

**Alachua County Board of County Commissioners
Performance Evaluation**

County Attorney

This form shall be completed by each member of the Board to evaluate the designated Administrative Official's performance in each of the areas noted below. Performance levels can be noted based on the following scale:

5- Excellent (almost always exceeds expectations and performs at very high standard)

4- Above average (generally exceeds performance expectations)

3- Satisfactory (meets performance expectations)

2- Below average (generally does not meet performance expectations)

1 -Unsatisfactory (almost always fails to meet minimum performance expectations).

Each member of the Board should sign the form and forward it to the Human Resources Director.

EVALUATION PERIOD: 10/1/2019 to 9/30/2020

1. PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND STATUS	5	4	3	2	1
a. Legal advice provided has proven to be accurate and technically correct.	✓				
b. Is respected within the legal profession.	✓				
c. Possesses an efficient and effective knowledge of the County's Code of Laws and regulations, state statutes and federal laws.	✓				
d. Possesses an efficient and effective knowledge of case law and other government's regulations regarding local governments and issues facing the County.	✓				

2. RELATIONS WITH BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS	5	4	3	2	1
a. Communicates effectively with the Board, staff and the community.	✓				
b. Responds in a timely manner to requests made by the Board.	✓				
c. Proactively anticipates and identifies potential legal consequences to proposed Board action.	✓				
d. Maintains the Board's and County staff's confidence in the performance of his/her duties.	✓				

3.	LEGAL REPRESENTATION	5	4	3	2	1
a.	Aggressively represents the County's interests as directed by the Board.	✓				
b.	Approach is effective in achieving the best possible legal outcomes for the County's interests given the issues that arise.	✓				
c.	Represents the County in a professional and ethical manner.	✓				
d.	Impartially and objectively performs his/her duties and responsibilities.	✓				
e.	Estimates of legal impacts are reasonably accurate on a regular basis.	✓				
f.	Regularly provides the scope of legal expertise necessary to meet the County's needs on issues that arise, either himself/herself, through staff, or other available resources.	✓				
g.	Maintains confidentiality with regard to all matter discussed with the Board and County staff.	✓				

4.	REPORTING	5	4	3	2	1
a.	Provides the Board with reports concerning matters of importance to the County.	✓				
b.	Reports are accurate, comprehensive, and produced in a timely manner.		✓			

5.	STAFFING	5	4	3	2	1
a.	Recruits and retains competent personnel.	✓				
b.	Accurately informed and concerned about employee relations.		✓			
c.	Promotes training and development opportunities for attorneys and staff.	✓				

7.	FISCAL MANAGEMENT	5	4	3	2	1
a.	Prepares a balanced budget to provide services at a level directed by the Board.	✓				

b.	Appropriately monitors and manages the fiscal activities of the County Attorney's Office.	✓				
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6.	SUPERVISION	5	4	3	2	1
a.	Encourages staff to make decisions within their own areas of responsibility and job descriptions, yet maintains general control of all legal operations.	✓				
b.	Instills confidence and initiative in subordinates and emphasizes support rather than restrictive controls for the completion of their assignments.	✓				
c.	Has developed a friendly and informal relationship with the work force as a whole, yet maintains the prestige and dignity of the County Attorney's Office.	✓				
d.	Evaluates personnel periodically and addresses any needed improvements, as well as recognizes accomplishments.		✓			
e.	Encourages teamwork, innovation, and effective problem-solving among the attorneys and staff.	✓				

Total All Points: 132 Divide Total by: 27 (#of categories) Average: 4.9

8. What strengths has the County Attorney demonstrated (management skills, knowledge, abilities) which have been most helpful to you as a commissioner during this evaluation period (feel free to be general or include specific issues or projects which benefited from the Attorney's leadership)?

Sylvia Torres is an excellent County Attorney, combining all the attributes that local government needs in their legal counselor. She manages a staff of lawyers and aides who have a remarkable work ethic, attention to detail, and a willingness to be creative within the law that is inspiring to observe. During the pandemic, her team has had to research the world to find best practices to incorporate into the unique constraints that governing in Florida presents. Her office managed numerous complicated kerfluffs, such as the collapse and re-building of CareerSource, intricate public-private partnerships, fast-tracked land development regulations, and a number of unique transactions – and mostly with staff working remotely with all the distractions that creates. Most importantly, her team is approachable and helpful to employees in various departments, rather than critical or confrontational which has sometimes been the posture of the office in past administrations.

9. What performance areas would you identify as needing improvement? Why? What constructive, positive ideas can you offer the County Attorney to improve these areas?

It is important to maintain strong connections within the legal profession in Alachua County and the state, as more often than not, a collegial conversation between attorneys behind the scenes can reduce or solve problems that can escalate in the absence of communication. While I believe Ms. Torres and her team do this as well as anybody, it's hard to observe (when it works), and so I simply want to reinforce this notion.

10. Other comments?

The County Commission has been fiscally reserved in compensating our Attorney to the point that she is well below what somebody with her legal capabilities is worth in her profession – either in public or private practice. I strongly support a substantial raise for Ms. Torres, both in recognition of her value to the community and our local government, and in the hope that she will not be enticed to find other employment.

Signature:  Date: 9-30-2020