

CITY OF OPA-LOCKA

“The Great City”

CLERK’S ACTION SUMMARY MINUTES SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING

June 15, 2022

5:30 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Williams called the meeting to order at 5:54 p.m. on Wednesday, June 15, 2022 at Sherbondy Village, 215 Perviz Avenue, Opa-locka, Florida.

2. ROLL CALL:

The following members of the City Commission were present: Commissioner Chris Davis, Commissioner Audrey Dominguez, Vice Mayor John H. Taylor Jr., and Mayor Veronica Williams. Commissioner Dr. Sherelean Bass arrived at 6:01 p.m. Also, in attendance were: Interim City Manager Darvin Williams, City Attorney Norris-Weeks, Assistant City Attorney Candice Cobb and City Clerk Joanna Flores.

3. INVOCATION:

The Invocation was delivered by Vice Mayor Taylor.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

5. PUBLIC INPUT: (*agenda items only*)

City Clerk Joanna Flores announced the protocol for public participation at City Commission meetings and stated that several individuals had registered to address the Commission virtually.

Mayor Williams opened the floor for Public Input.

Ms. Dorothy Johnson who resides at 13724 NW 22nd Place informed the Commission that she had completed extensive research over the last couple of days and she discovered multiple pieces of legislation addressing invoices and contracts dated between 2008 and the current date. Ms. Johnson said that she asked the Clerk to provide the Commission with Resolution 21-9832, which she said was sponsored by the previous City Manager and the current City Attorney, directing that the current invoices for the City Attorney be paid,

adding that as legislation, it is law. Having served on the Audit Committee, Ms. Johnson recalled that the auditor stated in his audit management summary that there were not any discrepancies in the unmodified audit from 2015 to 2019, and that it was highly recommended and approved by the Commission to implement a budget financial system, which she noted, is included in the 2022 budget. She also said that it was highly recommended to the Commission to establish a Finance Committee, but it has not been executed. Ms. Johnson concluded by stating that the City had paid an outstanding invoice for Miami-Dade College, and added that having served 4 administrations, she has never seen an audit conducted for invoices for one of the City's employees and urged the Commission to do what she characterized as the right thing, by paying the invoices and having everything else that needs to be done to happen behind the doors.

City Clerk Flores informed the Commission that Mr. Brian Hunter from the Office of Florida's Chief Inspector General was connected via Zoom to make comments at the meeting.

Mayor Williams stated that it would be up to the will of the Commission.

Vice Mayor Taylor pointed out that Public Input was open.

Mayor Williams acknowledged that Public Input is open and stated that Mr. Brian Hunter would get the same amount of time as any other member of the public.

Mr. Brain Hunter introduced himself as Special Counsel to the Governor's Designee and he stated that the State of Florida did not have a specific public statement to make and that he was present at the request of various Commissioners to provide technical assistance. Mr. Hunter added that they were sent a link to participate, and he is available to assist as necessary or as needed.

Mayor Williams thanked Mr. Brain Hunter for being present to provide assistance.

There being no additional members of the public to address the Commission, Mayor Williams closed Public Input.

6. RESOLUTION:

- 1. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF OPA-LOCKA, FLORIDA, DIRECTING THE INTERIM CITY MANAGER TO PAY ANY AND ALL INVOICES THAT HAVE BEEN PRESENTED TO THE CITY OF OPA-LOCKA FOR LEGAL SERVICES FROM THE LAW FIRM BURNADETTE NORRIS-WEEKS, P.A., PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION OF RECITALS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. *Sponsored by Mayor Williams***

The above resolution was read by City Attorney Norris-Weeks.

It was moved by Commissioner Dominguez, seconded by Vice Mayor Taylor to discuss Agenda Item 6-1.

Mayor Williams stated that she brought Agenda Item 6-1 before the Commission because of recent things that have been happening. The Mayor said that they know that there are issues, noting that it's been laid out in the public's eye. She went on to say that the issue at hand is the 2 invoices that were discussed at the last Commission meeting that have not been paid, and she stated that she is in agreement that they should be paid. Mayor Williams asserted that the Commission wants to make it clear that they oversee the 3 Charter members including the City Clerk, City Manager and the City Attorney. The Mayor lamented that their dirty laundry had been aired out publicly and said it was disgraceful, offering assurances that they were not going to do that during this meeting and expressed her hope that the Commission hears her on this.

Commissioner Davis stated that he did not agree with the wording in the resolution proposed by Agenda Item 6-1 because he thinks it is extremely broad. The Commissioner said that he understands the effort to resolve the issue in the most respectable manner but reminded the Commission that they have a fiduciary responsibility to make the best financial decisions on behalf of the Residents that they represent. He asked if the amounts for 2020 and 2021 were roughly about \$40,000.

City Attorney Norris-Weeks stated that the last page of both documents that were provided to the Commission, include the total amounts.

Commissioner Davis stated that what he sees on those pages was \$14,000 and \$12,000.

City Attorney Norris-Weeks confirmed that those were the correct amounts.

Commissioner Davis asked how the resolution proposed by Agenda Item 6-1 would impact invoices for FY 22 going forward, because he said it states, "any and all".

Mayor Williams pointed out that the resolution proposed by Agenda Item 6-1 stipulates "any and all invoices that have been presented to the City of Opa-locka" are to be paid. The Mayor added that those invoices for legal services from the City Attorney that include all supporting documentation, should be paid.

Commissioner Davis pointed out that Resolution 21-9832 basically states what the Commission was considering passing during this meeting, as a resolution

authorizing the City Manager to approve pending and future invoices for the City Attorney and its legal expenditures. The Commissioner recalled that the previous resolution was passed because, as Mayor Williams pointed out, the Members of the Commission are the bosses of the City's Chartered Officers and ultimately oversee their finances, and the resolution designated a City Employee to give that authority to the City Manager. He also said that the cap was an issue from the past which had still not been addressed. Commissioner Davis said that since he's been in office, outside litigation fees from the City Attorney's office have never been addressed. He concluded by asserting that he did not want to pass this and not address the larger issues which lead to these sort of situations.

Mayor Williams pointed out that she prefaced the Commission's conversation on the resolution proposed by Agenda Item 6-1, by saying that they know there are issues. The Mayor stated that as the City Attorney's bosses, they have the right to sit and have a conversation with her that does not have to be publicly aired. She went on to say that they have the right to let her know what she needs to do better, what's working and the things that they want to happen in order to move the City forward. Asserting that they have that right and no one else, Mayor Williams said that it's not an issue that's going to be dead or not going to come back, because she acknowledged that they know it will. She concluded by reasserted that they want to make sure that the 2 invoices that were discussed at the last Commission meeting, will be paid.

Commissioner Bass stated that she was looking for supporting documents with the City Attorney's invoices.

City Attorney Norris Weeks stated that she is not sure what supporting documents Commissioner Bass is looking for. The City Attorney explained that everything in the bill can be found online. She went on to say that her invoices are how bills are presented by all of the attorneys who do work for Opa-locka, including herself since she has been serving the City. City Attorney Norris-Weeks assured the Commission that her invoices are not in any unusual format, and they don't generally have supporting documents, just listing the breakdown for the time spent on each item. She also addressed a couple of things that Commissioner Davis stated, asserting that there had never been any discussion of caps. The City Attorney said that her bills are the lowest of any attorney that's worked with the City for the last 20 years, and she recalled that the representatives of the State of Florida have said that the bills have gone down under her tenure. She went on to say that her billing isn't the issue, and that she simply wants to be paid for her litigation bills going forward. City Attorney Norris-Weeks acknowledged that the issue brought up by Mayor Williams concerns the need to catch up on billing, which

she committed to do. She offered assurances that she will be caught up with her 2021 fiscal year billing before the 2021 audit begins and said that there's nothing that the auditors are waiting for from her. City Attorney Norris-Weeks concluded by asking that the Commission move the item forward.

Commissioner Bass expressed her hope that the other invoices that are due can get done in a timely manner so that this will not occur going forward and suggested that it be taken care of in 60 to 90 days.

City Attorney Norris-Weeks assured the Commission that she will have her invoices done in the time requested by Commissioner Bass.

Commissioner Bass asked if City Attorney Norris-Weeks was committing to have her invoices submitted in 60 or 90 days.

City Attorney Norris-Weeks stated that 90 days would be great and committed to have all her invoices done by that time.

Commissioner Davis requested that per the City Attorney's service contract, whenever there's a legal matter, that the Commission be provided a projected budget within 60 days.

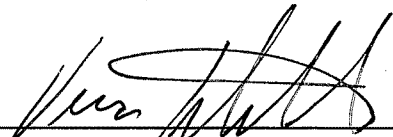
Mayor Williams stated that Commissioner Davis would need to sit with the City Attorney to make sure that what he is requesting is not happening, because she said that she believes it is happening. The Mayor went on to say that legal is not her field, and when they say stuff like a budget, she asked what that looks like and suggested that Commissioner Davis can tell her what that looks like.

There being no additional discussion, the resolution proposed in Agenda Item 6-1 passed by a 4-1 vote.

Commissioner Davis	No
Commissioner Dominguez	Yes
Commissioner Bass	Yes
Vice Mayor Taylor	Yes
Mayor Williams	Yes

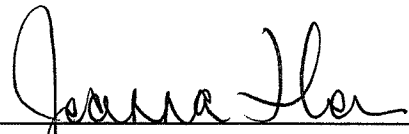
7. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the City Commission, Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at 6:14 p.m.



Veronica Williams
Mayor

Attest:



Joanna Flores, CMC
City Clerk