

BLANKENSHIP JORDAN^{P.A.}

Michelle Blankenship Jordan, Esq.
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Jeremy A. Mutz, Of Counsel
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Telephone: 850-638-9689
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May 1, 2023

Hon. Dr. Emily Rone McCann, Mayor
City Council
City of Bonifay
301 N. Ethridge St.
Bonifay, FL 32425

By E-Mail Only:
emily.mccann@cityofbonifay.com

Re: City Attorney Advertisement

Dear Mayor McCann and Council:

Enclosed with this letter are Mr. Jeremy Mutz's and my resumes, in application for the position of City Attorney for the City of Bonifay. We thank you for the opportunity to make this submission, and in advance, for your consideration of it.

I have been in private practice here in the panhandle since 2010. I formed my solo practice in Chipley in 2013 and have practiced here in Chipley since that time. Attorney Mutz joined the firm in March 2021. I will be responsible for the bulk of the City's work, but Mr. Mutz will perform special projects and will attend meetings and/or conferences in my absence.

I graduated from Chipley High School in 2001 and went on to the Florida State University for completion of my bachelor's degree and Juris Doctor. I was admitted to the Florida Bar in September 2009, and am also admitted to all Florida state courts, the United States District Courts for the Northern District of Florida (Federal Courts), and the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals (Federal).

Mr. Mutz has been a member of the Florida Bar since April 2004. He is admitted to all Florida state courts as well as the United States District Courts for the Northern and Middle Districts of Florida (Federal Courts)

The firm currently represents Jackson County, Florida and the Cities of Chipley, Vernon, Esto, Wewahitchka, and Bonifay on matters including:

- representation of Jackson County in employment matters before the Florida Commission on Human Relations;
- defense of the entities in civil litigation involving typically property issues, contracts and contracting (including bid disputes), and employment;
- civil litigation involving land use decisions;
- civil litigation to enforce Code Enforcement Board orders and decisions
- Public Records Act requests;

- analysis of proposed contracts, both with the State or other governmental entities and with private companies;
- input into individual personnel actions during the decision-making process and the entities' employment policies and procedures in general;
- right-of-way and other property acquisition for public purposes;
- land use decision-making, including the preparation and enforcement of land development orders and agreements and subdivision approvals and the Comprehensive Planning process (including Transportation and other public services concurrency management);
- preparation of local legislation (county and municipal ordinances);
- legal issues regarding county taxation and budgeting, including municipal service taxing or benefits units;
- loan and grant transactions, including those with the USDA/Rural Development and service as local (issuer) counsel on bond issues;
- County redistricting issues;

and others.

We have performed a firm conflict check and have found no apparent conflicts in representation of current or prior clients with respect to past, current or foreseeable future dealings with the City of Bonifay. We consider ourselves competent and sufficiently experienced to handle all matters which might come before the Council or involve the City's interest, with the exception of labor union certification or decertification issues.

Attorney Mutz and I suggest the following contacts for references: Hon. Paul Donofro, Jr., Chairman, Board of County Commissioners of Jackson County, (850) 482-9633, Dan Miner, City Manager, City of Chipley, (850) 638-6350, dminer@cityofchipley.com; Wilanne Daniels, County Administrator, Jackson County Board of County Commissioners, danielsw@jacksoncountyfl.gov; (850) 482-9633; Michael Gortman, City Manager, City of Wewahitchka, cityofwewa@fairpoint.net, (850) 639-2605; Candace Hodges, City Clerk, City of Vernon, clerk@vernonfl.com; (850) 535-2444.

The firm proposes the following fee schedule: a) a monthly retainer of \$500.00, for which we (principally Mrs. Jordan) would attend two (2) regular monthly meetings. For additional matters, an hourly rate of \$200.00 per attorney hour for attorneys, and \$87.50-\$112.50 per hour for paralegal services. Other than for regular meetings (which are included in the proposed retainer), the firm would charge one-half of the hourly rate for travel time, but no additional mileage or travel expense component. Other out-of-pocket expenses, such as court costs, filing fees, postage/courier and publications would be charged at actual cost. Copies are charged at the rate of \$0.02 per copy.

Our office is conveniently located on west Highway 90 in Chipley, approximately 10 miles from the City of Bonifay. Thank you again for the opportunity to submit this proposal. Please let me know if you'd like further information or if you wish to meet with us.

Sincerely,


Michelle Blankenship Jordan

cc: rickey.callahan@cityofbonifay.com

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michelle@blankenshipjordanpa.com

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Michelle Blankenship Jordan

Licensure:

Licensed to practice law in Florida since September 2009; admitted in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida, the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, and the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals

Work Experience

Blankenship Jordan, P.A.

October 2013-present

Attorney

Represent financial institutions in the areas of real estate closings, title examinations and opinions, and collections. Represent business and individual clients in the areas of general civil litigation including real property, probate, estate planning, and family law matters. City Attorney for the City of Chipley, Florida, the City of Vernon, Florida, the City of Bonifay, Florida, the City of Wewahitchka, Florida, and the Town of Esto, Florida; County Attorney for Jackson County, Florida; General Counsel to the Campbellton-Graceville Hospital Corporation (an independent special taxing district)

Law Office of Baker & Tagert

December 2010 - September 2013

Attorney

Represent financial institutions in the areas of real estate closings, title examinations and opinions, and collections. Represent clients in the areas of general civil litigation including real property, probate, and family law matters. City Attorney for the City of Chipley, Florida, and the City of Vernon, Florida, Assistant County Attorney for Jackson County, Florida;

Florida Department of Corrections

October 2009-November 2010

Junior Attorney

Represented the DOC in actions filed by inmates concerning gain time. Analyzed proposed state legislation. Provided legal advice to Institutions. Responded to public record requests.

Education

Florida State University College of Law, Tallahassee, Florida

Juris Doctor, May 2009

GPA: 81

Business Review, 2008-2009 Executive Board Member, Research and Writing Editor, Real Estate Law Society; FSU Public Interest Law Center, Family Law Clinic, Certified Legal Intern, Spring 2009

Florida Coastal School of Law, Jacksonville, Florida

Dean's Scholar, Fall 2006

Class Rank: Top 7.5% GPA: 3.47/4.0

Honors: Book Award (highest grade in class) Contracts I; Best Brief, Appellant Side, Lawyering Process II

Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida

Bachelor of Science in Psychology, Minor in Biology, December 2004

GPA: 3.2/4.0; Honors: Dean's List, multiple semesters

JEREMY A. MUTZ

1261 Jackson Ave. • Chipley, FL 32428 • (850) 676-4201

LITIGATION EXPERIENCE:

- **Jury Trials:** 160+. *Homicide, Robbery, Domestic Violence.*
- **Hearings:** 200+. *Civil, Criminal, Family; both State and Federal.*

WORK HISTORY:

LAW OFFICE OF JEREMY A. MUTZ, CHIPLEY, FLA.

SEPT. 2020 – PRESENT

- **Civil Litigation:** Civil Forfeitures, Small Claims, Insurance Claims, Foreclosure Defense (negotiations; *Summary Judgment* pleadings, hearings).
**Representing clients in Bay, Holmes, Jackson, Okaloosa, Washington Counties*
- **Real Property:** Motion Hearings; Appeals; drafting Answers/ Motions.
- **Probate:** all aspects.
- Criminal Defense; Family Law; Guardianship; Wills / Living Wills.

LEGAL SERVICES OF N. FLORIDA, QUINCY, FLA.

SEPT. 2019 – SEPT. 2020

- **Civil Litigation:** Breach of Contract; Foreclosure Defense (negotiations; *Summary Judgment* pleadings, mediation).
- **Real Property Law:** Drafted deeds, life estates, handled landlord-tenant cases;
- Family Law, Guardianship, Probate;
- Assisted victims of Domestic Violence (contested injunction hearings);
- Assisted victims of Hurricane Michael: FEMA appeals; title work; insurance disputes;

- VOP and Post-Conviction Matters
- “*Stand-Your-Ground*” Hearings
- Argued before Parole Commission (1985 homicide case)
- ALL-DUI assignment Covering Nine Divisions in Leon County (2010-2011)
- **Misdemeanor and Juvenile Litigation:**
 - Served as *Division Chief* - Misdemeanor/ Traffic Unit, Leon Co.: (2014-2016)
 - Jury Trials: Domestic Violence/ Stalking/ Violations of Injunction
 - Criminal Appeals including Oral Argument
 - Led Misdemeanor & Juvenile Division, Franklin Co. (2006-2009)
 - Worked closely with law enforcement agencies in advisory role
 - Extensive “Intoxilyzer” litigation

LEADERSHIP:

- **Supervised** Law Student Interns—UF, FSU, Cumberland;
Led and trained approx. 20 while at SAO and LSNF;
- **Trained** Prosecutors and LEO’s on Domestic Violence, Successful Injunction Prosecutions, DUI Investigations/ prosecutions;
(for FSU, Pat Thomas and Gulf Coast Law Enforcement Academies)
- Led In-house training for new Prosecutors in DV and DUI trial practice;
- **Coached** FSU Trial Team (2016) (went to semifinals in Montgomery);
- Auxiliary State Trooper - FHP (JUNE 2017 – FEB. 2020);
350 hours training, certified LEO;
Approx. 85 hours on the road in patrol duties;
- Interviewed by Court TV, WTXL, and 100.7 FM regarding Markel and Segura homicide trials (2019);
- Licensed *private pilot* (since 2010).

EDUCATION

Florida State University, College of Law, Tallahassee

2001 – 2003

- Juris Doctor, *Cum Laude*

University of West Florida, Pensacola

1997 – 2001

- Dual Major: Political Science and International Studies.
- Poli. Sci. *Student of the Year*

2000

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, FLA., TALLAHASSEE, FLA.
JAN. 2019 – SEPT. 2019

- Civil Litigation: Defended FDC staff and Dr.'s in *State and Federal Court*: (§ 1983 suits, tort/personal injury claims, suits for injunctions, Constitutional rights);
- Admitted *Northern and Middle Districts, Fla.*;
- Drafted answers, Motions for Summary Judgment, Motions to Dismiss; drafted appeals;
- Civil Discovery: *State and Federal*; incl. 30(b)(6) depositions;
- Hearings: Discovery/ Pre-Trial Hearing before *ND, Pensacola*;
- Federal Settlement Conferences; mediation;
- Probate and First Amendment litigation.

MUTZ LAW FIRM, INC., DAYTONA BEACH, FLA.
2016 – 2019

- Family Law: Divorce, custody, support, modifications, grandparents' rights cases;
**Hearings/ Trials: Broward, Hillsborough, Leon, Orange, Volusia counties*;
- Criminal Defense: homicide, battery, post-conviction (3.850) motions;
- Civil: drafted contracts, landlord-tenant cases (including trial); advised clients on HOA issues; drafted wills;
- Victim's Rights: assisted crime victims (liaison with prosecutor and restitution claims);
- Discovery: depositions, interrogatories, subpoenas;

STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, SECOND CIRCUIT, FLA.
2003 – 2016

- **Felony Prosecutor:**
 - Tried *Homicides* and Attempted Homicides
 - Served in specialized Domestic Violence (VAWA) assignment (2009-2014)
 - Tried Insurance Fraud / Contractor Fraud cases