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Best Practices to Consider When Negotiating an Employment/Retainer Agreement for a Chief Legal Officer

SPEAKER BIOS

Marion J. Radson is Board Certified by The Florida Bar in City, County and Local Government Law, and admitted as a Fellow with the International Municipal Attorneys Association. He served as the City Attorney for the City of Gainesville from October 1985 until his retirement in October 2012. He currently serves as a legal adviser to local governments, and is working with several local government attorney associations on a Rule Amendment pending before the Board of Bar Governors relating to the “no contact” Rule. He is the recipient of the Charles S. Rhyne Lifetime Achievement Award conferred by the International Municipal Attorneys Association, the Claude L. Mullis Lifetime Achievement Award conferred by the Florida Municipal Attorneys Association, the 2013 James L. Tomlinson Professionalism Award conferred by the Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association, and the 2015 H. Hamilton “Chip” Rice, Jr. Award conferred by the City, County and Local Government Law Section of The Florida Bar. He is Past President of the Florida Municipal Attorneys Association, and Past Chair of the City, County and Local Government Law Section of The Florida Bar. He is a frequent lecturer and author on matters related to city, county and local government law. Mr. Radson earned both his law degree and undergraduate degree from the University of Florida.

Howard Friedman is the Chief of the Contracts and Real Estate Division of the New York City Law Department. The Division counsels City agencies on transactional matters and acts as transactional counsel on special projects at the request of the Mayor’s Office and City agencies. Howard joined the Law Department, and the Contracts and Real Estate Division, in 1998, became Deputy Chief of the Division in 2004, and was promoted to Chief this year. He is a 1985 cum laude graduate of Harvard Law School.

Susan Churuti, the co-chair of BMO’s State and Local Government Practice Group. Prior to joining the Firm, she worked extensively with the Pinellas County Attorney’s Office serving as the County Attorney for over twenty years. Mrs. Churuti has broad experience representing the county and its constitutional officers, which are the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Property Appraiser, Sheriff, Supervisor of Elections, and Tax Collector. Her expertise includes U.S. and state constitutional law, legislation, charters eminent domain, elections, risk management, public construction, public finance, utilities, and procurement, as well as litigation and appellate practice. She is proficient in board representation, serving as general counsel for more than 50 boards, commissions, and special districts. She served for a long tenure as the attorney for the Pinellas County Legislative Delegation in drafting local bills and special acts. Mrs. Churuti has been active in the Florida Bar, serving as the Chair of the Eminent Domain Committee and the Chair of the City, County and Local Government Law Section, which awarded her the Ralph A. Marsicano Award for significant contributions to the development of local government law in

Florida and the H. Hamilton "Chip" Rice Award to recognize a distinguished lawyer who has served the section by mentoring and educating the future leaders of the profession. She has served as the President of the Florida Association of County Attorneys, and the President of the Clearwater Bar Association. Mrs. Churuti is a member of the Barney Masterson Inn of Court, which awarded her the Richard T. Earle Professionalism Award. She served as adjunct professor at Stetson University College of Law for eleven semesters, and has been board certified in City, County and Local Government Law since 1996. She graduated from Washington and Lee University School of Law in 1979.

Charles W. Thompson, Jr. is the Executive Director and General Counsel of the International Municipal Lawyers Association. Prior to being appointed to this position Mr. Thompson served as County Attorney for Montgomery County, Maryland from 1995 to 2006. For the previous 17 years, Mr. Thompson served as County Attorney for Carroll County, Maryland. Mr. Thompson received a bachelor's degree in history from Virginia Military Institute and earned his Juris Doctor from the University of Baltimore School of Law. In addition to serving as President of the Carroll County Bar Association, Mr. Thompson served as Chairman of the Board of the State and Local Government Law Section of the Maryland State Bar Association, and as Chairman and a member of the Committee on Ethics. Mr. Thompson also served on the Board of Directors and as President of the County Civil Attorneys group in the Maryland Association of Counties. Mr. Thompson is currently serving as an adjunct professor at the George Washington University teaching State and Local Government Law. Mr. Thompson is admitted to practice in the U.S. District Court for Maryland, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the U.S. Supreme Court.