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August 19, 2021

VIA E-MAIL DELIVERY

rvason@vasonlaw.com

Mr. Robert T. Vason, Jr., Esquire
501 East Fifth Avenue
Mount Dora, Florida 32757

Re: Petitions proposing amendment to City of Mount Dora Charter

Dear Mr. Vason:

The City of Mount Dora is in receipt of your letter dated August 17, 2021, which was appended to what you describe as, “in excess of 2,100 signed and notarized Initiative Petitions proposing an amendment to the City Charter.” The City of Mount Dora Charter, Section 28 states that before service on the Mayor, Petitions must meet the requirements of Section 28, must be on a form provided by the City and must be signed by fifteen (15) percent of the electors of the City of Mount Dora, registered to vote as of the last general election. These Charter requirements clearly contemplate that the Petitions would be verified through the Supervisor of Elections prior to service on the Mayor; however, in your letter, you unilaterally place the responsibility for verification on the City of Mount Dora, assuming that the City should ensure that the Lake County Supervisor of Elections would verify the Petition signatures in sufficient time for the matter to appear on the ballot of the upcoming general election. Although not obligated, the morning of August 18, 2021, our City Clerk, Jessica Burnham, hand-delivered the Petitions, on behalf of your clients, to the Lake County Supervisor of Elections for verification.

Late that afternoon, Ms. Burnham was contacted by the Lake County Supervisor of Elections Office and she was informed of various deficiencies with your clients’ Petitions. Pursuant to Florida law, the Supervisor of Elections is permitted 30 days to verify Petitions; however, at the request of our Clerk, the Supervisor was willing to commit to a shorter time frame. It was then discovered that your clients had revised the City provided Petition form by removing the voter registration number/date of birth identifier blank. Because the software utilized by the Supervisor of Elections necessitates a voter registration number or date of birth for elector verification, full verification can no longer be guaranteed by a date certain. The Supervisor has confirmed that now he will have to verify the electors through an alternate process, using the

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addresses or names provided. This process is much slower and while it will not exceed 30 days, there is no way to know the exact amount of time full verification will take.

In addition to the voter identification number/date of birth deficiency, we were informed that a fee of 49 cents will be charged for each Petition verified. I am certain that your client's failure to include a method for paying this verification fee was merely an oversight. Please let me know as soon as possible how you would like us to proceed related to the fee, as I do not believe that the verification process will begin until payment terms have been confirmed. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,



Sherry G. Sutphen

SGS/kr