



Florida House of Representatives
Representative Clovis Watson, Jr.
District 20

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August 3, 2016

Mayor Gib Coerper
Vice Mayor Robert Wilford
Commissioner Shirley Green Brown
Commissioner Gary Hardacre
Commissioner Ben Bourkari, Jr.
City of Alachua
PO Box 9
Alachua, Florida 32616

Re: Mike New Request for Legal Representation
Florida Board of Professional Engineers Complaint

Dear Mayor and Commissioners,

Please accept this letter supporting Mike New's request for you to consider paying for his legal representation related to a number of complaints filed with the Florida Board of Professional Engineers (FBPE). I request that you to agree to pay the expenses he incurred defending against these outrageous complaints. Mike faithfully served the City in the capacity of Public Services Director for ten (10) years, six (6) while I served as City Manager.

I am familiar with the complaints filed against Mike by Mr. Curtis. I am confident complaints were filed in retribution for Mike's involvement in the Heritage Oaks subdivision. Please know that Mike's involvement in Heritage Oaks always resulted from my direction, with my full knowledge.

I hired Mike in 2004 to be the City's Public Services Director. One of the primary factors that led to selecting Mike was his standing as a licensed professional engineer. I believed that it was important that a licensed engineer serve as Alachua's Public Services Director. Mike's licensure as a professional engineer brought a level of expertise to the position that the City previously lacked. I believed his possession of an engineering license was so important to the City that



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during my tenure with the City, I authorized payments for his license renewal fees and continuing education courses. To my knowledge, Mike maintained his engineering license solely to benefit the City of Alachua.

I understand that a central issue in this matter is whether or not Mike's job description required him to practice engineering when he prepared a cost estimate for wastewater system improvements related to the removal of the gray water system at Heritage Oaks. I directed Mike to prepare the cost estimate. His engineering license played no part in my decision to request it. Any Department Head in municipal government would be expected to develop cost estimates related to projects in their purview. In my judgement, Mike prepared the cost estimate as a function of his job duties as Public Services Director, not because he was a licensed engineer.

I believe that the question of whether or not the City should pay for legal representation would be moot if Mike continued as an employee of the City. His decision to move on and grow his career should not be a factor in considering this issue. He was employed with the City of Alachua, representing Alachua, during the time frame of the allegations. It is only fair that Alachua pay his legal expenses. That is the type of decision making that sets Alachua apart from others and makes it the "Good Life Community." I urge you to agree with his request.

Thank you for your consideration in this very important issue.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'C' followed by a dot, a second stylized 'C' followed by a dot, and a final dot.

Clovis Watson, Jr.
Representative, Florida House of Representatives

c: Traci L. Gresham, City Manager
Marian B. Rush, City Attorney
Adam Bourkari, Assistant City Manager
Mike New