



**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
CITY OF JACKSONVILLE**

TRANSMITTAL MEMORANDUM

April 29, 2022

Samuel Newby, City Council President
Office of the City Council
117 W. Duval Street, Suite 425
Jacksonville, Florida 32202

Audit Title and Number: Sunshine Law Compliance Audit, 2020-CR-0001

Dear President Newby:

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) completed a follow-up review of the Sunshine Law Compliance Audit report (2020-CR-0001). The objective of a follow-up review is to verify that corrective action(s) necessary to remedy conditions noted in an audit report were implemented.

Based on the current processes in place, it is our determination that the findings noted in the report have been satisfactorily corrected.

Please contact myself or our auditors Christine Cullen and Casandra Hobbs at (904) 255-5800, if you have any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matthew Lascell
Inspector General, Office of Inspector General

cc: Margaret Sidman Martin, Council Secretary/Director

"Enhancing Public Trust in Government Through Independent and Responsible Oversight"



Matthew Lascell
Inspector General

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL CITY OF JACKSONVILLE

Follow-Up Review Report: *Sunshine Law Compliance* (2020-CR-0001)

April 29, 2022

“Enhancing Public Trust in Government Through Independent and Responsible Oversight”



The Office of Inspector General

Audit Number 2020-CR-0001

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to document the Office of Inspector General (OIG) follow-up review of the previously issued *Sunshine Law Compliance Audit (2020-CR-0001)*, issued *June 1, 2020*. In accordance with the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), *Performance Standard 2500 – Monitoring Progress*, the basis of the follow-up review is to determine if the Corrective Action(s) necessary to remedy two Findings noted in the audit report were implemented.

Audit Follow-Up

We reviewed the findings noted in the audit report, management responses, and other discussions related to the follow-up inquiry. The results are as follows:

Finding Number 1:

Council Members did not always provide notice for absences and late arrivals, and/or obtain permission for early departures from City Council and Council committee meetings, as required by the *Rules of the Council*. The OIG found no notices were provided for an absence, early departure, or late arrival for 23 meetings.

OIG Verification:

While conducting the follow-up for this Audit, it was determined this finding was not within the requirements for the biannual review and report, which is outlined in Section 15.107, *Ordinance Code*. However, based on a discussion with the City Council President, procedures have been implemented in regard to requests for absences, late arrivals, and early departures, which include monitoring the number of requests for each meeting, and denying requests when a limit is reached. Controls also include monitoring any “pattern” of requests sent and discussing with the respective Council Member. Such pattern may result in a warning, denial of request, or removal from the committee, depending on the circumstance. The discussed procedures have not been formalized in writing; however, the OIG believes the current process is sufficient corrective action.

Status: Corrected

Finding Number 2:

During review of the 295 samples selected, the OIG was unable to locate 46 City Council and Council committee meeting minutes on the Council’s public notice system, located at <http://apps.coj.net/CouncilPublicNotices/Meetings/ShowMeetingsTablePage.asp>.

OIG Verification:

As noted in the response from the former Director/Council Secretary dated June 1, 2020, City Council has implemented a new software, as well as improved the Public Notice System. Based on discussion with the former Director/Council Secretary, changes have also been made to ensure timely updates to the Legislative Bill Search Calendar. The former Director/Council Secretary

demonstrated the functions of the websites to the OIG. Further, this matter will be reviewed for compliance with Section 15.107(b)(3), *Ordinance Code* in the bi-annual review commencing May 2022.

Status: Corrected

Conclusion

Based on the responses received and verification procedures conducted during the follow-up, we have determined the necessary corrective action measures were implemented. Further, the bi-annual Sunshine Law Compliance Review will commence May 1, 2022, pursuant to Section 15.107, *Ordinance Code*. We would like to thank the City Council President, as well as the former and current Director/Council Secretary with their assistance in this follow-up.