



## BROWARD OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 5, 2020

#### ***Plantation Mayor Violated State Open Government and Campaign Finance Laws***

Broward Inspector General John W. Scott announced today that the Broward Office of the Inspector General (OIG) issued a [final report](#) concluding that City of Plantation Mayor Lynn Stoner violated Florida's open government and campaign finance laws and acted beyond her mayoral authority as defined by the city code and charter.

The OIG's investigation determined that, after her election as mayor in November 2018, Stoner improperly discussed with city council members her plans to reorganize city staff, including eliminating an ordinance-created position. She raised the issue during a meeting that was closed to the public and despite a city council member's voiced concern that the discussion might be violating Florida's Sunshine Law. The investigation revealed a different occasion when the mayor privately discussed her reorganization plans with a single council member.

The mayor also intentionally violated Florida's public records laws when she refused to provide records in response to a council member's requests for her written plans for reorganization—documents that the OIG proved existed at the time of those requests.

Furthermore, the mayor unilaterally created and staffed two new positions within the city. Despite the mayor's assertions that she was at liberty to create and staff these positions without the council's input because she was a "strong mayor," the city charter vested the authority to do so solely in the council.

Finally, Mayor Stoner engaged in multiple violations of campaign finance law during her campaign to be elected mayor in November 2018. The OIG's investigation found that, after the election, Mayor Stoner unlawfully overdrew the campaign account and then made an illegal, post-election loan to cover the overdraft. She then filed false campaign treasurer's reports containing substantial omissions and false entries to conceal the overdraft and illegal contribution.

The OIG is referring this matter to the Florida Elections Commission and the Broward Office of the State Attorney for whatever action those agencies deem appropriate.

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John W. Scott, *Inspector General*

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