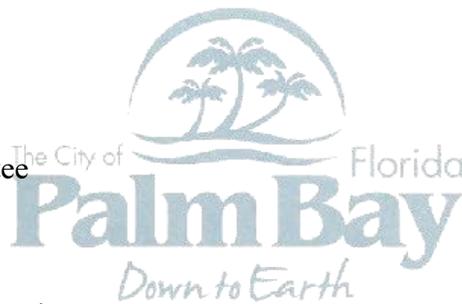


November 15th, 2017

Joint Legislative Auditing Committee
111 W. Madison Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1400



Ref: November 16th, 2017 JLAC Meeting

Dear Madam Chair Mayfield,

Please forgive my absence at your JLAC November 16th, 2017 meeting. My official duties require me to be present at a Regularly Scheduled and advertised meeting of the Palm Bay City Council, in our chambers at Palm Bay City Hall, at 7:00pm of the same day as your meeting in Tallahassee, Florida.

Firstly, I commend you and Representative Randy Fine for your leadership and commitment to the constituents of Palm Bay, Florida. Both of you represent the entirety of our municipality and its over 117,000 residents.

Second, as a longtime resident of this great community, and a City Councilmember elected at-large, I have witnessed decades of success and failures during this and prior administrations. This administration has finally said “no more kicking the can” when it comes to providing essential services, infrastructure, and a higher quality of life. We, as a City, are implementing programs and initiatives that will address our infrastructure needs and balancing our land-uses; however, without the trust & faith of our residents, our ability as a City to move forward with said initiatives are compromised. We have become the subject of multiple allegations of corruption, starting around April of this year, and our local media has sensationalized the issue ad nauseam. This negative press has resulted in cynicism and millions in lost economic development. I have zero tolerance when it comes to public corruption! We have spent a great amount of time and resources to investigate these allegations, especially when it came to allegations of missing or misappropriation of CDBG & SHIP funds [emphasis in our “Homes for Warriors” program]. With a combination of a clean city-wide financial audit [aka Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2016] by Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC; as well as the hiring of an expert who has been working with state/federal agencies regarding CDBG & SHIP – it was revealed last week, at a publicly advertised workshop, that there was no missing or misappropriation of public funds. This is fantastic news, but unfortunately a major local media source (*Florida Today Newspaper*) has failed to give this good news a fraction of the coverage that the initial allegations received.

To sum: I enthusiastically welcome your efforts to ensure we, as a City, are operating as our constituents expect and deserve. I know there is room for improvement and if we are to move forward with major initiatives, we need your assistance in regaining the trust & faith of our constituents.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tres Holton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tres Holton
Palm Bay City Councilmember, Seat 4

Cc: Senators Baxley, Passidomo & Thurston; Representaives Sullivan, Davis, Fine, Gruters, Hardemon & Stevenson; Staff - Kathy DuBose, Cathy Boyett & Debbie White

Legislative Department