



## MEMORANDUM

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Date: November 14, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and Commissioners

From: Todd Stoughton  
Interim City Manager

Subject: **File ID: 24-6624 Independent Counsel to Advise the City Commission on Issues Pertaining to recent Allegations and Investigations**

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### **Introduction**

Requesting the City Commission consideration to hire Independent Counsel to advise the Mayor and Commissioners on issues and investigations on City employees.

### **Background**

During the October 10<sup>th</sup> City Commission meeting a citizen spoke at Citizens Comments and made several allegations regarding ethical issues related to the City's Chief Building Official, in which he stated 'you can expect there will be further investigations', including FBI, State Attorney's Office, and the Florida Bar. The citizen recommended hiring an independent law firm to 'look at things'.

Immediately after the citizen comments, Commissioner Kaufman gave directions to the Interim City Manager to advise the commission on issues pertaining to these investigations and to bring forward a resolution to consider the hiring of an 'Independent Counsel'.

I personally contacted the City's Ethic Counsel, Robert Myers, with Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman (Government & Business Law Firm) who recommended that the State Attorney be contacted prior to hiring independent counsel. The State Attorney's Office was contacted in which they stated they did not see an issue based on the information given but would like to be informed if the City hires an independent counsel for the purpose of investigating these issues.

### **Financial Impact:**

The hiring of independent counsel costs has not been calculated at this time.

**Recommendation**

The City Manager's Office does not have a recommendation regarding the hiring of independent counsel.