

---

# DOUGLAS

---

## LAW FIRM

---

Submittal of Qualifications

**City Attorney**  
City of Deltona

September 2024



### Contact Person

Jeremiah Blocker, Esq.  
712 S Ocean Shore Blvd,  
Flagler Beach, FL  
904-671-8395

# DOUGLAS LAW FIRM

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

Charles T. Douglas, Jr.  
Jeremiah Blocker  
Christopher W. LoBianco  
Jacob McCrea  
Jason Odom  
Rory Diamond *Of Counsel*  
Cindy Marvin *Of Counsel*  
Lisa Miles

117 N. 2<sup>ND</sup> STREET, PALATKA, FL 32177  
6100 GREENLAND ROAD, UNIT 603, JACKSONVILLE, FL 32258  
309 KINGSLEY LAKE DRIVE, STE. 903, ST. AUGUSTINE, FL 32092  
100 SOUTH PARK BLVD., STE 414, ST. AUGUSTINE, FL 32086  
110 N MAGNOLIA AVE, Ocala, FL 34475  
820 N ORANGE AVENUE, GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FL 32043  
712 S OCEAN SHORE BOULEVARD, FLAGLER BEACH, FL 32136

Morgan Peacock  
R. Kevin Sharbaugh  
Carol Simpson  
John P. Steinmetz  
Cliff Baker  
Marcus Duffy  
Ian Pickens  
Patrick Kennedy

Telephone: (800) 705.5457

Fax: (386)385.5914

[www.DHClawyers.com](http://www.DHClawyers.com)

September 19, 2024

City of Deltona  
2345 Providence Boulevard  
Deltona, FL 32725

## Re: City of Deltona, City Attorney Position

Dear City Commission:

Douglas Law Firm is a full-service law firm with an unwavering commitment to our clients. With over 10 years of providing service to local governments, our Firm is dedicated to practicing law with integrity and providing insights and solutions to local leaders. Douglas Law Firm strives to be a trusted resource to our neighbors and hometown governments.

The City of Deltona is seeking a partner, supporter and trusted advisor to the City Commission and to city staff. As outlined by the City, it needs a counsel who understands politics but will not be involved in them and will work well with elected officials and city staff to accomplish goals legally and efficiently.

As outside counsel, The Douglas Law Firm can provide the City of Deltona with a backing of legal resources that one attorney cannot provide alone. Our government law team is comprised of seven attorneys, all with local, state and federal government experience.

Our Firm will benefit the City of Deltona in the following ways:

**Firm Experience.** Douglas Law Firm serves as the Attorney for the City of Palm Coast, City of St. Augustine Beach, St. Johns County Airport Authority, St. Johns River State College, Clay County School District and formerly served Putnam County School District for over 8 years. Our Firm is also under contract for the City of St. Augustine to provide legal services as-needed.

**Qualified Personnel.** The attorneys and legal professionals at Douglas Law Firm take pride in helping local communities navigate and resolve a wide range of legal issues with reliability and compassion. It's shown through their experience, accolades, and community involvement.

**Accessibility.** Douglas Law Firm will provide the City of Deltona with quality service and attentive personnel. We are personally committed to all our clients and make ourselves accessible. We are a part of your team and will work together in leaving a lasting legacy.

Our Firm is dedicated to serving the City of Deltona and is committed to building a valued relationship. We will be a reliable and trusted counsel to the City Commission as well as the city staff.

I look forward to the opportunity to meet with the Commission Members and answer any questions you may have.

Best Regards,  
Douglas Law Firm

Jeremiah Blocker, Partner  
[Jeremiah@dhclawyers.com](mailto:Jeremiah@dhclawyers.com)  
904-671-8395

# Table of Contents

*Click on the section title or page number to be directed to that section of the proposal. To return to the Table of Contents, click on the Douglas Law Firm logo anywhere in the document.*

Section 1	<b>Firm Overview</b>	<b>4</b>
	<i>Practice Areas</i>	<b>5</b>
	<i>Local Government Experience</i>	<b>6</b>
Section 2	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>7</b>
	<i>Resumes</i>	<b>8</b>



“Working with Douglas Law Firm has been a pleasure. In my experience, Douglas Law firm has always been professional, timely, and knowledgeable in their representation of our City and has always exceeded our expectations in the work performed.”

*Dylan Rumrell - Mayor, City of St. Augustine Beach*



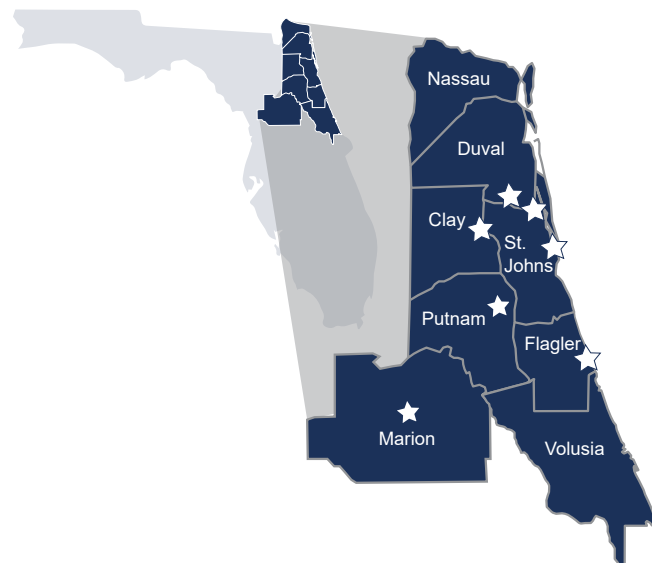
## Firm Overview

The Douglas Law Firm provides services for businesses and individuals, and we are focused on continuing a tradition of service to those tackling the ever-growing complexities of local government. Our commitment is to practice law with integrity and provide insights and solutions to local leaders. We handle a variety of cases, including real estate, estate planning, probate, business law, personal injury, wrongful death, and family law.

With offices across northeast Florida, we are truly a regional firm. We combine decades of experience to provide comprehensive legal representation. Our attorneys take pride in a compassionate and personalized approach to legal services.

Douglas Law Firm has  
**16 attorneys** and  
**27 support staff**  
with offices in:

- Flagler Beach
- Palatka
- Ocala
- St. Augustine
- Nocatee
- Jacksonville
- Green Cove Springs



## Practice Areas

The Douglas Law Firm provides a wide range of legal services. We have the knowledge and capacity to assist the City of Deltona with legal guidance and are dedicated to serving the Commission and all City departments, offices, advisory boards, and agencies.

The following is a list of the Firm's practice areas:

### **Government Law Matters:**

General Legal Counsel  
Sunshine Law  
Public Records Requests  
Ethics  
Regulation and Procedures  
Labor & Employment Issues  
Contracts and Legal Drafting  
Legal Research  
Real Estate, Including Eminent Domain  
and Purchasing  
Shade Meetings  
Litigation  
School Safety  
Union Negotiations & Contracting

### **Family Law Matters:**

Divorce  
Child Custody/Paternity  
Child Support  
Domestic Abuse/Protective Orders  
Termination of Parental Rights  
Name Change  
Adoption

### **Criminal Law Matters:**

Felony Criminal Defense  
Misdemeanor Criminal Defense  
Federal Criminal Defense  
Criminal Traffic Defense  
DUI Defense  
Marcy's Law/Victim's Rights Representation

### **Personal Injury Law Matters:**

Automobile Accidents  
Medical Malpractice  
Wrongful Death

### **Civil Law Matters:**

Eviction/Removal of Tenant Prosecution  
Foreclosure Prosecution  
Property Disputes  
Contract Disputes  
Replevin Prosecution  
Quiet Title Prosecution  
Civil Theft Prosecution/Defense  
Small Claim Disputes

### **Probate Law Matters:**

Formal Administration  
Summary Administration  
Ancillary Administration  
Contested Wills

### **Business Law Matters:**

LLC Formation  
General Legal Counsel  
Registered Agent Representation

### **Construction Law Matters:**

General Legal Counsel  
Enforcement of Mechanics Liens  
Construction Defect Disputes  
Arbitration Representation

### **Real Property Law Matters:**

Easement Disputes/Vacation  
Zoning Modifications  
General Legal Counsel  
Deed Drafting  
Real Estate Closing Representation

### **Miscellaneous:**

General document review and drafting including  
Demand Letters and Cease and Desist Letters  
Immigration Law

## Local Government Experience

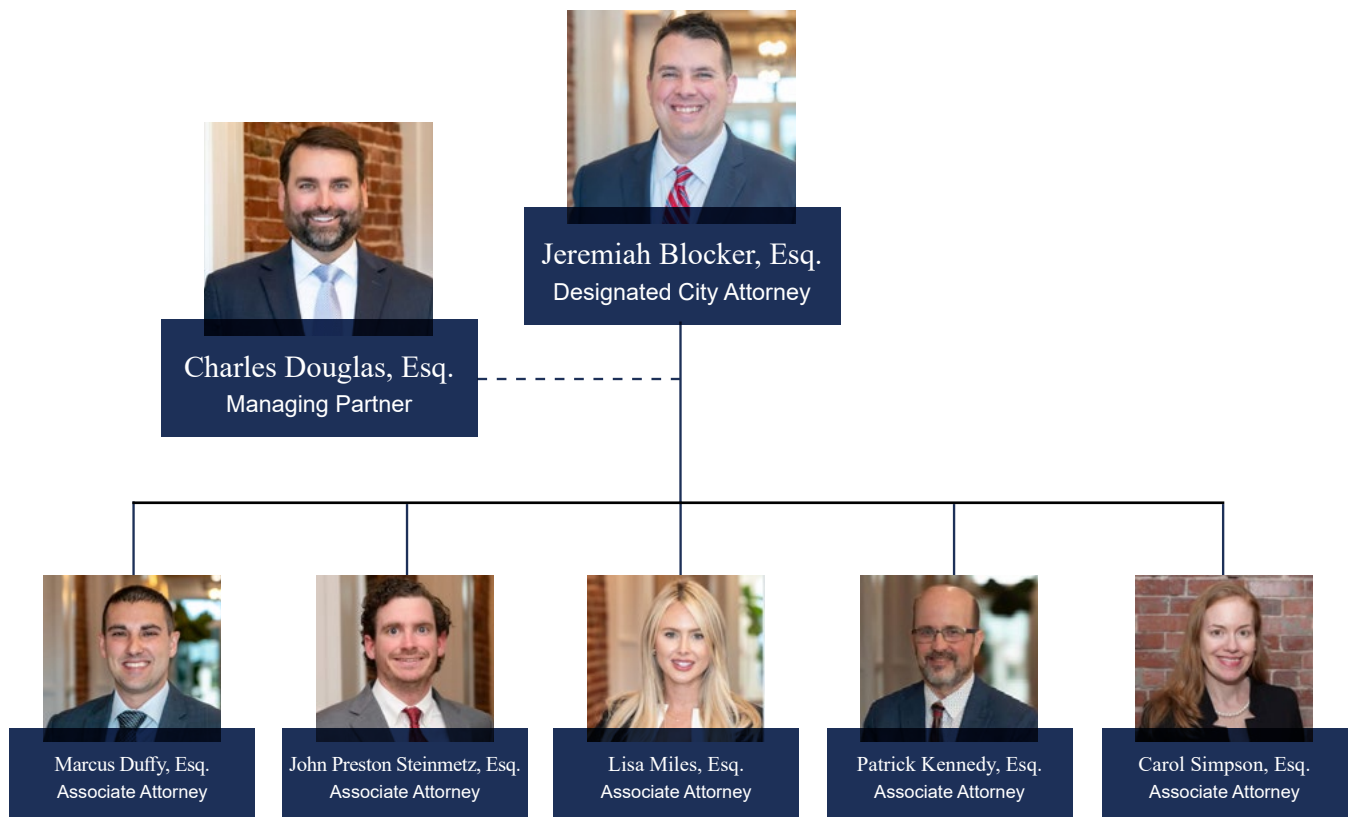
Douglas Law Firm is a full-service Florida law firm that represents clients throughout the north Florida region. Our lawyers take pride in helping their neighbors in the local community navigate and resolve a wide range of legal issues with reliability and compassion.

The Firm performs the following functions for the City of Palm Coast, City of Saint Augustine Beach, St. Johns River State College, Saint Johns County Airport and provides substantially similar functions for the Clay County School Board:

- Attend City Council meetings
- Provide guidance and advise to Council members
- Review and provide input on agenda and back-up
- Draft resolutions and ordinances.
- Liaison with City Manager and additional municipalities and boards regarding city business
- Assist in preparing and delivering presentations to City Council with City staff
- Review contracts and agreements
- Draft various agreements (interlocal agreements, services agreements, MOUs, etc.) with surrounding cities, County, School Board and Sheriff's Department.
- Assist city clerk with public records requests, Sunshine Law, voting, and ethics matters and address various legal inquiries regarding various state law application, general contract matters.
- Prepare legal memorandums
- Review and provide updates on new legislation and case law affecting municipal government.
- Provide board trainings on the Sunshine Law, board duties and ethical obligations.
- Provide legal guidance and opinions for bond and debt matters.
- Coordinate with staff regarding implementation of state legislation, cooperation between City and State Departments (Water Management District, DEP, FWC, Department of Emergency Management, State Attorney's Office).
- Coordinate with the County Sherriff's Office concerning public safety services and draft related agreements.
- Represent the City in litigation and appellate matters not handled by its insurance provider.
- Keep the City Council and City Manager informed of legislation or judicial opinions that have potential impact to the City.

# Team Overview

See below for our proposed staffing plan. Jeremiah Blocker will represent Douglas Law Firm as the designated City Attorney, providing the scope of services as outlined in the position overview. Charlie Douglas, Managing Partner, will provide oversight and assistance in matters as needed. Marcus Duffy, John Preston (JP) Steinmetz, Lisa Miles, Patrick Kennedy, and Carol Simpson will serve on an as-needed basis.





## Jeremiah R. Blocker, Esq.

DESIGNATED CITY ATTORNEY

11 Years Experience with Federal, State and Local Government

Jeremiah serves as legal counsel to the City of St. Augustine Beach, City of Palm Coast, Clay County School Board, St. Johns County Airport Authority, and St. Johns River State College.

Jeremiah attended law school in Jacksonville, Florida at Florida Coastal School of Law and graduated in 2012. After passing the Florida Bar, Jeremiah continued his legal studies at the University of Miami School of Law in Coral Gables, earning a Master of Law in Real Property Development. In addition to a law degree, Jeremiah has a graduate degree in Business Entrepreneurship from the University of Florida and a graduate degree in Military History from Norwich University in Vermont.

He was born and raised in Ocala, FL, and is a sixth-generation Floridian. Public service is important to his family with his father, uncle, and all four brothers having served as combat veterans in the Armed Forces.

Jeremiah is a graduate of the University of Florida, where he obtained a degree in History. While attending college, he participated in the Army ROTC program, commissioning as a Second Lieutenant upon graduation.

As a veteran, Jeremiah served as an Army officer for over 13 years, both on active duty and in the reserves. A veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Jeremiah commanded a Military Police company. In addition to his Army service, Jeremiah served as a Judge Advocate General officer in the Air Force Reserve in the position of Staff Judge Advocate for Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida. He continues his military service in the Florida Army National Guard as a Judge Advocate General officer with the rank of Major.

As a decorated combat veteran, some major awards Jeremiah has received include Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal with two oak leaf devices, Air Force Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, Iraqi Campaign Medal, and the Combat Action Badge.

Before transitioning into private practice, Jeremiah served as a state prosecutor in Jacksonville, Florida, and later in the Seventh Judicial Circuit. Today, as a partner in Douglas Law Firm, Jeremiah concentrates on assisting small businesses and veterans.

### Awards/Recognitions

- The United States Air Force Judge Advocate Lowry Award for Leadership
- Florida Super Lawyers Magazine as a "Rising Star"
- St. Augustine Record 40 Under 40, Young Local Government Official Award

### Community Involvement

- Former Chair of the St. Johns County Board of County Commission
- St. Augustine Inns of Court
- St. Johns County Bar Association
- Jacksonville Bar Association
- American Legion
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Military Officer Association of America





## Charles T. Douglas Jr., Esq.

DOUGLAS LAW FIRM MANAGING PARTNER

18 Years Experience

Charlie founded the Douglas Law Firm in 2013, and it proudly serves multiple governmental entities including the City of Palm Coast, City of St. Augustine Beach, Clay County School Board, St. Johns River State College, and the St. Johns County Airport Authority. In each role, the Firm oversees governmental legal issues and has extensive experience related to Sunshine Laws, Public Records Requests, Labor & Employment, Contracts and Legal Drafting, Collective Bargaining, Real Estate including eminent domain, purchasing, and drafting of policies and procedures. The Firm also handles planning and zoning matters, constitutional law, and election law.

Local government and community have always been important to Charlie. He is heavily involved in the restoration and revitalization of his hometown community. Charlie has worked with local government to develop solutions and a path to move forward with revitalization efforts for a restored and renewed downtown area in Palatka, FL.

Charlie graduated Valedictorian of Palatka High School in 2000. In 2003, Charlie graduated, summa cum laude, with a degree in Business Administration from the University of Florida. Charlie then attended the University of Florida Levin College of Law, where

he served as Editor-in-Chief of the Florida Law Review and graduated second in his class of 211 students. Prior to founding the Douglas Law Firm, Charlie was a litigator at a large civil law firm in Jacksonville from 2006 until 2013.

In 2007, Charlie gained national recognition for his fight to free a Texas man, Tyrone Brown, who had been sentenced to life in prison after testing positive once for marijuana while on probation. Hearing that Mr. Brown had already served nearly 17 years of the life sentence, Charlie launched a lengthy grass-roots advocacy campaign that resulted in Mr. Brown's Freedom.

Charlie has also fought against the tobacco industry and was previously named by the Lawton Chiles Foundation as Florida's Youth Advocate of the Year. For those efforts, the American Legacy Foundation asked Charlie to serve as a national spokesperson to help expose the truth about tobacco company tactics.

Charlie's passionate representation and advocacy for his clients led Florida Super Lawyers Magazine to recognize Charlie as a "Rising Star," which is an award reserved for less than 2.5% of attorneys in Florida under the age of 40.

### Awards/Recognitions

- Named by the Lawton Chiles Foundation as Florida's Youth Advocate of the Year
- Florida Super Lawyers Magazine as a "Rising Star"

### Community Involvement

- Putnam First Cancer Fund, Board Member
- The ARC, Board Member
- Kiwanis of the Azalea City, Member
- Boy Scouts of America, Volunteer



## Marcus Duffy, Esq.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY

7 Years Experience with Federal, State and Local Government

At Douglas Law Firm, Marcus represents the Firm as the City Attorney for the City of Palm Coast. He handles matters for the firm involving government law, civil litigation and real estate law.

Marcus recently completed his active-duty military service as a Captain in the Air Force Judge Advocate General (JAG) Corp. While serving on active duty, Marcus was selected as Company Grade Officer of the Year (2022) for the Operations and International Law Domain for the Office of the Judge Advocate General. Marcus served as the Deputy Chief for the Utility Law Field Support Center where he represented the Air Force and other Federal Agencies (local and state entities) before state utility commissions across 24 states in matters involving the procurement and rates of electric, gas, water, and sewer utilities.

In the spring of 2022, Marcus returned from an overseas deployment in the Middle East where he served as the Deputy Staff Judge Advocate at Ali Al Salem Air Base. He was recognized as the Air Force Central Command Attorney of the Quarter for Southeast Asia and received the Meritorious Service Medal for his work overseas.

Prior to his deployment, he served as Chief of Military Justice at Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City, FL. He also held positions at Joint Base Andrews, MD, providing legal advice and drafting legal reviews to units assigned to Joint Base Andrews, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, and the Pentagon. Marcus also had the privilege of serving as the Honorary Pallbearer for President George H.W. Bush's State Funeral, for which Marcus received the Air Force Achievement Medal. During his time on active-duty Marcus has also received the Air and Space Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Services Medal, National Defense Service Medal, and the Air and Space Longevity Service Award.

Born in Ireland, Marcus and his family immigrated to the United States when he was young. Marcus attended Florida Southern College in Lakeland, FL where he received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. He later went on to receive his Juris Doctorate from Barry University School of Law in Orlando, FL.

### Awards/Recognitions

- Company Grade Officer of the Year, USAF
  - Operations & International Law Domain, 2022
  - Operations, International, Environmental Law & Litigation Division, 2022
- Air Force Central Command Attorney of the Quarter, Southwest Asia, First Quarter 2022
- Company Grade Officer of the Quarter, Tyndall AFB Wing Staff Agency, First Quarter 2022 & Third Quarter 2021
- Honorary Pallbearer for President, George H.W. Bush's State Funeral, Washington D.C., December 2018

### Community Involvement

- Flagler County Rotary, Member
- Volunteer Soccer Coach, Flagler County Youth Soccer Association



## John Preston (“J.P.”) Steinmetz, Esq.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY

4 Years Experience with Federal, State and Local Government

John “J.P.” Steinmetz is the Clay County School Board Attorney point of contact.

J.P. currently handles a variety of matters at Douglas Law Firm, including, real estate transactions and litigation, transactional law, civil litigation, criminal defense, education law, and local government law.

After graduating from high school, J.P. studied at Florida State University. While there, J.P. earned a Bachelor of Science degree in interdisciplinary social sciences with a focus on both land use and zoning and emergency management, becoming a FEMA certified Emergency Manager through his studies. J.P. worked in the state legislature during his tenure at FSU, gaining knowledge in government processes and political advocacy.

During law school at the Stetson University College of Law, J.P. served as treasurer of the Student Bar Association and volunteered for both the Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, where he assisted those in need in preparing their taxes to maximize their returns, and for the Veterans Advocacy Clinic, where J.P. advocated for veterans who were injured during or as a result of serving our country but had been denied eligibility for VA disability benefits.

After law school, J.P. worked at the State Attorney’s Office for the 4th Judicial Circuit and gained trial and court experience.

### Community Involvement

- Board Member - President, JP Hall Charities  
JP Hall Charities provides college scholarships to Clay County students as well as Christmas toys to Clay County children who may otherwise not receive anything.
- The Chester Bedell American Inn of Court



## Lisa Miles, Esq.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY

2 Years Experience with Federal, State and Local Government

At Douglas Law Firm, Lisa assists in matters involving Probate and Real Property, Local and Municipal Government, Civil Litigation, and Education.

Lisa is a native of St. Augustine, Florida with historic Minorcan roots. Lisa completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Florida with a major in Sociology and went on to earn her law degree from Florida Coastal School of Law.

Lisa is an active member of the St. Johns County Bar Association and is the past chair of the Young Lawyers Division. She continues her community involvement as a volunteer for Jacksonville Area Legal Aid and Jacksonville Women's Lawyer Association.

Additionally, Lisa is a member of the Real Property Trust & Probate and Local Government sections of the Florida Bar.

Prior to joining the Douglas Law Firm, Lisa dedicated the start of her career to serving the citizens of St. Johns County as an Assistant State Attorney. During her time as Assistant State Attorney, Lisa prosecuted thousands of criminal cases and was lead prosecutor on several jury trials.

In 2017, Lisa served as the Law Clerk for the Honorable Judge Daniel Wilensky in the Fourth Judicial Circuit where she assisted the Circuit Court in legal research and case review in the Family Law Division.

### Community Involvement

- Jacksonville Area Legal Aid
- Jacksonville Women's Lawyer Association
- St. Johns County Bar Association



## Patrick Kennedy, Esq.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY

24 Years Experience with Federal, State and Local Government

At Douglas Law Firm, Patrick leverages his extensive experience and focuses on areas such as land use, local government affairs, and real estate for private and public sector clients.

In the 30 years since Patrick has graduated law school, he has dedicated 24 years in public and private sector work covering a range of practice areas that include land use, local government, construction litigation, employment law and real estate law.

A majority of his experience was spent in public service, providing oversight and guidance for local governments in all manners of legal and administrative issues. This included land use, permitting, and code enforcement matters. Accomplishments include a complete rewrite of Putnam County land development, revising and rewriting municipal charters, and rebuilding the code enforcement function.

Upon re-entering the private sector, Patrick soon accepted a role as the Town Attorney for the Town

of Welaka, while commencing his representation of numerous private sector clients pursuing various land use, code enforcement, and government affairs issues in the central and northeast Florida area.

He was born in Key West, Florida and grew up in Orlando, Florida, before leaving to get his college education. He graduated from the University of Miami with a degree in Marine Science before attending law school.

Patrick attended Pace University College of Law in White Plains, New York, where he was a member of the Pace Environmental Law Review. His student paper was chosen to be published in the law review: *The United States Claims Court: A Safe "Harbor" from Government Regulation of Privately Owned Wetlands*, 9 Pace Envtl. L. Rev. 723 (1992). He graduated in May 1992, earning an environmental law certificate with his JD degree, and moved back to Orlando, Florida to start his career.

### Community Involvement

- Member of Crescent City Rotary Club
- Palatka Habitat for Humanity Board Member
- Member of the City, County and Local Government Section of the Florida Bar



## Carol Simpson, Esq.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY

21 Years Experience with Federal, State and Local Government

Carol R. Simpson served as Douglas Law Firm's primary attorney for the Putnam County School Board until 2023. Her main practice areas are government law, administrative law, and family law.

Prior to working at The Douglas Law Firm, Carol worked for the Office of the Attorney General in Tallahassee for over twenty-one years in the Child Support Enforcement Bureau and represented the Department of Revenue in court proceedings. Carol was ultimately promoted to the position of Senior Assistant Attorney General before moving to Palatka in April 2022 to work for the Douglas Law Firm.

Carol was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio and was named a National Merit Scholar before graduating

from high school with honors. She attended Hood College in Frederick, Maryland where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with a double major in history and French.

Carol moved to Florida in 1994 after her father relocated for job reasons and worked in Jacksonville for an advertising data firm before attending law school at the University of Florida, where she served as a Teaching Assistant for the introductory Legal Research and Writing class and was inducted into the legal honor society of Phi Delta Phi. Carol worked as a summer judicial law clerk in the Family Law Self Help Program of the Eighth Judicial Circuit in Gainesville before graduating from law school with honors.