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LETTER OF REFERENCE

To whom it may concern:

The City of Urbana is pleased to extend this letter of reference for Mr. James Simon who has served as City Attorney since 2012.

At the City of Urbana, the City Attorney is responsible for oversight of all legal affairs of the City and serves as chief legal advisor to the Mayor, City staff, the City Council, and members of the City's various boards and commissions. As such, Mr. Simon has many responsibilities. Among them, he supervises the Legal Division staff and any outside counsel we retain. He drafts and reviews ordinances and provides legal counsel on the various contracts into which the City enters.

Mr. Simon has evidenced a strong work ethic, and he has undertaken many complex matters, including several that involved litigation. Mr. Simon has successfully represented the City in litigation in Ordinance Violation court all the way up to the Illinois State Supreme Court. Additionally, Mr. Simon is the primary attorney who advises all staff on how to respond to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act. Mr. Simon advises the City Council on all matters related to the Open Meetings Act and conflicts of interest and provides related training to members of the Council and the City's Boards and Commissions. He often negotiates and drafts intergovernmental and interagency agreements.

Mr. Simon advises staff on issues related to enforcement of the state and local liquor codes. In 2019, he worked with me in my role as Local Liquor Commissioner and my Deputy Local Liquor Commissioner to re-write Chapter 3 of Urbana City Code-Liquor Code. This nine-month project resulted in a new language that reflected the needs of local businesses, provided for more efficiency and flexibility in administration, and resulted in cost-savings for liquor license holders. The new Chapter 3 was approved by the Urbana City Council earlier this year.

As a supervisor and co-worker, Mr. Simon has shown himself to possess a genial demeanor. He cares about the employees he supervises and advocates on their behalf. Mr. Simon has made valuable contributions to the City of Urbana and the community we serve. We thank him for his service to the City and we wish him the best in all his future endeavors.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Wolfe Marlin
Mayor