Agenda Item #: 3D-2

### PALM BEACH COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Meeting Date:	September 10, 2013		Consent Public Hearing	[] Regular
Department		LJ		
Submitted By:	COUNTY ATTORNEY			
Submitted For:				

### I. EXECUTIVE BRIEF

**Motion and Title: Staff recommends motion to:** approve a Settlement Agreement in the amount of \$85,455, inclusive of attorneys fees and costs, in the personal injury action styled <u>Jose A. Castillo vs. Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners and Palm Tran, Inc.</u>, Case No. 502012CA019639XXXXMB AB.

**Summary**: This is a personal injury case which arose out of an incident that occurred on June 2, 2011. The plaintiff, 19 years old, sustained injuries when the car in which he was a passenger was struck by a Palm Tran bus. The Plaintiff treated with an orthopedic surgeon for a torn rotator cuff of his right shoulder and fracture of his left wrist. He underwent a right shoulder arthroscopy and chiropractic therapy. His surgeon assigned an 8% impairment rating to the shoulder. His past medical bills total \$67,276, and there was no available insurance.

Staff, including the Risk Management Roundtable Committee, concurs that this settlement is in the best interest of Palm Beach County. <u>Countywide</u> (SCL)

**Background and Justification**: On June 2, 2011, Plaintiff, Jose A. Castillo, 19 years old, was involved in a collision with a Palm Tran bus. He was seated in the rear passenger seat in a northbound car on Lake Avenue at or near its intersection with Tuscaloosa Street in West Palm Beach. Lake Avenue has one northbound and one southbound lane. The Palm Tran bus attempted to pass the car on the right side of the road just as the car initiated a right turn onto Tuscaloosa Street. The Plaintiff presented to the emergency room that day with complaints of right shoulder and left wrist pain. He followed up with an orthopedic surgeon for a torn rotator cuff of his right shoulder and a fractured wrist. He underwent a right shoulder arthroscopy and several injections into his right shoulder. His medical bills totaled \$67,276, and there was no insurance coverage. As a result of the accident, the Palm Tran driver received a written reprimand.

Therefore, it is recommended that the County approve the Settlement Agreement in the amount of \$85,455.

Atta	ch	me	nts:

1.	Settlement Agreement and	Release of All Claims

2. Budget Availability Statement

	$\square$	. ••		-
Recommended by:		Mim	8.15.13	
·	County Attorney		Date	
Approved by:	N/A			
			Date	

# II. FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Α.	Five Year Summar	y of Fiscal Ir	npact:			• •
	Fiscal Years	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
-	al Expenditures ating Costs	\$85,455				
Progr	nal Revenues am Income (County nd Match (County)	')				
NE1	FISCAL IMPACT	\$ 85,455				
	DDITIONAL FTE SITIONS (Cumulativ	e)				
ls Iter	n Included in Curre	nt Budget?	Ŷ	es <u>X</u> No	<b>_</b>	
Budg	et Account No.:	Fund <u>5010</u>	Departm	ent <u>700</u> Unit <u>7</u>	130 Object	<u>4511</u>
		Reporting C	ategory			
<ul> <li>B. Recommended Sources of Funds/Summary of Fiscal Impact:         <ul> <li>*Settlement \$85,000</li> <li>Mediation Costs \$455</li> </ul> </li> <li>C. Departmental Fiscal Review:</li></ul>						
III. REVIEW COMMENTS						
Α.	OFMB Fiscal and/o				rol Comment	S
OFMB 50 8/15 A Contract Development and Control 8/15/13 8-22-12 Biohuen						
В.	Legal Sufficiency:	r				
(	Assistant Cour	The Attorney	<u>j</u>	· ·		
C.	Other Department	Review:				

**Department Director** 

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

### SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT made and entered into this  $\frac{2(\mathcal{H}^{h})}{2013}$  day of  $\mathcal{I}_{I}$  and  $\mathcal{I}_{I$ 

WHEREAS, JOSE A. CASTILLO sued the COUNTY in a lawsuit presently styled Jose A. Castillo v. Palm Beach County and Palm Tran, Case No. 502012CA019639XXXXMB AB, in the Circuit Court of Palm Beach County, Florida (the "Pending Lawsuit"), for damages arising from an incident that occurred on June 2, 2011, at or near intersection of Lake Avenue and Tuscaloosa Street, 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 and PALM TRAN 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, Salesia V. Smith-Gordon, Esq., shall execute and 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 a reasonable time of full execution and receipt hereof, <u>and subject</u> to final administrative approval, the COUNTY shall pay to Jose A. Castillo the amount of Eighty Five Thousand Dollars **(\$85,000.00)**, by a check made payable to Jose A. Castillo and Salesia V. Smith-Gordon, P.A., Trust Account. The "COUNTY" will also pay for the total mediation costs incurred on July 24, 2013, at Matrix Mediation.

4. Salesia V. Smith-Gordon, Esq. shall not disburse, and Jose A. Castillo 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. Jose A. Castillo acknowledges and agrees that he is responsible for the payment of any liens against this settlement and that the COUNTY and/or PALM TRAN shall not be responsible for any portion of said liens. Jose A. Castillo, on behalf of himself and his officers, agents, employees, heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, further agree to indemnify, defend, and hold the COUNTY and PALM TRAN, 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.

7. This Settlement Agreement does not constitute an admission of liability by any party.

8. 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.

9. Jose A. Castillo 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.

10. This Settlement Agreement shall be binding on the parties hereto, his assigns, transferees, heirs, and other successors in interest.

11. 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.

THE SPACE BELOW IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

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

Plaintiff, JOSE A. CASTILLO

ATTEST: Sharon R. Bock, Clerk & Comptroller

Chuck Cohen

Director of Palm Tran

# PALM BEACH COUNTY, a Political Subdivision of the State of Florida

By:

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY

By:

By Han C. Undsey, Sara C. Lindsey, Sr. Assistant County Attorney

#### RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS

### KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

That the Undersigned, Jose A. Castillo, being of lawful age, for the sole consideration of EIGHTY FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$85,000.00), to the Undersigned in hand paid, the receipt and sufficiency whereof is hereby acknowledged, does hereby and for his executors, administrators, successors and assigns, release, acquit and forever discharge PALM BEACH COUNTY and PALM TRAN, (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 June 2, 2011, at or near the intersection of Lake Avenue and Tuscaloosa Street 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(s) 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 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 his representatives or by any physician or surgeon employed by him. 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 he 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(s) is/are 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, JOSE A. CASTILLO, have hereunto set my hand and seal this 2640 dav of \_, 2013.

PLAINTIFF

RESENCE OF: IN THE

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 2/2 day of 5/20/22, 2013, by 5/20/24, 2013/24identification; and who freely and voluntarily executed the within Release of All Claims for the purposes therein recited.

[seal]

Notary Public My Commission Expires: 4

NOTARY PUBLIC-STATE OF FLORIDA Commission #DD977999 APR. 01, 2014 Mz nines -N.S. THE REMERSE CO., INC.

### STATEMENT OF ATTORNEY FOR RELEASOR

I, Salesia V. Smith-Gordon, Esq., of the Law Office of Salesia V. Smith-Gordon, P.A., state that I am the attorney for Jose A. Castillo, the above-signed Releasor, that I have explained to Jose A. Castillo all the terms of this Release and the Settlement Agreement upon which it is based and that Jose A. Castillo has represented to me that he understands all those terms and their significance. Jose A. Castillo has signed this Release knowingly, voluntarily, and on my advice.

26 2013 Dated ſŨ a Salesia V. Smith-Gordon, Esq.

Attorney for Jose A. Castillo Flòrida Bar No. 0974757

## BUDGET AVAILABILITY STATEMENT RISK MANAGEMENT

REQUEST DATE: <u>8/6/13</u> REQUESTED BY: <u>County Attorney's Office</u> REQUESTED FOR: <u>Jose Castillo Claim #000103-009090-AB-02</u> REQUESTED AMOUNT: <u>\$85,455</u> AGENDA DATE: <u>9/10/13</u>

BUDGET ACCOUNT NUMBER:

FUND: 5010 DEPT: 700 UNIT: 7130 OBJ: 4511

BAS APPROVED BY: DATE: 8/6/13 Jessica Kolb

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