

VERONICA PATTERSON'S NOMINATION FOR FLOC HONOR

For reasons that follow, it is a privilege to recommend Veronica Patterson of Ormond Beach for recognition as Florida League of Cities City Clerk of the Year 2008.

Ormond, formerly called New Britain, was incorporated as a city in 1880 and was subsequently renamed Ormond Beach. In 1993, one hundred thirteen years after the incorporation, Veronica Patterson, former Sales Administrator for Bertram Yachts in Miami, moved to this area with her young daughter. It would be Ms. Patterson who would devise and implement a protective and modern day system to protect the century old documents garnered from the earliest days of government in the City of Ormond Beach.

Her talents in dealing with the public, accepting responsibility and an intense desire to work in an organized atmosphere had made her the first woman to reach the executive level at her former job. These same attributes soon propelled Ms. Patterson from her starting position as an assistant clerk into the one she holds now as City Clerk for Ormond Beach. She has almost 15 years of faithful service at this time.

Over 390 Commission meetings, 20 elections plus special referendums, bond issues and other occasions are but a few areas of service in which professional service has been rendered by Ms. Patterson. Former Mayors Fortunato, Hood, and Persis, plus current Mayor Costello and the respective commissioners have all benefited from her detail oriented work.

Her service to the citizens is exemplary at all times. Her gracious demeanor is legendary in our city and among others in the county.

Ms. Patterson has a unique and subtle way of introducing political newcomers (commissioners and/or mayor) to the importance of procedural matters during public meetings. A smile or nod often suffices, but once in awhile, someone will look her way and ask, "Did we get that right, Ronnie?", referring to a recap of an item or statement made...thus assuring clear understanding by all participants.

When she first joined the city, a request for records pertaining to various projects meant a dreaded trek to a mountain of flea infested cardboard boxes stacked on a dirt floor. These were stored in a leaky shed near the water treatment plant. After a rain, papers were often found stained from mud and water. Mud and fleas might have discouraged one of lesser determination. For Ms. Patterson, it was an incentive to make a difference as soon as possible.

Once envisioned, she implemented a secure and protected system. Next move was relocation to a better site. Organizing over a hundred years of records and establishing a date related filing system, scanning and then securing it in hurricane proof storage took months to complete since all of the demands of her daily duties continued.

Another of Ms. Patterson's special efforts produced the 'Clerk's Index' and a document imaging system. With this imaging program, all deeds, contracts and franchise agreements became readily accessible. Packet items from 1990 forward can now be scanned and emailed when needed. Expeditious response, savings in man hours, eliminated delivery time and mailing costs are some of the advantages.

From the mundane to the monumental, Ms. Patterson welcomes challenges. Early on, when the stresses experienced during her first municipal election revealed a need for uniformity, she decided an elections manual with details covering specific responsibilities for city clerks and requirements for both aspiring and experienced politicians was needed.

Helping others continues to be important to her. Once the manual was completed, Ms. Patterson chose to share it with the County Elections Office as well as among those she serves in our city. She has also shared the manual and/or its contents with other City Clerks. Ms. Patterson is recognized by many for her expertise in election law. It is not unusual for clerks from other municipalities to call upon her for answers to questions they encounter.

For years, Ms. Patterson seldom directed a task to someone else. Her reason, "It was a great way to learn." A previous city attorney once registered concern that the new City Clerk's background did not cover things he often dealt with. Those concerns dissipated

completely when questions he asked her were answered using reference to specific Florida statutes.

Ms. Patterson admits her concentration is on her work. While she delights in time spent with family and friends, especially her young grandson, there is little time allotted for casual activities. She is a member of both IIMC and FACC.

Our City Clerk is among those who choose to "bloom where you are planted." We, as a city and many beyond our borders profit from her focus.

Enthusiasm, reliability, an innovative attitude, detail orientation and love of people are a few of the qualities we see daily in this special lady. Her pride in her job, our city and our state is reflected in the sunshine Ms. Patterson keeps in her voice and the optimism in her attitude at all times.

It is humility that prompted her to make this statement, "There are many great City Clerks in Florida." She's right. There are - but there are none more gracious, more dedicated or who would make a finer goodwill facilitator as Clerk of the Year for Florida League of Cities than Veronica Patterson. Thus we are pleased to forward this application to you.