



Hunter O'Connor, Esq.
Attorney

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VERDICTS AND DISPOSITIONS

Digennaro v. Malgrat, et. al.

AREAS OF PRACTICE

Administrative Law
Affordable Housing
Business and Real Estate Law
Code Enforcement
Contract Law (Drafting and Defense)
Cyber Security
Education Law
Eminent Domain
Ethics
First and Third Party Property and Casualty Claims
Labor and Employment Law
Land Use and Zoning
Municipal/Government Liability Defense
PIP/Personal Injury Protection Litigation
Public Finance
Public Procurement
Public Records Law
Public Sector Liability
Sunshine Law
Tax Referendum/Election Law

BAR & COURT ADMISSION

Hunter is a Florida native born and raised in the Florida Keys. Following his graduation from the University of Central Florida, he returned to Key Largo to attend law school at St. Thomas University in Miami Gardens, graduating in 2020. After admission to the Florida Bar, Mr. O'Connor began practicing with Vernis & Bowling of the Florida Keys.

As an associate with Vernis & Bowling of the Florida Keys, Mr. O'Connor has practiced in a wide variety of areas with a focus towards local government law.

Mr. O'Connor handles various legal matters for The School Board of Monroe County, the City of Key Colony Beach, City of Layton, Florida Keys Mosquito Control District and Key Largo Fire & EMS District, North Fort Myers Fire District, and Monroe County. Some of the legal areas Mr. O'Connor handles include, but are not limited to, contracts, ordinances, procurement, affordable housing, public records, and sunshine law. Mr. O'Connor looks forward to continuing to expand his skills and expertise alongside the excellent attorneys at Vernis & Bowling of the Florida Keys.

EDUCATION

Graduate:

St. Thomas University School of Law

Undergraduate:

University of Central Florida

VERNIS & BOWLING

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Florida Bar Certified in City, County and Local Government Law

Dirk M. Smits was born in Boca Raton, Florida. He attended and graduated from Tulane University with a bachelor's degree in accounting. During his years at Tulane, he was a member of Beta Alpha Psi Accounting Honor Society and on the Dean's List three (3) semesters. Mr. Smits attended law school at the University of Miami and graduated *Cum Laude*. While in law school, he received honors including Dean's List and an honors scholarship.

Mr. Smits' practice is concentrated primarily in City, County and Local Government Law and he has been certified as an expert by the Florida Bar for those areas. He serves as a Monroe County School Board Attorney, City Attorney for the City of Layton, Board Attorney for the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District, and Board Attorney for Key Largo Fire & EMS District. Mr. Smits formerly served as City Attorney for the City of Marathon and as a special counsel for Monroe County.

In service of the numerous government clients, Mr. Smits has handled every aspect of the practice. Matters include a range of routine meeting issues to complicated land use, acquisition and even eminent domain questions. Mr. Smits regularly drafts legal documents, resolutions, ordinances, contracts and legal opinions for his government clients.

Additionally, Mr. Smits has extensive jury trial experience at both the Federal and State level. In addition, Mr. Smits has appellate experience in the Third, Fourth and Fifth State District Courts of Appeal, as well as the Supreme Court of Florida.

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PIP/Personal Injury Protection Litigation
Public Finance
Public Procurement
Public Records Law
Public Sector Liability
Sunshine Law
Tax Referendum/Election Law

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Undergraduate:

University of Central Florida

Mr. Smits serves on the board of Habitat for Humanity of the Upper Keys as Vice President. Dirk is also a lector, Eucharistic minister and member of his parish's finance counsel. He founded Friends of San Pedro Catholic Church which is an endowment to provide for the capital needs of the church.