Agenda Item #: 3 D-1

# PALM BEACH COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Meeting Date: Department	Oct. 5, 2010	[X] Consent [ ] Public Hearing	[ ] Regular	
Submitted By:	COUNTY ATTORNEY			
Submitted For:	COUNTY ATTORNEY			

### I. EXECUTIVE BRIEF

**Motion and Title: Staff recommends motion to:** approve a Settlement Agreement, inclusive of attorney's fees and costs, in the total amount of \$90,000 in the personal injury action styled Nina Lewis v. Palm Beach County, Case No. 502008CA026911XXXXMBAB.

**Summary**: On May 14, 2005, Nina Lewis was a passenger on a Palm Tran bus. The driver drove the bus into a light pole in the parking lot of the Palm Beach Mall. Damage to the bus totaled \$76,000. The County driver was terminated. Countywide (SCL)

Background and Justification: Plaintiff, Nina Lewis, was transported by ambulance after the Palm Tran accident on May 14, 2005. She was treated in the emergency room for neck and shoulder pain. MRI's later revealed herniated discs which were treated with injections. She had damage to her right knee which required surgery. Ms. Lewis is still undergoing treatment for her injuries. To date, she has incurred \$77,918.30 in medical bills and also has a lost wage claim. This settlement is reasonable and in the County's best interest. Accordingly, it is recommended that the County approve the Settlement in the amount of \$90,000.

Attachments:		
Settlement Agreemer	nt and Release of All Claims.	
Recommended by:	Millen	m 9/3/10
	County Attorney	Date
Approved by:	N/A	
5		Date

# II. FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

A.	A. Five Year Summary of Fiscal Impact:								
	Fiscal Years	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015			
Oper Exter Prog	tal Expenditures rating Costs rnal Revenues ram Income (County nd Match (County)	\$90,000 							
NE	T FISCAL IMPACT	\$90,000				· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			
	DÖITIONAL FTE SITIONS (Cumulative	e)		400 Maria 400 Million 44		·			
Is Ite	m Included in Currer	nt Budget?	Yes	s <u>X</u> No_					
Budç	get Account No.:	Fund <u>5010</u>	Departme	ent <u>700</u> Un	it <u>7131</u> Obje	ect <u>4511</u>			
		Reporting C	ategory						
B.	B. Recommended Sources of Funds/Summary of Fiscal Impact:								
C. Departmental Fiscal Review:									
III. REVIEW COMMENTS									
<b>A.</b>	OFMB Fiscal and/o	r Contract D	evelopme	nt and Contr	ol Comments	<b>\$</b> :			
	OFMB	5 July 5.	alulo Co	ntract Devel	- Jawou	9)14)10			
В.	Legal Sufficiency:	917	み ノ る			<i>(1.1.)</i>			
•	Assistant Count	ksey ty Attorney							
C.	Other Department F		<b>&gt;</b>						
	Department [	JII ECIOF							

THIS SUMMARY IS NOT TO BE USED AS A BASIS FOR PAYMENT.

#### **SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

THIS AGREEMENT made and entered into this 26 day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 2010, by and between PALM BEACH COUNTY (the "COUNTY"), a political subdivision of the State of Florida, and NINA LEWIS.

WHEREAS, Nina Lewis sued the COUNTY in a lawsuit presently styled <u>Nina Lewis v. Palm Beach County</u>, Case No. 502008CA026911XXXXMBAB, in the Circuit Court of Palm Beach County, Florida (the "Pending Lawsuit"), for damages arising from an incident that occurred on May 14, 2005, at or near the Palm Beach Mall parking lot, West Palm Beach, in Palm Beach County, Florida;

WHEREAS, the COUNTY has denied liability and raised several affirmative defenses in the Pending Lawsuit; and

WHEREAS, the parties hereto wish to amicably resolve that portion of the Pending Lawsuit that involves PALM BEACH COUNTY without further litigation of the claims made and defenses raised therein.

**NOW, THEREFORE,** in consideration of the mutual covenants hereinafter set forth, the sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the parties agree as follows:

- 1. The foregoing recitals are true and correct and incorporated herein by reference.
- 2. Within a reasonable time, Nina Lewis shall execute and Mark Januschewski, Esq., shall deliver to the Palm Beach County Attorney's Office the 1) Settlement Agreement, 2) Release of All Claims, and 3) the Stipulation and Final Order of Dismissal with Prejudice.
- 3. Within thirty (30) days of full execution and receipt hereof, <u>and subject to final administrative approval</u>, the COUNTY shall pay to Nina Lewis the amount of Ninety Thousand Dollars (\$90,000.00), by a check made payable to Nina Lewis and Mark Januschewski, P.A.
- 4. Mark Januschewski, Esq. shall not disburse, and Nina Lewis shall not accept, any proceeds from the settlement check described in paragraph 3 unless and until the Release of All Claims has been delivered to the COUNTY and the Final Order of Dismissal with Prejudice has been filed and served in accordance with paragraph 2 above.
- 5. Nina Lewis acknowledges and agrees that she is responsible for the payment of any liens against this settlement and that the COUNTY shall not be responsible for any portion of said liens. Nina Lewis, on behalf of herself and her officers, agents, employees, heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, further agree to indemnify, defend, and hold the COUNTY, its officers, agents, elected officials, employees, their heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, harmless from and against all suits, actions, proceedings, claims, demands, and damages, including attorneys fees, arising out of or related to such liens or

claims of lien.

- 6. Each party shall bear its respective attorneys fees and costs.
- This Settlement Agreement does not constitute an admission of liability by any party.
- In any litigation brought to enforce the terms or remedy a violation of this Settlement Agreement, the prevailing party shall be entitled to an award of reasonable attorney's fees in addition to any other recovery.
- Nina Lewis declares and acknowledges that the terms of this Settlement Agreement have been completely read, fully understood, discussed with counsel, and voluntarily accepted as a full and final compromise of any and all claims they may have against the COUNTY.
- This Settlement Agreement shall be binding on the parties hereto, their assigns, transferees, heirs, and other successors in interest.
- The parties represent that no claim that has been, or could have been, raised in the Pending Lawsuit, and no claim to which this Settlement Agreement applies, has been assigned or otherwise transferred to any other person or entity not a party hereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Settlement Agreement to be executed as of the date first set forth above.

WITNESS:

PLAINITFF:

Print Name:

**NINA LEWIS** 

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY

Assistant County Attorney

#### **RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS**

#### KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

That the Undersigned, NINA LEWIS, being of lawful age, for the sole consideration of NINETY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$90,000.00), to the Undersigned in hand paid, the receipt and sufficiency whereof is hereby acknowledged, does hereby and for her executors, administrators, successors and assigns, release, acquit and forever discharge PALM BEACH COUNTY, (hereinafter referred to as "the Releasees"), and their officers, agents, employees, heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns, none of whom admit any liability to the Undersigned, but all of whom expressly deny any such liability, from any and all claims, demands, rights, damages, costs, loss of service, expenses, compensation, actions, causes of action or suits of any kind or nature whatsoever, which the Undersigned may now have or which may hereafter accrue or develop, particularly on account of or in any way growing out of any and all known and unknown, foreseen and unforeseen, bodily and personal injuries, and property damages, and any and all consequences thereof, resulting or to result from an alleged event or incident that occurred on or about May 14, 2005, at or near the Palm Beach Mall in West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida.

FURTHERMORE, the Undersigned agrees that each party shall bear its own costs and attorney's fees, and the Undersigned shall bear sole responsibility for any and all hospital, physician, diagnostic, rehabilitation, training, maintenance, medical or pharmaceutical expenses, bills, statements, liens or subrogable interests, of any nature whatsoever, which are or may be outstanding and payable on the date of execution of this agreement, or which may be incurred and payable in the future. The Undersigned further agree to indemnify and save harmless the Releasees from any requests for payment or attempts for collection therefrom. Should legal action be instituted against the Releasees for payment or collection of the aforementioned expenses, the Undersigned agrees to indemnify and save harmless the Releasees for any attorney's fees, costs and/or judgments which may be entered against the Releasees.

FURTHERMORE, the Undersigned understands and agrees that this settlement is the compromise of a doubtful and disputed claim, and that the payment made shall not be construed as an admission of liability on the part of the Releasees, and that the Releasees deny any liability therefore and merely intend to avoid further litigation and buy their peace.

FURTHERMORE, the Undersigned hereby declares and represents that any injuries sustained are or may be permanent and progressive and that recovery therefrom is uncertain and indefinite and in making this Release the Undersigned understands and agrees that the Undersigned relies wholly upon the Undersigned's own judgment, belief, and knowledge of the nature, extent, effect and duration of any injuries and liability therefore, without reliance upon any statement or representation by the Releasees, or by her representatives or by any physician or surgeon employed by her. The Undersigned further declares and represents that no promise, inducement, or agreement not herein expressed has been made to the Undersigned, and that this Release contains the entire agreement between the parties hereto, and that the terms of this Agreement are contractual and not merely a recital.

FURTHERMORE, the Undersigned states that while she hereby releases any and all claims against the Releasees and their officers, agents, employees, heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns, for both past and future losses, including medical expenses, health care expenses, and related expenses, the necessity for future medical treatment and expenses incurred is speculative and unknown at this time and therefore, as a result, the Undersigned reserves the right to pursue and recover all future medical expenses, health care expenses, and related expenses, from any person, firm, or organization who may be responsible for payment of such expenses, including any first-party health or automobile insurance coverage, but such reservation specifically does not

include the Releasees.

FURTHERMORE, notwithstanding the language contained in this Release, this Release shall not be construed as releasing any medical providers for potential claims which may arise based upon treatment and care rendered as a result of the accident which is the subject of this Release. Moreover, this Release shall not be construed as releasing any health insurance carrier or other insurer from medical and lost wage benefits to which the Releasor is entitled.

THE UNDERSIGNED hereby declares that the Undersigned has completely read, fully understood, and voluntarily accepted the foregoing Release of All Claims for the purpose of making a full and final compromise settlement and adjustment of any and all claims disputed or otherwise on account of the injuries and damages set forth above, and for the express purpose of precluding forever any further or additional claims against the Releasees arising out of the aforementioned incident.

THE UNDERSIGNED hereby accepts the tendered settlement draft as final payment of the consideration set forth above.

IN WITNESS HEREOF, I, Nina Lewis, have hereunto set my hand and seal this 26 day of 2010.

IN THE PRESENCE OF:

MITNESS

PLAINTIFF:

<u>الاحسام</u> NINA LEWIS

STATE OF FLORIDA ) COUNTY OF PALM BEACH )

The foregoing Release of All Claims was acknowledged before me, an officer duly authorized in the State and County aforesaid to take acknowledgments, this 26th day of Asy 2010, by Louis, who:

is personally known to me; OR has produced FC D.C. as identification; and who

and who executed the within Release of All Claims, and who acknowledged the within Release of All Claims to be freely and voluntarily executed for the purposes therein recited.

[seal]

Notary Public in and for Palm Beach County My Commission Expires:

LENEL THEUS
Commission # DD 677574
My Commission Expires
August 04, 2011

## STATEMENT OF ATTORNEY FOR RELEASOR

I, Mark Januschewski, Esq., of the Law Office of Mark Januschewski, P.A., state that I am the attorney for Nina Lewis, the above-signed Releasor, that I have explained to Nina Lewis all the terms of this Release and the Settlement Agreement upon which it is based and that Nina Lewis has represented to me that she understands all those terms and their significance. Nina Lewis has signed this Release knowingly, voluntarily and on my advice.

Dated <u>8/26/co</u>

Mark Japaschewski, Esq. Attorney for Nina Lewis Florida Bar No. 153257