

BROWARD COUNTY POLICE BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jeff Marano
954.584.7600

JUDGE SAYS CITY ACTED IN BAD FAITH TO PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST

Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. – Broward Circuit Court Judge Carol-Lisa Phillips has ruled that the City of Hollywood’s response to a public records request from the Broward County PBA for public accounting statements was “not prompt, reasonable or in good faith” as required by law.

The PBA filed suit on February 23 after Senior Vice President Jeff Marano requested the current balance of the city’s reserve account along with supporting documents and financial statements on two separate occasions without any response from Hollywood Financial Services Director Matthew Lalla. Marano made requests on January 19, 2012 and again on January 27, 2012. On March 8, 2012, he was copied on an email from Lalla to the city commission that contained midyear projections and supporting documents. No specific response to Mr. Marano’s request was given until April 20, 2012.

Judge Phillips found that a three-month delay in responding to a public records request was in violation of Florida Statute 119.07 (c), which states that a custodian of public records “must acknowledge requests to inspect or copy records promptly and respond to such requests in good faith.”

“It is obvious that the City of Hollywood does not feel that it needs to follow the rule of law if it is not to their advantage,” says Marano. “But, like any member of the public, we have the right to know how they are spending our tax dollars.”

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The Broward County Police Benevolent Association is a non-profit organization providing labor relations assistance and collective bargaining services for its members. The PBA's mission is to promote professionalism in law enforcement and to protect the rights and privileges of individual law enforcement officers and civilian employees, as well as to keep citizens informed of the challenges facing law enforcement today.

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