



City of Lauderhill *Public Reprimand*

On October 28, 2024, the City Commission of the City of Lauderhill ("City") passed Resolution No. 24R-10-257 approving the issuance of a Public Reprimand of Commissioner Denise D. Grant, which shall be published and which states as follows:

WHEREAS, the City is a municipal corporation located within Broward County, Florida, duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of Florida and is charged with maintaining the highest standards of conduct and professionalism in all aspects of governance and public service; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Statutes, Chapter 112, Part III, provides a Code of Ethics for all public officers and employees to follow and abide by; and

WHEREAS, on February 12, 2024, the City approved a Code of Ethics/Code of Conduct for City Public Officials, City Code of Ordinances, Section 2-166, which includes the procedures regarding violations, to include discipline of its own members; and

WHEREAS, Section 2-166 provides *inter alia*, the authority to publicly reprimand a Commissioner for conduct that is deemed to be a violation of any law, including any City policy, City code, and/or the City charter; and

WHEREAS, a prior Florida Department of Law Enforcement ("FDLE") criminal investigation revealed conduct by Commissioner Grant which could constitute violations of certain City policies, Codes, and/or the City charter; and

WHEREAS, the majority of the City Commission voted to hire an independent investigator to thoroughly investigate the above-referenced matters, and instructed the City Attorney, Angel Petti Rosenberg, to retain such an investigator on behalf of the City; and

WHEREAS, consistent with the Commission's directive, Mrs. Rosenberg engaged Ria Chattergoon, Esq., of RC Law Group on or about June 25, 2024, to conduct the independent investigation and determine if there were violations; and

WHEREAS, the results of the investigation found, *inter alia*, that:

- a. In January 2022, Commissioner Grant improperly submitted for mileage reimbursement in the amount of \$507.36 in violation of the 2019 Travel Policy, which allows mileage reimbursement only when a personal vehicle is used. This reimbursement was processed because the City did not become aware of the fact that she had actually used a City vehicle until years later as a result of a criminal investigation; and
- b. On or about March 18-25, 2023, Commissioner Grant improperly used a City vehicle out-of-state for personal use to take her son to a soccer tournament in Tennessee "which clearly was not City business and which was not approved by the City"; and
- c. On or about March 26-20, 2023, Commissioner Grant again submitted for mileage reimbursement in the amount of \$567.50 while driving a City vehicle, and also submitted an altered hotel invoice for \$804.92 seeking reimbursement for the cost of the hotel (which was later discovered to have been paid for by Youth Empowerment Village and already reimbursed to that entity); and

- d. Commissioner Grant personally benefitted from the use of a City vehicle which contained an employee's personal Sunpass, and for which Commissioner Grant did not reimburse the owner; and

WHEREAS, the investigative report dated October 23, 2024, and the findings and recommendations therein, were adopted on October 28, 2024 by the remaining sitting commissioners; and

WHEREAS, in response to the findings, the City Commission made the following recommendations: Commissioner Grant must reimburse the City in the amount of \$507.36 for the 2022 trip and \$1,125.00 representing the value of the mileage for the personal trip to Tennessee in 2023. In addition, Commissioner Grant must reimburse the Sunpass owner. in the amount of \$86.47; and

WHEREAS, this conduct was a misuse of public assets or funds serving solely Commissioner Grant's personal benefit and not serving a public purpose nor incurred in connection with the performance of official duties; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission finds that a public reprimand of Commissioner Denise D. Grant for the behavior referenced in the investigative report is in the best interests of the citizens and residents of the City, and that the conduct and behavior exhibited by Commissioner Denise D. Grant is misuse of public assets or funds, is unacceptable, and will not be tolerated; and

WHEREAS, such conduct undermines the integrity of the City Commission, erodes the public trust in the governance of the City, and is contrary to the welfare of the City and its residents; and

WHEREAS, such conduct was found by an independent investigator to be a violation of the City's 2019 Travel Policy, the 2023 Travel Policy, and Florida Statutes, Section 112.313;

NOW, THEREFORE, the foregoing "Whereas" clauses are adopted herein and that the City Commission of the City of Lauderhill hereby formally publicly reprimands Commissioner D. Grant for the behavior that was outlined in the investigative report dated October 23, 2024, as such behavior was a misuse of public assets or funds, was inappropriate, unacceptable, and unbecoming of a public official; and further finds that she must make the reimbursements as recommended herein and must strictly adhere to the expected standards of conduct and all City policies in all future dealings, both within the City Commission, and in her representation of the City of Lauderhill at large.

FURTHER THAT, a copy of this Public Reprimand shall be entered into the official minutes of the City Commission meeting, with a signed copy delivered to Commissioner Grant, a copy to be posted electronically on the City's website and in a place of public prominence at City Hall, published in a newspaper of record and in the City Spotlight, and referred to the Florida Commission on Ethics, Office of Inspector General, or any other agency deemed appropriate.

REQUESTED AND APPROVED BY the City Commission of the City of Lauderhill on this 28TH day of October, 2024.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I HAVE HEREUNTO
SET MY HAND AND CAUSED THE OFFICIAL
SEAL OF THE CITY OF LAUDERHILL, FLORIDA,
TO BE AFFIXED THIS 10TH DAY OF JUNE, 2019.

KEN THURSTON, MAYOR