



**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
City Commission Agenda Memo  
REGULAR MEETING**

**#15-0767**

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**TO:** Honorable Mayor & Members of the  
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

**FROM:** Cynthia A. Everett, City Attorney

**DATE:** June 2, 2015

**TITLE:** Resolution appointing the law firm of Hough Law Group, P.A., as special  
counsel representing the City in bankruptcy litigation filed regarding Sixth  
Street Plaza, Inc. and Maria J. Freeman

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**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the City Commission adopt a Resolution appointing the law firm of Hough Law Group, P.A., as special counsel representing the City of Fort Lauderdale in connection with the Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing regarding Sixth Street Plaza, Inc., and the Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing regarding Maria J. Freeman, and any anticipated adversarial proceedings in connection therewith.

**Background**

The City of Fort Lauderdale has a vested interest in this matter evidenced by a third mortgage given by Sixth Street Plaza, Inc. in favor of the Fort Lauderdale Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), which mortgage was modified to \$697,990.50 and recorded in August 2010. In addition, the City filed code liens, which attach to both the Tuskegee and Progresso properties owned by Sixth Street Plaza, Inc. The City Attorney's Office recommends appointing Hough Law Group, P.A., as special counsel and to establish the fees for special counsel.

Special counsel proposes an hourly rate of \$325.00 per hour for partners, \$225.00 per hour for associates and \$125.00 per hour for paralegals to represent the City's interests including attending all bankruptcy court proceedings and conducting discovery. A copy of the Hough Law Group, P.A. firm resume is attached.

**Resource Impact**

There is a fiscal impact to the City in the amount of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000.00). Funding is available in the Legal Services account.

Funds available as of May 27, 2015

ACCOUNT NUMBER	INDEX NAME (PROGRAM)	OBJECT CODE/ SUB-OBJECT NAME	AMENDED BUDGET (Object Code)	AVAILABLE BALANCE (Object Code)	PURCHASE AMOUNT
001-ATT010101-3119	City Attorney's Office	Services & Materials/Legal Services	\$255,167	84,723	15,000.00
				<b>PURCHASE TOTAL ►</b>	<b>15,000.00</b>

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Prepared by: Lynn Solomon, Assistant City Attorney

Charter Officer: Cynthia A. Everett, City Attorney

## **HOUGH LAW GROUP, P.A.**

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Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33323

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Cell: 954.309.1960

Email: [jhough@polenbergcooper.com](mailto:jhough@polenbergcooper.com)

Julie Hough has worked as a complex business litigation and bankruptcy attorney since 2004, and as the principal of Hough Law Group, P.A. since 2009. In addition to being an attorney, Ms. Hough has owned several small businesses and, from her unique personal perspective, has developed a practice area representing small and mid-sized businesses with their transactional and litigation needs, including preparation of contracts, employment agreements, trademark and copyright registration, and representing the business client in litigation matters from small claims to multi-million dollar cases. Ms. Hough also represents debtors, creditors, and trustees in consumer and business bankruptcy cases and has litigated commercial litigation matters in state and federal courts and in front of the American Arbitration Association.

Ms. Hough is an adjunct professor at Nova Southeastern University, where she currently teaches the Consumer Bankruptcy Law Clinic and has previously taught both Civil Pretrial Practice and Negotiation Workshop.

Ms. Hough currently serves as the Immediate Past President of the Broward County Women Lawyer's Association and is a Past-Chair of the Bankruptcy Section of the Broward County Bar Association. Ms. Hough is also an active member of the International Women's Insolvency & Restructuring Confederation, the Bankruptcy Bar Association of the Southern District of Florida, the Bankruptcy/UCC Committee of the Business Law Section of The Florida Bar, the Nova Southeastern University Alumni Association, and the Florida Lawyers Network.

Ms. Hough earned her J.D. degree, magna cum laude, from Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad School of Law. In law school she was part of the Moot Court Honor Society and was the winner of the First Year Moot Court Competition. She was the Executive Editor of the Nova Law Review.

### **ADMISSIONS:**

United States Supreme Court  
11th Circuit Court of Appeals  
U.S. District Court, Southern District of Florida  
U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida  
U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Southern District of Florida  
U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Middle District of Florida  
Florida State Courts

### **AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:**

2012, 2013 Super Lawyers Rising Star  
2014 Super Lawyers  
2012 National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges Next Generation Program  
AV Preeminent® rated by Martindale Hubbell

**SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS:**

2008 Bankruptcy Legal Assistant's Association of the Southern District of Florida  
2009 Broward County Bench and Bar Conference  
2010 National Business Institute Consumer Bankruptcy from Start to Finish Seminar  
2010 and 2012 Broward County Bar Association Panel on Bankruptcy  
2010 and 2011 National Business Institute Bankruptcy Implications on Estate Planning  
2012 Broward County Women Lawyer's Association presentation Judge John K. Olson  
2013 Broward County Bar Association Family Law Section Raising the Bar presentation  
2014 Florida Institute of CPA's Bankruptcy Basics for the CPA

**PUBLICATIONS:**

2012 Southern District of Florida Bankruptcy Buzz Newsletter, Chapter 20: A Relic of the Past?  
2012 American Bankruptcy Institute Journal, Bare Legal Title or Property of the Estate?