MERRITT



Keith Merritt
Lighthouse Point, FL 33064
merritkp@yahoo.com
+1 863 286 1923
June 26, 2025

Selection Committee
City of North Port
4970 City Hall Boulevard
North Port, FL 34286

Re: Application for City Attorney

Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

I am writing to express my sincere interest in the City Attorney position for the City of North Port. With a Juris Doctor from the University of Florida, active membership in the Florida Bar since 1999, and 25 years of legal practice—both in the private sector and as an elected municipal official—I bring the ethical leadership, strategic vision, and local-government expertise you seek.

As City Commissioner and Mayor Pro Tem for the City of Lakeland (2012–2016), I served as policy advisor to other elected officials, staff, and multiple boards—including Lakeland Electric, the Lakeland Area Mass Transit District, and the Polk County Regional Water Cooperative. In that capacity (and as a practicing lawyer) I regularly review[ed] ordinances, resolutions, interlocal agreements, and procurement contracts; oversaw code enforcement and public-records compliance; and spoke at public hearings and community forums. These hands-on experiences honed my knowledge of land-use and zoning law, Sunshine and public-records statutes, procurement/public-finance rules, and the delicate balance between policy objectives and legal constraints.

In my current role as in-house litigation counsel at Fidelity National Title, I manage a high-volume docket of complex real estate and title disputes for a Fortune 300 company. I oversee outside counsel, develop case strategy, draft pleadings and ordinances, and represent clients in trials and appeals. Previously, I founded and led a civil-litigation firm through Florida's foreclosure crisis—building and mentoring a support staff, managing budgets, and ensuring best-in-class client service. That combination of executive management and courtroom experience parallels the leadership and operational oversight required of your City Attorney.

My approach is grounded in servant-leadership: I listen to stakeholders, act decisively, and deliver clear, practical legal guidance that empowers elected officials and staff to advance

the community's vision. I pride myself on responsiveness, fiscal stewardship, and forging collaborative relationships with colleagues, outside experts, and community partners. Whether addressing complex procurement questions, defending the City in litigation, advising on emergency declarations, or mentoring assistant attorneys, I bring integrity, tact, and a steadfast commitment to public service.

I am inspired by North Port's values-driven mission and look forward to the opportunity to apply my municipal-law background, trial advocacy skills, and management acumen to serve your Commission and residents. Thank you for considering my application. I welcome the chance to discuss how my experience can contribute to North Port's continued success.

Sincerely,
Keith Merritt

Enclosures: Résumé, References Upon Request

Keith Merritt

Lighthouse Point, FL 33064

merritkp@yahoo.com

+1 863 286 1923

25 years experience in Commercial, Consumer, Bankruptcy and Collections. 14 years as small firm owner & manager.

Work Experience

Attorney

Fidelity National Title - Fort Lauderdale, FL

May 2021 to Present

In-house litigation counsel for Fortune 300 Fidelity National Financial family of companies representing property owners, lenders, and insurers. Providing representation, advice, and counsel to Company stakeholders. Clients include the Company's title and life insurance underwriters and insureds and its mortgage technology divisions in litigated matters. Accustomed to independent, aggressive case handling. Superior knowledge and expertise in trial practice and excellent client service. Litigation experience as lead counsel in complex real estate matters.

Consumer Attorney

Merritt Law Office, P.A. - Lakeland, FL

May 2007 to May 2021

Opened Merritt Law Office in 2007 amidst the foreclosure crisis. Recognizing that bankruptcy was a critical area for consumers, focused practice in bankruptcy and consumer litigation such as FDCPA and TILA.

City Commissioner

City of Lakeland - Lakeland, FL

January 2012 to January 2016

Acted as Commissioner and Mayor Pro Tem in guiding the City of Lakeland through a police department "scandal". Acted as Commission Representative for Lakeland Electric, Chairman of the Lakeland Area Mass Transit District and member of then newly formed Polk County Regional Water Cooperative.

Litigation Attorney (Civil & SSD)

Carlton & Carlton, P.A. - Lakeland, FL

2006 to 2006

Worked as an associate representing clients in Social Security disability claims

Guardian Ad Litem Attorney

Florida Guardian ad Litem program (Polk County) - Bartow, FL

2005 to 2006

Managed a litigation caseload on behalf of guardians ad litem representing children in termination of parental rights and dependency matters.

Nuclear Electrician/ Navy Scuba Diver

US Navy - Pearl Harbor Naval Station, HI
March 1981 to March 1987

Trained as a nuclear electrician at Nuclear Power School (Orlando) 1981-1983. Assigned to and qualified in submarines, USS Aspro (SSN-648) and USS Bremerton (SSN-698) 1983-1987. Duties included oversight of the nuclear reactor during shutdown and underway as operator of the electric plant, and throttleman. Also served as ship's diver aboard the Bremerton.

Education

M.B.A. in Entrepreneurship

University of Florida - Gainesville, FL
January 1997 to May 1999

Juris Doctor in Law

University of Florida - Gainesville, FL
January 1995 to May 1999

B.S./B.A. in Biology/History

Florida State University - Tallahassee, FL
January 1989 to May 1992

Skills

- Legal Research (10+ years)
- Legal Drafting (10+ years)
- Negotiation (10+ years)
- Contract Negotiation (10+ years)
- Research (10+ years)
- English (10+ years)
- Presentation Skills (10+ years)
- Proofreading (10+ years)
- Team Management (10+ years)
- Interviewing (10+ years)
- Writing Skills (10+ years)
- Intake Experience (10+ years)
- Public Speaking (10+ years)
- Case Management (10+ years)
- Business Development

Certifications and Licenses

Florida Bar

September 1999 to Present

EMT Certification

1988 to 1988

**City Attorney
North Port, Florida
Semifinalist Questionnaire**

Please return to: DelenaFranklin@GovernmentResource.com
Due NLT Sunday, July 20, 2025 @ 11:00 PM Central Time

Full Name (first, middle, last): Keith P Merritt

Cell: 863-286-1923

Home: same

Please answer each of the following questions completely and thoroughly.

1. For your last three positions, please list:
 - a. **Job Title:** Vice President/Litigation Counsel
 - b. **Organization and Location:** Fidelity National Law Group, Ft. Lauderdale
 - c. **Scope of Responsibilities/Services Provided:** In-house litigation counsel for Fortune 300 Fidelity National Financial family of title insurance companies representing property owners, lenders, and insurers. Providing representation, advice, and counsel to Company stakeholders. Clients include the Company's title underwriters and insureds in litigated matters. Accustomed to independent, aggressive case handling. Superior knowledge and expertise in trial practice and excellent client service. Litigation experience as lead counsel in complex real estate matters.
 - a. **Job Title:** Owner
 - b. **Organization and Location:** Merritt Law Office, P.A., Lakeland, FL
 - c. **Scope of Responsibilities/Services Provided:** Opened Merritt Law Office in 2007 amidst the foreclosure crisis. Recognizing that bankruptcy was a critical area for consumers, focused practice in bankruptcy and consumer litigation such as FDCPA and TILA.
 - a. **Job Title:** Litigation Attorney (Civil & SSD)
 - b. **Organization and Location:** Carlton & Carlton, P.A.
 - c. **Scope of Responsibilities/Services Provided:**

2.

3. Please describe why you left your last three positions. Additionally, are there any gaps in excess of two weeks in your employment history including any short-term (i.e., approximately 1-year or less) posts that may have occurred in your career? If so, please explain in detail. **My work has been continuous since 2007 until two weeks ago when I resigned from Fidelity National Law Group to pursue opportunities closer to Central Florida, nearer family and friends.**
4. Do you currently possess an active Florida Bar license? If so, please attach a copy of your credentials. Also, include any special credentials or Board Certifications you may currently possess. **DONE**
5. Have you had any ethics or grievance filings against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail. **NO**
6. Have you had any malpractice suits against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail. **NO**
7. Please list any client that you currently represent that could cause a potential conflict of interest with the City of North Port, Florida. If applicable, please describe how you would resolve any current or future potential conflicts of interest. **NONE**
8. Have you or your firm represented any client in the past 10 years against the City of North Port, Florida or one of its employees? If so, please describe in detail. **NO**
9. **Please describe any experience you may have in Land Use, Planning & Zoning, Economic Development Agreements, Procurement, Contracts, Environmental Permitting, Easements & Eminent Domain, Public Records, Ordinance Drafting, Interlocal Agreements, and Florida Local Government Law.** My experience includes my work as a an Owner's Representative for a Summit East Office Park (Tallahassee, FL) where my work led to the execution of a Development Agreement with the City of Tallahassee; Volunteering/acting as a Boardmember of the Planning & Zoning Commission (Lakeland, FL); City Commissioner for the City of Lakeland where I was involved with all these areas of law; and as legal counsel involving complex right-of-way and easement issues research involving land use in Hillsborough County.
10. If selected as the next City Attorney for North Port, what do you believe will be your greatest challenges as you move into the position? **I feel comfortable with real estate issues and litigation management, I will need to bring myself back up to speed with public records law and Sunshine Law.**
11. Describe your philosophy regarding the role the City Attorney plays with the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, the senior leadership of the City, and the various standing Boards & Commissions. **The City belongs to the people who have elected Commissioners to represent them. The City Attorney is appointed by and is responsible to them.**

They have also appointed boardmembers and the City Manager who has appointed senior leadership. It is the City Attorney's responsibility to form a positive working

relationship with and advise the City Manager, board members and leaders on legal matters that may affect the performance of their work and/or the well-being of the citizenry.

12. Tell us about the volume of work you currently manage on a regular basis and how varied your responsibilities may be. If you are presently in private practice, how many clients do you currently service? **I customarily have between 30-45 open litigation files and am responsible for reporting to the client and the title insurance underwriter as well as working with any co-counsel or opposing counsel.**

13. How do you keep up to date on state and federal legislation, and how would you communicate changes in legislation and other legal questions related to administrative and operational issues with both the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, and staff of the City of North Port? **The Florida Bar has a Public Law section and there are listserves that I have used. Moreover, there are many continuing education courses offered by the Florida Bar. Communicating change would be a cooperative effort with the City Manager to ensure that the Mayor, Commission and Department Heads are aware of and able to act upon legislation.**

14. Please describe your experience of working in or for a fast-paced growth community. What do you believe are the unique challenges the City Attorney's Office will likely face in such an environment? **When asked, no one, will say that they didn't work hard at any job they've taken. I'm not unlike anyone else and believe that the entirety of my professional life, from life aboard a submarine to my legal career with dedicated adversaries and strict deadlines has been fast-paced and demanding.**

In my experience the life of a City Attorney is not unlike the proverbial man in the foxhole – periods of boredom interrupted by moments of terror. I've found that the time sensitive demands are often driven by commissioners' desire to please their constituencies but otherwise can be anticipated and addressed. I thrive in an atmosphere where creative problem solving is required and am better when I am in direct contact with stakeholders.

15. Describe the most complex or controversial lawsuit or open records request you have been involved with and the outcome.

After my term on the Lakeland City Commission had expired I was presented with an extremely challenging case in which my client, an aviation repair shop facing financial hardship and located at Lakeland Linder Airport had ceased to pay its rent to the City. In an effort to recover some of what it was owed by imposing liens upon aircraft in the possession of my client. I was torn between my loyalty to the city and my allegiance to my client and was compelled to initiate a suit against the city and simultaneously file a Chapter 11 Bankruptcy on its behalf to enable it to survive and relocate to the midwest where it stood a greater chance of survival through partnership with competitors.

After more than a year of litigating the civil action against the city regarding its aircraft liens and the Chapter 11 against a group of creditors who were not pleasantly disposed to my client, I was able to resolve both with the client relocating and enjoying business success.

16. Do you take the time to educate a Board of Directors/Governing Body, Departmental Staff, or members of a Board/Commission about the legal implications and circumstances when asked to provide your legal opinion on a matter? If so, how do you accomplish that?

Anticipation is the one word solution. In an instance where it is apparent that a group, such as a commission or a department, will face a legal challenge or more likely a group of legal challenges, it is incumbent upon the City Attorney to act preemptively. To act is not to only present possibilities but to game out alternatives and to speak often with the stakeholders to avoid surprises.

17. The City Attorney's Office consists of eight full-time employees, including the City Attorney, Deputy City Attorney, two Assistant City Attorneys, the Police Legal Advisor, two Paralegals, and one Business Services Coordinator. How comfortable are you in working in a smaller department where it is expected that you will largely undertake your own legal research, draft documents, and working collaboratively with a small office team? **This is the atmosphere that I am accustomed to. An unspoken component of administering any office is investing in the people. In my online interview I mentioned that I am currently reading "How to Win Friends and Influence People". I believe in the advice and feel that it is the City Attorney's responsibility to have an interest in their people, to improve their work lives through training and provision of resources and to foster continuity.**

18. Tell us about your experience in managing outside legal counsel with litigation, risk management cases, and other specialized matters. **For the duration of my firm's existence I had a series of lawyers who I provided guidance in litigation and bankruptcy.**

19. Describe your management style in five bullet points of five words or less for each bullet point.

- **Assessment/Reassessment of the work group (i.e. the City Attorney's office)**
- **Prioritize areas of concern**
- **Implement plan to address concerns**
- **Foster professional development**

20. When we conduct a comprehensive background investigation and reference checks, what will we find that may warrant explanation or that could be of concern to the City of North Port? Nothing. **You will find my name primarily regarding my work as a commissioner and my judicial campaign in 2018.**

21. Are you currently involved in any other employment searches and if so, what is your status and associated timetables involved in those searches? I have other ongoing searches and am awaiting responses. I am not committed to a timetable. **I am currently seeking employment in both the public and private sectors and am awaiting responses. I have no specific time table.**
22. What will we find in an Internet search of press coverage that may be controversial or of concern to the City of North Port? Please provide whatever explanation you think is appropriate to help us understand what we will find. **As a city commissioner I served during a scandal that preceded my election. During my term I would have been in the news repeatedly.**
23. Please provide your desired compensation range and related benefit package if you are ultimately selected as the final candidate for this position. **\$175,000-\$200,000 and the benefits that are offered to the current City Attorney.** If you are selected and offered an acceptable compensation and benefits package, what concerns or hesitations do you have that would have to be resolved before you would be ready to accept the position? **I don't have concerns but will share them if they come to my attention.** How soon would you be available to start work following the negotiation and acceptance of a final package? **30 days.**
24. What are the three most important questions you have for the North Port Mayor & City Commission as part of your consideration of the City Attorney position?
- **What are your most immediate legal priorities?**
 - **What do you see as impediments to resolving these priorities?**
 - **Where do you see the city and the City Attorney's office in 5 years?**

The University of Florida

has conferred on

Keith Hoole Merritt

the degree

Juris Doctor
with Honors

and all the rights and privileges heretofore appertaining.

In Witness Whereof, this diploma, duly signed, has been issued
and the seal of the University affixed.

Issued by the Board of Regents upon recommendation of the Faculty of
The College of Law

at Gainesville, this sixteenth day of May, A.D. 1958.

John H. ...
President



John H. ...
President

John H. ...
President

Supreme Court of the State of Florida



1887-1888 Term

Keith P. Stiermi

Among faithful the recipients of the Court is hereby named as one of the
and Recipients of the in all the Courts of the State

In Witness Whereof, I have signed as my hand and official
Seal of the Supreme Court of the State of Florida, this 27th
day of September, 1903

W. H. Brewster
Clerk of the Court

MICHAEL FUINO



Michael Fuino, B.C.S.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
michael.fuino@gmail.com
[REDACTED]

June 9, 2025

RE: City Attorney Position

Mayor and Commissioners:

Local government law is complex. Take three-week period of mine last fall. I represented the City of Clearwater in a 5-day jury trial between September 9th and September 13th. Then I appeared as the head attorney at the September 23rd Clearwater Downtown Development Board meeting. In between, I assisted the Clearwater Gas Company in obtaining six months of RIN credits, while answering Public Records law questions for the City Clerk's Office. And now I'm gearing up for another multi-day jury trial set to start on October 7th. These experiences—and more—mean that I am qualified to be North Port's next City Attorney.

I am board certified in local government law and for the past six years, I have acted as the lead attorney for nearly all Clearwater's departments and divisions including: the Community Redevelopment Agency; the Clearwater Gas System; the Official Records and Legislative Services Department; the Planning and Development Department; the Solid Waste/Recycling Department; the Marine and Aviation Department; the Risk Management Division; the Parking Division; and the Stormwater Division. I have tried over 50 civil trials and argued over 30 appellate proceedings—including representing Clearwater in state and federal court at both the trial and appellate levels. I have also managed successful legal teams. So, I know local government law, my way around a courtroom, and how to get the best out of other people.

I also have a deep commitment to public service. For instance, I am the Chairman of the Sixth Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee "E." The Committee acts as a grand jury and investigates possible attorney misconduct referred to the Florida Bar's discipline committee. Chairing the Committee has driven home the impact an attorney's work has on the client's life.

This is all to say that I am tailor-made for this position and that this position is tailor-made for me. Thank you for considering me for this wonderful opportunity.

Sincerely,

Michael Fuino

MICHAEL FUINO, B.C.S.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
michael.fuino@gmail.com
[REDACTED]

OBJECTIVE: To obtain a full-time position in public service as the City Attorney for North Port.

SKILLS SUMMARY: Board-certified local government attorney with over a decade of experience in local government law, land use law, real property law, constitutional law, civil litigation, and transactional work. Working independently, I have litigated on behalf of municipalities in court and also represented municipal clients in transactional dealings. I have worked on many unique and difficult legal issues and have tried complex cases.

I have the following experience which makes me uniquely qualified for this position:

- Between April 2018 and May 2021, I was the head land use attorney for the City of Clearwater, Florida. In that role, I prepared all ordinances affecting land use, zoning, and growth management in the City. Additionally, I was responsible for negotiating and drafting all development agreements the City entered into.
- As the attorney for the Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency, I have prepared regulations for the Agency's trustees—who are also the City's councilmembers—and the Agency's executive director which comport with Part III, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes and Chapter 189, Florida Statutes. Additionally, I have negotiated and drafted over a dozen development agreements for the Agency.
- I am also the lead attorney for the Clearwater Downtown Development Board, a dependent special district headed by the Clearwater City Council. In that role I advise both the Board and the Board's executive director on various legal matters; draft grant agreements between the Board and applicants; and ensure that the Board follows Florida's Special District Act found at Chapter 189, Florida Statutes.
- As Clearwater's chief litigator, I have represented the City in contested matters in both state and federal court at the trial and appellate levels, and before the State of Florida Department of Administrative Hearings. This includes *Giannikos v City of Clearwater*, (Fla. 6th Cir. Ct. Sep. 13, 2024) (finding plaintiff 55% liable for his own fault after 5-day jury trial); *McAffee v. City of Clearwater*, No. 22-12320, 2023 WL 2823392 (11th Cir. Apr. 7, 2023) (affirming order dismissing section 1983 lawsuit); *Holmes v. Illich-Hailey*, No. 8:21-CV-2803-SDM-TGW, 2024 WL 1328414 (M.D. Fla. Mar. 28, 2024) (granting summary judgment in police officers' favor in section 1983 lawsuit); *Watt v. City of Clearwater*, No. 19-13-AP (Fla. 6th Jud. Cir. App. Div. Dec. 9, 2020) (denying landowner's petition for writ of certiorari seeking to quash the City's decision to enter into a development agreement); and *Weschler, et al. v. City of Clearwater, et al.*, No. 19-

5045-CI (Fla. 6th Cir. Ct. 2019) (granting final judgment in City's favor and finding that a development agreement does not conflict with City's comprehensive plan).

- I am the lead attorney for the Clearwater Gas System, a wholly owned municipal utility company which services 32,600 accounts and covers 330 square miles in Pinellas and Pasco counties.
- For three years, I represented the City of Clearwater before two administrative boards: the Community Development Board, which is charged with implementing the City's land development code and granting development approval, and the Municipal Code Enforcement Board, which is charged with carrying out the statutory duties found in The Local Government Enforcement Boards Act, Part I, Chapter 162, Florida Statutes. Additionally, I have represented the City before The Building/Flood Board of Adjustment and Appeals, which has the power to hear appeals from the Building Official's decisions related to unsafe buildings, structures, and service systems.
- While in private practice, I successfully prosecuted claims municipal code enforcement lien claims for Hillsborough County and the City of St. Petersburg.
- I am a veteran of over 50 civil trials. As the lead defense attorney, I have won several lawsuit dismissals for my clients, including a dismissal of a claim with prejudice after full day trials in *Bayview Loan Servicing, LLC v. Finkelman, et al.*, Case No. 11-9527-CI (Fla. 6th Jud. 2017), and *Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC v. Massaro, et al.*, Case No. 16-462-CI (Fla. 6th Jud. 2017).
- As my prior firm's head appellate attorney, I have drafted and argued over 30 appellate briefs and original proceedings, including petitions for writs of prohibition, mandamus, and certiorari. Acting as the lead appellate attorney, I successfully briefed and argued the cases of *Ali v. Wells Fargo Bank*, 264 So. 3d 1096 (Fla. 5th DCA 2019); *Cagwin v. Thifty Rents, Inc.*, 219 So. 3d 1003 (Fla. 2d DCA 2017); *Xbelaj v. McCormick*, 219 So. 3d 989 (Fla. 2d DCA 2017); *Buckley v. JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A.*, 200 So. 3d 1297 (Fla. 2d DCA 2016). I have also appeared before appellate courts for oral arguments over ten times.
- I was responsible for managing an office staff of five that includes one attorney, two paralegals, and two office assistants at my prior firm.

I also believe the following additional skills make me an ideal candidate for the position:

- I am the current chairman of the Sixth Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee "E." The Committee is responsible for investigating possible lawyer misconduct referred to the Florida Bar's discipline counsel.
- I am a proficient and experienced legal writer. I authored a law review article titled *Foreclosing in a Hurricane: Florida Courts Struggle to Deal With a Crisis of Epic Proportions* published in the *Stetson Law Review* at 41 *Stetson L. Rev.* 679, 681 (2012). This article cited by Florida's First District Court of Appeal cited it as an authority in *Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. v. Bobatka*, 112 So. 3d 596 (Fla. 1st DCA 2013) and the article was also discussed during the Northern District of California 2014 Judicial Conference.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

I. Attorney Positions

City of Clearwater

Senior Assistant City Attorney

April 2018 – Current, Full Time Employment

- Current or former lead attorney to the directors of the Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency; the Gas Department; the Official Records and Legislative Services Department; the Planning and Development Department; the Solid Waste/Recycling Department; the Marine and Aviation Department; the Risk Management Division; the Parking Division; and the Stormwater Division.
- Provide legal advice and opinions to the above-referenced City departments and special districts, and directly to the City Council. Official legal opinions are dispensed in writing, and informal advice may be given either orally or in writing.
- City's head land use attorney from April 2018 until May 2021.
- City's chief litigator responsible for representing the City in state and federal court.
- Prepare for and represent the City and its Departments before various administrative bodies, including the Clearwater Municipal Code Enforcement Board, the Clearwater Community Development Board, and the State of Florida Division of Administrative Hearings.
- Draft and negotiate development agreements, contracts for the sale and purchase of real property, and contracts for the sale and purchase of goods and services.
- Draft, review, and present ordinances and resolutions to City Council for Council's consideration.
- Responsible for managing a paralegal and a legal assistant.

Weidner Law, P.A.

Senior Associate Attorney

September 2010 – April 2018, Full Time Employment

- Appointed special assistant county attorney and special assistant city attorney, and prosecuted code enforcement lien foreclosures for Hillsborough County and the City of St. Petersburg.
- Civil litigation trial attorney who has tried over 50 civil trials as the lead lawyer and argued several hundred dispositive motion hearings.
- Firm's head appellate attorney responsible for drafting over 30 appellate briefs and original petitions, and experienced conducting oral arguments.
- Managed staff of five.

II. Non-Attorney Legal Positions

Weidner Law, P.A.

Law Clerk

January 2010 – September 2010

- Researched and drafted numerous pleadings, motions, and memorandums filed in civil court.
- Drafted a variety of wills, contracts, and corporate documents.

Eleventh Judicial Circuit, State of Florida

Judicial Law Clerk

August 2009 – November 2009

- Conducted legal research and drafted orders and judgments for the Honorable Robert N. Scola, former Circuit Court Judge for the Eleventh Judicial Circuit in and for Miami-Dade County and current judge for the United States Southern District of Florida.

The Pinkert Law Firm, P.A.

Law Clerk

March 2009 – August 2009

- Drafted pleadings and motions for insurance defense lawsuits.
- Conducted initial and supplemental discovery including, but not limited to: affidavit drafting; document production; and request for production motions.

Jet Card Plus, Inc.

Law Clerk

September 2008-February 2009

- Drafted pleadings and motions on behalf of company filed in State and Federal courts.
- Involvement with the corporate aspect of the business, including review of contracts and partnership/brokerage agreements.

Global Market Consultants, Inc.

Legal Analyst

May 2008-August 2008

- Performed a Federal and State regulatory analysis of the Direct Exchange Geothermal Heat Pump market utilizing secondary research from Federal and State Administrative Codes.

III. Non-Legal Positions

Click to Protect, LLC
Project Manager
May 2007-May 2008

- Drafted business plan for computer peripheral start-up company.
- Head of sales marketing team.

Citigroup, Inc.
Reporting and Licensing Analyst
October 2003-August 2004

- Researched and drafted annual licensing exams for CitiFinancial, Inc.
- Produced monthly, quarterly, and annual financial statements for CitiFinancial business units and individual branches.
- Wrote, tested, and implemented all written procedures used by Reporting and Licensing staff.

BOARD CERTIFICATION

I have been board certified in City, County and Local Government law by the Florida Bar since 2021.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

I am the Chairman of the Sixth Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee “E.”

COMPUTER SKILLS

I am proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, and Outlook, as well as Aderant Total Office and CityLaw, legal software used by the City of Clearwater’s Legal Department.

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor – Certification in Business and Financial Law, University of Miami, 2010
Bachelor of Science – Economics, Villanova University, 2007, cum laude
Bachelor of Science – Business Administration, Villanova University, 2007, cum laude

REFERENCES

- Pam Akin, Esq., *professional and personal reference; former Clearwater City Attorney*
- Matthew D. Weidner, Esq., *professional and personal reference; former employer*
- Jay Daigneault, Esq., *professional reference; board certified local government attorney since 2020*
- John R. Cappa, II, Esq., *professional and personal reference; Florida Bar member since 1995*
- Marshall Reissman, Esq. , *professional and personal reference; Florida Bar member since 1980*
- Glenn Goldberg, Esq. , *professional and personal reference; Florida Bar member since 1998*

**City Attorney
North Port, Florida
Semifinalist Questionnaire**

Please return to: DelenaFranklin@GovernmentResource.com
Due NLT Sunday, July 20, 2025 @ 11:00 PM Central Time

Full Name (first, middle, last): Michael Patrick Fuino
Maiden Name(s), if any: N/A
Nickname(s), if any: N/A

Cell: [REDACTED]
Home: [REDACTED]

Please answer each of the following questions completely and thoroughly.

1. For your last three positions, please list:
 - a. Job Title
 - b. Organization and Location
 - c. Scope of Responsibilities/Services Provided

**Senior Assistant City Attorney
City of Clearwater; Clearwater, Florida
April 2018 – Current**

- Current or former lead attorney to the directors of the Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency; the Gas Department; the Official Records and Legislative Services Department; the Planning and Development Department; the Solid Waste/Recycling Department; the Marine and Aviation Department; the Risk Management Division; the Parking Division; and the Stormwater Division.
- Provide legal advice and opinions to the above-referenced City departments and special districts, and directly to the City Council. Official legal opinions are dispensed in writing, and informal advice may be given either orally or in writing. Concomitant with this responsibility is the duty to research the law, so legal research of relevant local, State, and Federal law is required.
- City's chief litigator responsible for representing the City in state and federal court at both the trial and appellate levels, including jury trials as first chair.
- Prepare for and represent the City and its Departments before various administrative bodies, including the Clearwater Municipal Code Enforcement Board, the Clearwater Community Development Board, and the State of Florida Division of Administrative Hearings.
- Draft and negotiate development agreements, contracts for the sale and purchase of real property, and contracts for the sale and purchase of goods and services.

- Draft, review, and present ordinances and resolutions to City Council for Council's consideration.
- Responsible for managing a paralegal and a legal assistant.

Senior Associate Attorney

Weidner Law, P.A., St. Petersburg, Florida

September 2010 – April 2018, Full Time Employment

- Appointed special assistant county attorney and special assistant city attorney, and prosecuted code enforcement lien foreclosures for Hillsborough County and the City of St. Petersburg.
- Civil litigation trial attorney who has tried over 50 civil trials as the lead lawyer and argued several hundred dispositive motion hearings.
- Firm's head appellate attorney responsible for drafting over 30 appellate briefs and original petitions, and experienced conducting oral arguments.
- Managed staff of five.

Law Clerk

Weidner Law, P.A., St. Petersburg, Florida

January 2010 – September 2010

- Researched and drafted numerous pleadings, motions, and memorandums filed in civil court.
- Drafted a variety of wills, contracts, and corporate documents.

2. Please describe why you left your last three positions. Additionally, are there any gaps in excess of two weeks in your employment history including any short-term (i.e., approximately 1-year or less) posts that may have occurred in your career? If so, please explain in detail.

- I worked for Weidner Law, P.A., a boutique law firm, for eight-and-a-half years. I began as a law clerk in January 2010 and then transitioned to an attorney after passing the Florida bar exam in September 2010.
- I left Weidner Law in April 2018 to work for the City of Clearwater for two reasons. **First**, I became interested in local government practice around 2015 when I began prosecuting code enforcement foreclosures for the City of St. Petersburg and Hillsborough County. **Second**, I felt that I had reached the limit of what I could do at the firm and sought out new challenges. It was a difficult decision to make because of the relationships that I built at the firm but ultimately the right one.
- I have not had any employment gaps or short-term posts since becoming a licensed attorney 15 years ago. Any short-term posts or employment gaps prior to that were a result of attending college and law school.

3. Do you currently possess an active Florida Bar license? If so, please attach a copy of your credentials. Also, include any special credentials or Board Certifications you may currently possess.
 - Yes, a copy of my bar license is attached.
 - I have been board certified by the Florida Bar in City, County and Local government since 2021.
4. Have you had any ethics or grievance filings against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.
 - No.
5. Have you had any malpractice suits against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.
 - No.
6. Please list any client that you currently represent that could cause a potential conflict of interest with the City of North Port, Florida. If applicable, please describe how you would resolve any current or future potential conflicts of interest.
 - N/A.
7. Have you or your firm represented any client in the past 10 years against the City of North Port, Florida or one of its employees? If so, please describe in detail.
 - No.
8. Please describe any experience you may have in Land Use, Planning & Zoning, Economic Development Agreements, Procurement, Contracts, Environmental Permitting, Easements & Eminent Domain, Public Records, Ordinance Drafting, Interlocal Agreements, and Florida Local Government Law.
 - Land Use—I was Clearwater’s primary land-use attorney from April 2018 until May 2021. During that time, I was responsible for all legal work related to annexations, comprehensive plan amendments, and land use amendments.
 - Planning & Zoning—part of my responsibility as Clearwater’s land-use attorney was to represent the City’s Planning and Development Department. This included representing the City before its planning and zoning boards for all matters related to land development and rezonings.
 - Economic Development Agreements—I have negotiated, drafted, and defended in court no less than 40 development agreements. One such agreement for an 81-unit affordable housing project was the center of a story that was published on June 20,

2024 in the Tampa Bay Times.¹ Another agreement was the subject of two court challenges that I successfully defended the City against.²

- Procurement—I handle the procurement process for Clearwater’s Gas Department, the Clerk’s Office, Risk Management Division, as well as the Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency and the Clearwater Downtown Development Board—both of which are dependent special districts controlled by the City’s councilmembers. This includes drafting invitations to bid and requests for proposals, and then evaluating subsequent submissions under the City’s standard procurement code as well as the Consultants’ Competitive Negotiation Act.
- Contracts—I draft, review, and negotiate all contracts for Clearwater’s Gas Department, the Clerk’s Office, Risk Management Division, as well as the Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency and the Clearwater Downtown Development Board.
- Environmental Permitting—I am responsible for reviewing the legal aspects of all environmental permit requests for underground or underwater gas piping as the Clearwater Gas Department’s primary attorney.
- Easements & Eminent Domain— In addition to securing the environmental permits, I am also responsible for drafting and securing real property easements for underground or underwater gas piping as the Clearwater Gas Department’s primary attorney. This includes negotiation with private companies and individuals, as well as other governmental entities such as Pinellas County and the Southwest Florida Water Management District. As Clearwater’s chief litigator, I am responsible for any eminent domain lawsuits the City may file.
- Public Records—I handle all legal questions related to any public records requests in my role as the primary attorney responsible to the Clearwater City Clerk. Additionally, as Clearwater’s chief litigator, I am responsible for defending the City in any public records lawsuits filed against it. I successfully defended the City in two such cases.³
- Ordinance Drafting—I have drafted many ordinances in my eight years with Clearwater. Larger examples include: Ord. No. 9228-19, City of Clearwater, FL (revamping the City’s code enforcement procedures); Ord. No. 9349-20, City of Clearwater, FL (revising the City’s Building/Flood Board of Adjustment and Appeals powers and responsibilities); Ord. No. 9414-20, City of Clearwater, FL

¹ Available online at <https://www.tampabay.com/news/real-estate/2024/06/20/clearwater-breaks-ground-81-unit-affordable-housing-project/> (last accessed June 24, 2024).

² See *Watt v. City of Clearwater*, No. 19-13-AP (Fla. 6th Jud. Cir. App. Div. Dec. 9, 2020) (denying landowner’s petition for writ of certiorari seeking to quash the City’s decision to enter into the development agreement); *Weschler, et al. v. City of Clearwater, et al.*, No. 19-5045-CI (Fla. 6th Jud. Cir. 2019) (granting final judgment in City’s favor and finding that the development agreement does not conflict with City’s comprehensive plan).

³ See *Gray v. City of Clearwater*, No. 24-284-CI (Fla. 6th Jud. Cir.); *Weaver v. City of Clearwater*, No. 22-1329-CI (Fla. 6th Jud. Cir.)

(amendments to the ordinances governing the Clearwater Downtown Development, a special taxing district).

- Interlocal Agreements—I routinely act as an intermediary and draft interlocal agreements on a variety of matters between Clearwater and other units of local government, including Pinellas County and special districts such as the Pinellas County School Board.
 - Florida Local Government Law—I have been board-certified in City, County and Local Government law since 2021. By my count, there are only 305 other attorneys in the State with this certification.
9. If selected as the next City Attorney for North Port, what do you believe will be your greatest challenges as you move into the position?
- **First**, will be the cultural change the office will undergo. I know that the prior City Attorney held the job from 2016 until September 2024 and that the current interim has been with the Office for eight years. We are all different people, so we naturally have different personalities and leadership styles. My personal experience with a change in the Clearwater City Attorney’s Office in 2021 will be beneficial. My old boss, Pam Akin, retired that October after nearly 30 years at the City. I was a semi-finalist for the job. When I was not selected, I didn’t pout—instead, I developed an excellent working and personal relationship with my new boss.
 - **Second**, will be dealing with new clients whom I have never worked with—particularly the City Commission and the City Manager. Working with new clients is nothing new to me. I did it routinely while in private practice with each new case I took on and I do it now with the City of Clearwater as members of the Council and senior leadership transition into new roles and out of old ones.
10. Describe your philosophy regarding the role the City Attorney plays with the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, the senior leadership of the City, and the various standing Boards & Commissions.
- The City Attorney is the chief legal officer for North Port. The City Attorney’s primary responsibility is to render legal advice to the Mayor and City Commission, the City Manager, the City’s senior staff, and—to the extent not conflicted out by Florida law—the various boards and commissions on any legal matter that may come before them.
 - The City Attorney’s secondary responsibility is to administer the City Attorney’s Office. This includes hiring, promoting, demoting, suspending, or dismissing the legal staff. The City Attorney is also responsible for preparing an annual department budget that the Attorney must submit for inclusion in the City’s annual budget.
 - The City Attorney does not render business or political advice. Business advice is left to the sound discretion of the City’s professional operations staff and political advice is left to the elected officials’ professional political staff.

11. Tell us about the volume of work you currently manage on a regular basis and how varied your responsibilities may be. If you are presently in private practice, how many clients do you currently service?

- I manage a large volume of work in several different governmental areas. My client break down is as follows:

1. Risk Management—70% overall; of that 85% is dedicated to litigation (court appearances, legal drafting, depositions and other discovery, and mediations) and 15% is non-litigation work (advice on claims with no pending lawsuit and insurance coverage review)

2. Gas Department—12.5%

3. City Clerk—10%

4. Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency/Clearwater Downtown Development Board—5%

5. Customer Service—2.5%

- The best way to describe my workload and its variety would be to recap last week. On July 7-8 I first-chaired a jury trial that led to a complete defense verdict in the City's favor in a personal injury lawsuit. *See Curto v. City of Clearwater*, No. 20-5162-CI (Fla. 6th Jud. Cir.). On July 9-10 I worked on transactional matters for the Clearwater Gas Department, including: 1) intellectual property and trademark designations for the Gas Department's new D/B/A logo; 2) negotiated, drafted, and reviewed a master template agreement between the Department and local builders to provide gas service for residential projects; and 3) reviewed a MAP shoring agreement and associated procurement procedures so the Department can provide shoring for job sites. Finally, on July 10 I counseled the City Clerk on a subpoena for trial she received in which a defendant is criminally accused of disrupting one of the Clearwater City Council meetings.

12. How do you keep up to date on state and federal legislation, and how would you communicate changes in legislation and other legal questions related to administrative and operational issues with both the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, and staff of the City of North Port?

- I closely follow the Florida League of City's legislative bill summaries and end-of-session report for such legislation. Clearwater also utilizes the services of state lobbying groups that provide informational updates while the session occurs. Finally, I attend end-of-session seminars.

- I have made it a point to communicate any applicable changes in the law to my departmental clients in writing after the session concludes. I explain those changes in laymen terms, how they impact the department's current operations, and possible suggestions for what the department should do going forward. I also have one-on-one meetings with the client after sending my memo to talk through any difficult issues or discuss any questions that the client may have. This process is

effective and is one that I would implement in the City Attorney's Office. Before beginning this process, I would call a legal department meeting so the attorneys in the office can hash out the changes of the law and how it affects each County department.

13. Please describe your experience of working in or for a fast-paced growth community. What do you believe are the unique challenges the City Attorney's Office will likely face in such an environment?

- Clearwater has over 117,000 residents and growing, making it the eighteenth largest municipality in the state. Its beach is also consistently ranked as one of the best in the county. So, I have over seven years' experience working in a fast-paced growth community.
- Fast growth communities pose several unique challenges for the City Attorney's Office. **First**, are the legal issues related to housing affordability. Many of the recent issues that I have worked on in this area have to do with the application of Florida's Live Local Act—particularly, the *ad valorem* tax exemption. **Second**, the City Attorney's office will have deal with routine development and construction issues that come with increased growth. This includes legal issues related to processing development and building applications in a timely manner; the proper application of user fees, impact fees, and special assessments; and amendments to the City's comprehensive plan and land development regulations. **Third**, is the practical matter of making sure that the City Attorney's Office keeps up with the population growth. No firm administrator can address its clients' needs if the administrator does not have enough staff to do so.

14. Describe the most complex or controversial lawsuit or open records request you have been involved with and the outcome.

- I was the first-chair litigator of a section 1983 use-of-force lawsuit filed against the City and one of its police officers. The primary issue in that case was whether the officer was working within the course-and-scope of his employment. Federal civil rights litigation is particularly complex, but the case was internally controversial because of the course-and-scope issue since it implicated whether the City would indemnify the officer for his conduct. Put simply, the City would not indemnify the officer if the officer was not within his course-and-scope of employment. Adding to this tension was an internal affairs investigation which found that the officer used excessive force and recommended a 7-day suspension. The suspension was thereafter upheld by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.
- Senior City staff directed me not to indemnify the officer. However, I was able to successfully resolve the case to everyone's benefit. The plaintiff agreed to accept \$70,000 (down from a pre-suit demand of \$200,000) from the City in exchange for a release against the City (but not the officer) and a dismissal with prejudice of all claims.

15. Do you take the time to educate a Board of Directors/Governing Body, Departmental Staff, or members of a Board/Commission about the legal implications and circumstances when asked to provide your legal opinion on a matter? If so, how do you accomplish that?
- I consider providing the City Council and senior departmental employees—including the City Manager—with legal advice and education as a central requirement of my job. I dispense this advice either formally through written legal opinions or informally through private client consultations.
16. The City Attorney's Office consists of eight full-time employees, including the City Attorney, Deputy City Attorney, two Assistant City Attorneys, the Police Legal Advisor, two Paralegals, and one Business Services Coordinator. How comfortable are you in working in a smaller department where it is expected that you will largely undertake your own legal research, draft documents, and working collaboratively with a small office team?
- The North Port City Attorney's Office closely mirrors Clearwater's in size. I routinely do my own legal research and draft my own documents. I also take pride and enjoy working collaboratively with my peers and my staff. So, I would be very comfortable working in an office of your size.
17. Tell us about your experience in managing outside legal counsel with litigation, risk management cases, and other specialized matters.
- As Clearwater's chief litigator, part of my responsibility is to manage outside counsel litigation. I prefer to do the litigation work myself but there are times when I am conflicted out of civil rights cases or where the work is of a unique variety. I currently manage two such cases. My primary duties when managing outside counsel is to: 1) provide my legal opinion of the case; 2) review outside counsel billing; and 3) ensure that billing remains under the budgeted amount.
 - The Risk Management Division is my primary client responsibility. I help the Risk Manager manage state and federal law claims from pre-suit through trial.
 - I have two specialized submerged land cases that I am litigating. Both involve title to land under The Butler Act, which provided that waterfront owners who made improvements to the land prior to 1951.
18. Describe your management style in five bullet points of five words or less for each bullet point.
- Lead from the front
 - Decisive decision-making
 - Forward-thinking problem solving
 - Consultative professional atmosphere
 - Nurturing employees' individual goals

19. When we conduct a comprehensive background investigation and reference checks, what will we find that may warrant explanation or that could be of concern to the City of North Port?

- No.

20. Are you currently involved in any other employment searches and if so, what is your status and associated timetables involved in those searches?

- Yes, I am currently under consideration for the City of Key West City Attorney position. An advisory board has been created for that position and will meet on July 21, 2025 to make recommendations to the City Commission.

21. What will we find in an Internet search of press coverage that may be controversial or of concern to the City of North Port? Please provide whatever explanation you think is appropriate to help us understand what we will find.

- No.

22. Please provide your desired compensation range and related benefit package if you are ultimately selected as the final candidate for this position. If you are selected and offered an acceptable compensation and benefits package, what concerns or hesitations do you have that would have to be resolved before you would be ready to accept the position? How soon would you be available to start work following the negotiation and acceptance of a final package?

- I have reviewed the compensation package described in the informational pamphlet and am comfortable with what is offered there.
- I do not have any concerns or hesitations that would need to be resolved before accepting the position.
- I would be available to start on 30-days' notice after acceptance of a final package.

23. What are the three most important questions you have for the North Port Mayor & City Commission as part of your consideration of the City Attorney position?

- What type of attorney are you looking for as a client?
- Do you agree with my characterization of the City Attorney as the City's chief legal officer who does not offer business or political advice?
- How do you intend to support the City Attorney's Office in the future—both financially and otherwise?

REGINA KARDASH

PURSUANT TO REGINA KARDASH, THE CONTENTS OF HER QUESTIONNAIRE INCLUDE INFORMATION DEEMED CONFIDENTIAL AND EXEMPT FROM PUBLIC DISCLOSURE UNTIL SUCH TIME AS A FINAL DETERMINATION IS RENDERED BY THE FLORIDA BAR AND THE FLORIDA SUPREME COURT.



July 3, 2025

Mayor Phil Stokes and
Members of the City of North Port City Commission
City Hall, Second Floor
4970 City Hall Boulevard
North Port, FL 34286

Via Strategic Government Resources internet portal submission only

Re.: City Attorney Position

Dear Mayor Stokes and Member of the City Commission:

I am pleased to submit my resume and application for consideration as the City Attorney for the City of North Port. As reflected on my resume, I have well over a decade of experience advising and serving Florida local governments. My commitment to local government began with my internship at the City of St. Petersburg through Stetson University College of Law, and continued to grow after I graduated to working in private practice with the Law Office of James W. Denhardt as contract counsel for two Pinellas municipalities in addition to private client representation. During the early years of my career, I had the benefit of serving as an appointed board member for the Pinellas County Local Planning Agency which deepened my understanding and application of Florida's land use laws and quasi-judicial hearings.

Practice videos demonstrating my capacity to handle various types of Sunshine meetings are available online on the City of Tarpon Springs YouTube channel from during my tenure. The eight-hour May 17, 2023, Tarpon Springs Workshop provides a good overview of my knowledge, interactions, and dedication to serve as General Counsel to a robust local government agency. Some other limited examples are also available online for the City of Treasure Island Planning and Zoning Board, as well as the City of Dunedin Code Enforcement Board, where I served as conflict counsel representing staff on contentious items. I have also previously served as conflict counsel to the Charlotte County Construction Industry Licensing Board, and provided presentations on Ethics for Public Officials to the Big-C Pinellas County Barrier Islands Government Council.

Having served as contract counsel to a variety of agencies and in-house with Sarasota County, I would bring a wide array of experience on various local government topics, including emergency management, FEMA regulations, building codes, and taxation and real estate matters. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you and discuss whether I would be a good fit for a leadership position at the City of North Port.

Sincerely,



License Credentials and Education

Florida Bar	2009-Present	Stetson University College of Law	J.D., 2007
Board Certified	2017-Present	Florida Southern College	B.A., 2002
		<i>City, County and Local Government Law</i>	
Federal Middle District, FL	2010-Present		

Experience

Public Titles and Appointments

City Attorney, Tarpon Springs	2022-2024	Asst. Town Attorney, Longboat Key	2016-2024
Town Attorney, Indian Shores	2014-2024	Town Attorney, Reddington Beach	2015-2016
Town Attorney, Belleair Shore	2016-2024	Asst. City Attorney, Pinellas Park	2009-2012
Special Magistrate, Palmetto	2018-2024	Asst. Town Attorney, Reddington Shores	2009-2012
Asst. City Attorney, Venice	2016-2024	Alt. Special Magistrate, Seminole	2011-2012
Asst. County Attorney, Sarasota	2024		
Pinellas County Local Planning Agency, Appointed Board Member and Two Term Chair	2010-2019		
Pinellas County Homeless Leadership Board, Counsel to 26 Member Board	2016-2021		
Hearing Officer, St. Petersburg Housing Authority	2011-2015		

Representative Awards, Publications and Affiliations

<i>Florida Association for Women Lawyers</i>	<i>Clearwater Bar Association</i>
Pinellas County – President 2016-2017	Co-Chair, People’s Law School 2015-2016
Sarasota County – Secretary, Pres. Elect	<i>The Florida Bar</i>
State - Legislative Affairs Director 2019-2020	Constitutional Judiciary Com. 2014-2016
<i>St. Petersburg Bar Association</i>	<i>Sixth Judicial Circuit</i>
Editor, Paraclete	Pro Bono Recognition 2015, 2016
Local Gov’t Law Chair 2018-2019	Volunteer Guardian Ad Litem 2008- 2016
<i>“A Public Office is a Public Trust” Examination of the Implementation of Constitutional Amendments Governing the Abuse of Public Office, Stetson Law Review Local Gov’t Law Symposium Spring 2022</i>	
<i>Civilian Merit Award, Indian Shores Police Department 2023</i>	
2013 Leader in the Law, Florida Association for Women Lawyers	
2024 Florida Municipal Attorneys Association Seminar Presenter: Constitutional Code Enforcement	

Employment

Regina A. Kardash, P.A. 2016- Present
 Former contract employee for Persson, Cohen, Mooney, Fernandez & Jackson, P.A., located in Lakewood Ranch, solely representing and providing services to local government entities, including municipalities, counties, special districts, fire districts, community development districts, and providing conflict counsel services. Appointed as General Counsel to three Pinellas County municipalities, advising on all aspects of municipal government and departments. Advised countless boards and governing bodies, including, but not limited to, boards of adjustment, charter review boards, local planning agencies, planning and zoning boards, code enforcement boards, historic preservation boards, homeless leadership boards governed by HUD, and construction industry licensing boards. Drafted countless ordinances, resolutions, contracts, memorandums of law, development orders, policies, operating procedures, and accompanying documents. Advised on all aspects of government departments, including finance, utilities, police departments, fire departments, municipal cemeteries, building departments, and planning departments.





Curriculum Vitae

Sample Presentations

- July 26, 2024, Florida Municipal Attorney's Association Annual Seminar, *Nuts and Bolts: Constitutional Code Enforcement*.
- October 2023, SRQ FAWL Members CLE, *Cemetery Law: Because It's Good to Know Where the Bodies are Buried*.
- May 17, 2023, City of Tarpon Springs Board of Commissioners Workshop, *Basics of Local Government Law*, presentation video available on City's YouTube channel.
- October 2022, Pinellas County Big C Barrier Island Local Governments, *Ethics for Local Government Officials*, presentation video available upon request from the City of Madeira Beach, Pinellas County, Florida.
- October 6, 2020, SRQ and Pinellas FAWL Members CLE, Moderator, Presenter Julie Marcus Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections, *Hot Topics in Florida Elections Law*.
- November 2019, Firm Client Chiefs, Administrators, and Office Staff, *Public Records and Sunshine Law for Police and Fire Personnel*.
- February 1, 2019, St. Petersburg Bar Association CLE, *Son of a Beach, My Airbnb was Shut Down by the City!*
- November 11, 2018, *New Channel 8 WATCH POLITICS ON YOUR SIDE*, Elections Law Expert for Reporter Evan Donovan, presentation video available online.
- October 26, 2018, St. Petersburg Bar Association CLE, Moderator, Presenter Florida Bar Past President Bill Schifino, *Ready for November? Need a Better Understanding of the Proposed Amendments?*

Sample Articles and Published Recognition

- "A Public Office is a Public Trust": Examination of the Implementation of Constitutional Amendments Governing the Abuse of Public Office, Stetson Law Review Local Government Symposium, Summer 2022 Vol 51, No. 4.
 - SRQ Magazine 2022 Top Elite Attorneys, Government and Administrative Law.
 - *Vacation Rentals and Homestead Fraud*, St. Petersburg Bar Paraclete: The Spirit of Truth, March/April 2018.
 - *Development Agreements: Quasi-Judicial Decision or Legislative Action?*, St. Petersburg Bar Paraclete: The Spirit of Truth, November 2014. (Co-Author Jay Daigneault).
 - *Monthly Editor's Note*, 2013-2014, St. Petersburg Bar Paraclete: The Spirit of Truth.
-
-

**City Attorney
North Port, Florida
Semifinalist Questionnaire**
Please return to: DelenaFranklin@GovernmentResource.com
Due NLT Sunday, July 20, 2025 @ 11:00 PM Central Time

Full Name (first, middle, last): Regina Ann Kardash
Maiden Name(s), if any: N/A
Nickname(s), if any: Gina

Cell: [REDACTED]
Home: Same

Please answer each of the following questions completely and thoroughly.

1. For your last three positions, please list:

- a. **Job Title**
- b. **Organization and Location**
- c. **Scope of Responsibilities/Services Provided**

For this question, I am actually providing five instead of three because I held the last four positions simultaneously, meaning that I served as the appointed city/town attorney for three municipalities and as a Special Magistrate at the same time. This does not violate the Florida Constitutional prohibition on dual office holding pursuant to opinions of the Florida Attorney General's Office, and because these positions were under contract, not in-house.

1.1 a. Assistant County Attorney

1.1 b. Sarasota County, Sarasota, Florida

1.1 c. I served in-house as the County's legal advisor on transactional matters including real estate transactions, special taxing districts, government finance matters, and related land use questions. In addition, I provided input on any additional matters as requested by staff and supervisors.

1.2 a. City Attorney

1.2 b. Tarpon Springs, Florida

1.2 c. I served as contract counsel after bidding for the position through the Request for Proposals (RFP) process. In the General Counsel position, I advised all City departments, officials, and boards, including public works, police, fire, the City Clerk, the City Manager, the Building Official, the planning department, finance, and the City cemetery. I also advised all City of Tarpon boards, including the Planning and Zoning Board, which served as the Local Planning Agency

board, the Board of Adjustment, the very active Historic Preservation Board, and the Code Enforcement Board.

1.3 a. Town Attorney

1.3 b. Indian Shores, Florida

1.3 c. I served as contract counsel for just over a decade, advising on all aspects of Town business, departments, and boards. I assisted the Town with their first Charter review in over twenty years, and provided comprehensive land development code advise and review. I helped the Town maintain the highest Community Rating System (CRS) rating of all the Pinellas beach communities due to the increased standards and enforcement of the building codes, both local and state codes.

1.4 a. Town Attorney

1.4 b. Belleair Shore, Florida

1.4 c. I served as contract counsel for a prestigious beachfront community of fifty-two homes with the highest tax base in Pinellas County. Many of the homes in this Town had property lines that extended into the Gulf of Mexico abutting sovereign submerged lands of the United States, and presented unique legal challenges for both individual property owners and the Town. The Town had a special grant of authority from the State legislature to meet outside of its incorporated jurisdiction because the only property owned by the municipality were three beach access easements.

1.5 a. Special Magistrate

1.5 b. Palmetto, Florida

1.5 c. I served as the Special Magistrate for the City of Palmetto, presiding over code enforcement matters. I received testimony and evidence at code enforcement hearings, and issued orders with findings of fact and legal conclusions. The opinions drafted took into consideration both the unique factual circumstances of each case as well as the constitutional considerations and protections of the parties.

2. Please describe why you left your last three positions. Additionally, are there any gaps in excess of two weeks in your employment history including any short-term (i.e., approximately 1-year or less) posts that may have occurred in your career? If so, please explain in detail.

- a. In March of 2024, I resigned from Persson, Cohen, Mooney, Jackson & Fernandez, P.A., for which I was an exclusive contract employee through my personal firm, Regina A. Kardash, P.A. In addition to the positions and responsibilities above, I also provided a considerable amount of support to other firm clients, which included over thirty community development districts, special

fire districts, and additional municipalities and police departments such as Venice and Longboat Key. I resigned the position in order to structure a better work-life balance as in-house counsel by focusing on a single client for the Sarasota County position. Following the death of my mother last year, I resigned Sarasota County and began to care for my father full time who passed away last month. Although I have maintained my independent firm, I have not taken on any clients during this period to solely focus on my family. I consider this gap a healthy break in what has been a very busy and successful career.

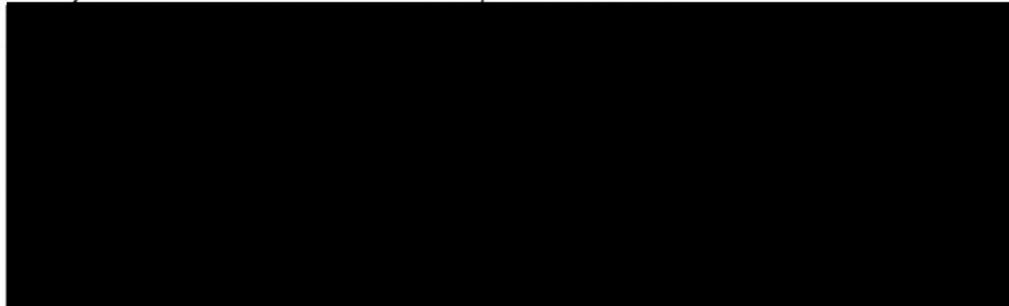
3. Do you currently possess an active Florida Bar license? If so, please attach a copy of your credentials. Also, include any special credentials or Board Certifications you may currently possess.

a. I have a Florida Bar license, attached, and I have been Board Certified in City, County, and Local Government Law since 2017.

4. Have you had any ethics or grievance filings against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.

a. *The following information is confidential and exempt from disclosure until final resolution by the Florida Bar and Florida Supreme Court.*

i.



5. Have you had any malpractice suits against you or your firm? If so, please explain in detail.

a. None.

6. Please list any client that you currently represent that could cause a potential conflict of interest with the City of North Port, Florida. If applicable, please describe how you would resolve any current or future potential conflicts of interest.

a. None.

7. Have you or your firm represented any client in the past 10 years against the City of North Port, Florida or one of its employees? If so, please describe in detail.

a. I have not represented any adversarial clients or employees from the City of North Port. I have provided support to attorneys representing community development districts within the municipal boundaries, but those matters have been either legislative or administrative in nature, not adversarial. The client that stands out in my recollection was Bobcat Trail CDD, and I believe the matter pertained to easements.

8. Please describe any experience you may have in Land Use, Planning & Zoning, Economic Development Agreements, Procurement, Contracts, Environmental Permitting, Easements & Eminent Domain, Public Records, Ordinance Drafting, Interlocal Agreements, and Florida Local Government Law.

Due to the extensive experience I have in each one of these categories, I am going to provide a brief review of my knowledge base for each category listed.

a. Land Use

i. In addition to advising every jurisdiction I have served on land use matters, I also served for almost a decade as an appointed board member on the Pinellas County Local Planning Agency and was elected Chair for two terms.

b. Planning & Zoning

i. Planning and zoning was an integral part of the land use advisement mentioned above. I educated board members through the Comprehensive Planning process, and assisted boards in applying regulations in matters that came through for approval or variances.

c. Economic Development Agreements

i. In certain communities, Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRA's) played an important role in the economic growth of the area. The utilization of TIF funds and reinvestment of those funds into the community helped multiple areas with growth and development or redevelopment. Some of the most complex economic development agreements I handled were for the Pinellas County Homeless Leadership Board. This entity was a twenty-six member board that served as the Continuum of Care to administer services and federal HUD dollars to the community. Pinellas County was one of the nation's top five recipients of these funds. The board members were politicians, law enforcement, and non-profit community leaders who all came together to ensure that the funds were spent according to the demonstrated needs of the homeless community in Pinellas County.

d. Procurement

i. I worked on procurement projects ranging from multi-million dollar art installations and community beautification funds, to critical infrastructure projects such as drainage, sewage, and lift stations. My procurement experience is not limited to construction, but also includes advising on compliance with the auditor procurement process outlined in state law, as well as other required procurements for professional services such as architects, engineers, and landscapers. I also have experience with the declaration of surplus property and offering government property for sale.

e. Contracts

i. I have reviewed or drafted just about every kind of contract that a municipality would utilize. These contracts include interlocal agreements, memorandums of understanding, grant agreements, software contracts,

intellectual property agreements, severance agreements, lease agreements, real estate sales contracts, and government bonds and refinancing agreements.

f. Environmental Permitting

i. I have reviewed many land use applications and permit applications on environmentally sensitive lands both as the attorney advising the government entity and also as a board member on the local planning agency. This has included shoreline preservation issues, protected species relocation and identification, and designation of preserve and conservation areas.

g. Easements & Eminent Domain

i. I have extensive experience with easements, including public use easements and the legal standards to create easements. Although I have never personally handled an eminent domain case, I understand what is required to prove the government necessity for eminent domain under Florida's Constitution which provides greater protection for private property rights.

h. Public Records

i. I have dealt with Florida's public records laws for the entirety of my career and have routinely educated my officials and clients on public records. While working with Persson, Cohen, Mooney, Fernandez & Jackson, I developed a class for firm clients to educate public employees on redacting records for police and fire departments. These two departments in particular often have sensitive information which is deemed confidential and may not be released under penalty of law.

i. Ordinance Drafting (And Resolutions)

i. I have drafted countless ordinances and resolutions over the course of my career. These legislative documents have ranged from simple parks ordinances and elections resolutions to complex land development and flood plain ordinances. Ordinance writing is an art which continues to evolve with Constitutional standards. Writing solid ordinances with proofs in the "WHEREAS" clauses can often times be difference between winning or losing a lawsuit challenging the regulation.

j. Interlocal Agreements

i. I have drafted, reviewed, and litigated many interlocal agreements throughout my career. These agreements have been both simple two-party agreements, and complex thirty-member or countywide agreements. For example, the Pinellas County Homeless Leadership Board was originally formed using an interlocal agreement that was sunseting during my tenure as their advisor. I worked with multiple jurisdictions and their respective counsels to determine that it was time for those agreements to sunset and restructure the organization according to Federal HUD guidelines.

k. Florida Local Government Law

- i. As a Board Certified City, County, and Local Government Law attorney, I have demonstrated my knowledge, proficiency, and peer-reviewed support in local government law.*

9. If selected as the next City Attorney for North Port, what do you believe will be your greatest challenges as you move into the position?

- a. Every City is unique, and learning about the culture and processes at City Hall will be a welcome challenge, as will assisting with the strategic growth and preservation of the community.

10. Describe your philosophy regarding the role the City Attorney plays with the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, the senior leadership of the City, and the various standing Boards & Commissions.

- a. The role of the City Attorney is to represent and advise the City; I am always very clear that the client I am advising is the entity. I provide the Mayor, the City Commission, the City Manager, and all officials advice within the course and scope of their public duties only. This extends to the boards as well. I spend time educating board members on the scope of their delegated authority, and I am clear that I do not serve as a personal attorney for any of the elected or appointed public officials outside the scope of their public duties.

11. Tell us about the volume of work you currently manage on a regular basis and how varied your responsibilities may be. If you are presently in private practice, how many clients do you currently service?

- a. The volume of work I would handle on a daily basis as general counsel representing three municipalities along with my support of other firm clients exceeded normal expectations for most attorneys. The client list for which I provided services spanned from Charlotte to Pasco counties, all requiring in-person meeting attendance, agenda reviews, legal research, memorandums, legal document review, client conferences and advising public officials. The high-paced environment provided exposure to a wide range of legal issues with demanding turn around times. Meticulous time management and appropriate delegation was imperative for continued successful representation.

12. How do you keep up to date on state and federal legislation, and how would you communicate changes in legislation and other legal questions related to administrative and operational issues with both the Mayor & City Commission, the City Manager, and staff of the City of North Port?

- a. Over the years organizations such as the City, County, and Local Government Law Section of the Florida Bar, the Florida Municipal Attorneys Association, the Florida League of Cities, and the Florida Association of Police Attorneys have provided great annual updates and instructive information regarding legislative changes to our practice area. I had started the process for my clients of providing relevant legislative updates that might impact each specific community

through a memorandum. Sometimes additional research would be required to review how or if it would impact the client. If compliance goals had to be met, I would assist the client in developing those goals.

13. Please describe your experience of working in or for a fast-paced growth community. What do you believe are the unique challenges the City Attorney's Office will likely face in such an environment?

- a. The most important part of working with fast-paced growth and development is ensuring the proper infrastructure to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of the community. The whole purpose of government building regulations is to provide for the appropriate symbiotic relationship between new growth and preserving historically and culturally significant buildings and neighborhoods for the community.

14. Describe the most complex or controversial lawsuit or open records request you have been involved with and the outcome.

- a. I have handled multiple complex and controversial lawsuits and public record requests throughout my career. A particular case that stands out involves the beach access easements in Belleair Shore. This case was complex because it intertwined two municipal governments, real property law, private property rights, sovereign submerged lands, public beach access rights, and home rule authority. Belleair Shore was previously a special beach improvement district of neighboring Belleair Beach. After researching deeds, I was able to determine that the entire area had been platted as a single resort district in the 1930's when Pinellas County was still a part of Hillsborough County. At the beginning of World War II, the developer no longer had access to materials and resources necessary to build the resort as platted, and instead began to sell off individual lots for development. The deeds drafted for the properties north of Gulf Boulevard in what is now Belleair Beach included easement rights over three lots in what is now Belleair Shore. In the 1980's and 90's, the two government entities executed interlocal agreements defining the rights and responsibilities of each entity and its citizens. The Mayor of Belleair Beach insisted that this amounted to ownership rights and sued Belleair Shore privately along with about forty Belleair Beach residents in an attempt to gain control of the beach access lots. The frivolity of the lawsuit and antics of the litigants ultimately cost the Mayor his seat during the next election, and the two communities were able to return to their previous peaceful interactions after the plaintiffs settled.
- b. Another interesting and complex case that I handled involved the seizure of real property for the Longboat Key Police Department. The underlying felony that served as the basis for the seizure was video voyeurism. An individual who owned a short term/vacation rental property had illegally installed recording devices in private areas of the home, such as the bedroom and bathroom, and had been illegally recording renters. A tech savvy renter detected the cameras and reported it to the police department. The investigation led to the owner

being charged with multiple counts of video voyeurism sufficient to justify the seizure of the property which was non-homestead.

15. Do you take the time to educate a Board of Directors/Governing Body, Departmental Staff, or members of a Board/Commission about the legal implications and circumstances when asked to provide your legal opinion on a matter? If so, how do you accomplish that?

- a. I believe that educating the governing body and its boards is an important part of advising government entities. Not only does the Ethics Commission require annual training for reporting individuals on constitutional requirements for public records and sunshine law, reviewing community specific regulations, Ordinances, and Charters helps to build a more efficient and effective government organization through its leaders. I like to provide annual updates, trainings, and refreshers to any board that I advise. Often times I like to provide these trainings the first time I sit with a board so that everyone is starting off on the same page, and the board members understand that I am there to help them do the best job that they can within the confines of the law.

16. The City Attorney's Office consists of eight full-time employees, including the City Attorney, Deputy City Attorney, two Assistant City Attorneys, the Police Legal Advisor, two Paralegals, and one Business Services Coordinator. How comfortable are you in working in a smaller department where it is expected that you will largely undertake your own legal research, draft documents, and working collaboratively with a small office team?

- a. I have always worked in small, collaborative environments where I was responsible for my own work product. I particularly enjoyed working at Persson, Cohen, Mooney, Fernandez & Jackson, P.A., with intelligent and responsible colleagues. The important part of working with smaller departments is being able to rely on each other and an understanding that everyone's contributions are important to the overall success of the team.

17. Tell us about your experience in managing outside legal counsel with litigation, risk management cases, and other specialized matters.

- a. Understanding legal department (1) strengths, (2) resources such as budget, and (3) personnel time management are top considerations when referring matters to outside legal counsel. From the beginning of my career, I have been tasked with monitoring legal proceedings handled by insurance defense counsel which included attending depositions, hearings, and mediations. In addition, certain employment law cases were also outsourced to counsel that was board certified in employment law. As the City or Town Attorney, I would be the individual to report to the governing body on the status of all litigation cases, call shade meetings, discuss strategies, and present settlement offers. If the scope or defense of a particular case exceeds the legal department resources, using qualified firms and lawyers to assist can prove to be a valuable and strategic step

forward in a litigation matter. Some attorneys may have specific experience or expertise in a matter that exceeds the normal course and scope of a government lawyers practice. The decision to utilize outside counsel should always be made with the best interest of the client in mind. When there is a legal conflict of interest, as defined under the Florida Bar rules or pursuant to law, the decision to utilize outside counsel is mandated. A good example of this occurs on code enforcement boards. The City Attorney's Office should either represent the board or prosecute the case, but not both.

18. Describe your management style in five bullet points of five words or less for each bullet point.

- a. *Collaborative*
 - i. We succeed or fail together.
- b. *Instructional*
 - i. Learn from success and mistakes.
- c. *Supportive*
 - i. Team support breeds more success.
- d. *Accountability*
 - i. Know your role.
- e. *Integrity*
 - i. Speaks for itself.

19. When we conduct a comprehensive background investigation and reference checks, what will we find that may warrant explanation or that could be of concern to the City of North Port?

- a. For almost ten years I have exercised my right under the Florida Constitution to utilize medical marijuana for a qualifying chronic medical condition, and the medical card will appear on a comprehensive background investigation.
- b. The pending paternity action involving my child has been ongoing for eight (8) years, including a Second District Court of Appeals case.
- c. *The following information is confidential and exempt from disclosure under Florida law.*
 - i. There are police reports containing allegations of child abuse in multiple jurisdictions.

20. Are you currently involved in any other employment searches and if so, what is your status and associated timetables involved in those searches?

- a. I am currently interviewing for a part-time teaching position to teach a single class at a local college.

21. What will we find in an Internet search of press coverage that may be controversial or of concern to the City of North Port? Please provide whatever explanation you think is appropriate to help us understand what we will find.

- a. The most prominent press coverage relates to the City of Tarpon Springs when I resigned, and that is rather benign. One article mentions a pending public records request involving litigation at the City of Tarpon. The City had been sued by their former City Attorney, Tom Trask, and the firm essentially buried the City in public records requests. Thousands of documents had to be reviewed and redacted by the City. The City had to hire a public records expert qualified to handle police records and confidential materials in order to respond to the request. I rarely, if ever, talk directly to the press because that is the responsibility of the City's Public Information Officer, but if the Mayor or a Commissioner asks me a question at a public meeting, I answer it. I received an inquiry from the Dias at a meeting regarding the status of the pending public records requests, and answered that the records in question were under review for confidential material and being processed for release.
- b. There was also press coverage of the beach umbrella ordinance that I wrote for Belleair Shore, but I do not recall if the articles mentioned my name at all. None of these articles are necessarily concerning; the beach umbrella ban was somewhat controversial, but I ultimately successfully defended the Constitutionality and enforcement of the ordinance.

22. Please provide your desired compensation range and related benefit package if you are ultimately selected as the final candidate for this position. If you are selected and offered an acceptable compensation and benefits package, what concerns or hesitations do you have that would have to be resolved before you would be ready to accept the position? How soon would you be available to start work following the negotiation and acceptance of a final package?

- a. I would anticipate a compensation range between \$175,000 and \$200,000 for this position, with benefits including health insurance, dental and vision insurance, life and disability insurance, and retirement. I am assuming that the City of North Port offers a standard benefits package in this regard, as well as paid vacation and sick leave. In addition, I would anticipate the payment of Florida Bar dues and certification fees, and payment for Continued Legal Education (CLE) conferences and seminars sufficient to keep the license and certification active. I would also anticipate payment for membership in related voluntary bar organizations such as the Florida Municipal Attorneys Association.
- b. I do not have concerns or hesitations at this time.
- c. I would be available to start September 1, 2025.

23. What are the three most important questions you have for the North Port Mayor & City Commission as part of your consideration of the City Attorney position?

- a. What have been the three greatest successes of your legal department over the past five years?
- b. What, if anything, would you change or keep the same about the City's legal department?
- c. What does a successful relationship look like between the City Attorney and the elected and appointed City Officials?



MEMBER PROFILE

Regina Ann Kardash

Member in Good Standing

Eligible to Practice Law in Florida

Bar Number:

66381

Mail Address:

[Redacted]

Office: [Redacted]

Email:

regina@reginakardashpa.com

Personal Bar URL:

<https://www.floridabar.org/mybarprofile/66381>

vCard:



County:

Manatee

Circuit:

12

Admitted:

06/11/2009

10-Year Discipline History:

None

Law School:

Stetson University College of Law, 2007

Board Certifications:

Area	Year
City, County and Local Government Law	2017

Sections:

City, County & Local Govt Law

Practice Areas:

Government and Administrative
Government and Public Policy
Government Contracts
Law and Government/Procurement
Real Estate/Land Development
Zoning, Planning and Land Use

Federal Courts:

U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida

State Courts:

Florida

The Find a Lawyer directory is provided as a public service. The Florida Bar maintains limited basic information about lawyers licensed to practice in the state (e.g., name, address, year of birth, gender, law schools attended, admission year). However, The Florida Bar allows individual attorneys the opportunity to add personal and professional information to the directory. The lawyer is solely responsible for reviewing and updating any additional information in the directory. The lawyer's added information is not reviewed by The Bar for accuracy and The Bar makes no warranty of any kind, express or implied. The Florida Bar, its Board of Governors, employees, and agents are not responsible for the accuracy of that additional information. Publication of lawyers' contact information in this listing does not mean the lawyers have agreed to receive unsolicited communications in any form. Unauthorized use of this data may result in civil or criminal penalties. The Find a Lawyer directory is not a lawyer referral service.