

January 5, 2026

Mounir Bouyounes
Marion County Administrator
601 S.E. 25th Avenue
Ocala, Florida 34471

Dear Mounir:

Thank you for meeting with me on December 23rd of last year to discuss my proposal to create the Don R. Moreland Criminal Justice Complex in memory of former Sheriff Don R. Moreland, who recently passed away. My proposal is to name the area including the current Marion County Jail, the Fleet Services building, the Emergency Operations Center, the Forensics and Evidence building, the MCSO Operations complex, the Multi-Purpose Conference Room & Jail Visitor Center, the on-site Training Facility and any other structures which may be built in the future "The Don R. Moreland Criminal Justice Complex" without affecting the names of any existing facilities thereon – the individual buildings located therein would not carry Sheriff Moreland's name, only the overarching geographical area containing the buildings. This written request to do so is in response to my discussion with you and in compliance with Marion County Commission Policy 24-06 adopted in October of 2024.

As you know, Don R. Moreland served honorably as Marion County Sheriff for twenty years after his election in the Fall of 1972, serving until the end of his term in late 1992. Then, in 1993 he was subsequently appointed as the United States Marshal for the Middle District of Florida, serving in that capacity for the next nine years. He is a legend in Marion County law enforcement, and I have discussed this proposal with our current Sheriff, Billy Woods, Ocala Police Chief Mike Balken, Belleview Police Chief Terry Holland, State Attorney Bill Gladson, and Clerk of the Circuit and County Courts, Greg Harrell. All seem to be quite enthused about the prospect of honoring Don's legacy in the manner in which I propose.

Sheriff Moreland began his law enforcement career with the Ocala Police Department in 1957, then shortly thereafter became a deputy with the Marion County Sheriff's department, moving from patrolman through the ranks until his election as Sheriff in 1972. Along the way, he was a proud graduate of the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia. As Sheriff, Don Moreland oversaw the creation, construction and expansion of this very complex after the county acquired the land, so I feel it would be completely natural and appropriate to name the entire complex after him. While serving as our sheriff, Don Moreland appointed Patti Lumpkin as Marion County's first female road deputy (Patti eventually became the first female major in the MCSO) and discarded the outdated (and

racist) policy that had previously only allowed Black deputies to respond to calls in Black areas of the county – now deputies of any ethnicity answer calls for service in every section of our county. Sheriff Moreland was responsible for creating the sheriff's department aviation unit, fleet maintenance and the accreditation of both the department and the jail. In short, he modernized and improved every aspect of the Marion County Sheriff's Department to mold it into the superb law enforcement agency that it has become over the years. Don Moreland set the bar very high and then insisted that the department live up to the standard that he set. His deputies and employees respected and loved him – in fact, my involvement with this proposal began after the subject of naming "something" after him was introduced at our monthly breakfast meeting by number of retired deputies and other retired law enforcement officers back on December 18th of last year (Sheriff Moreland created that breakfast group many years ago, and I have been a proud participant since they kindly asked me to join them upon my retirement from office in 2013).

On May 18th, 2024, former Sheriff Don Moreland was recognized as a statewide law enforcement legend when he was inducted into the Florida Law Enforcement Hall of Fame after his nomination by our current Sheriff Billy Woods, and his legacy of excellence should be recognized, honored and preserved by naming the complex he created after him! As I stated earlier in this request, Don Moreland is a true law enforcement legend in Marion County and, as such, I would respectfully suggest that the final paragraph of County Policy 24-06 ("Notwithstanding the aforementioned policy, the County Commission authorizes the County Administrator to bring forward a request to the Board for consideration that may not specifically fit the instructions of this policy, but it is deemed to be of value to the county operation to address a specific situation or circumstance") should be employed. Hopefully, you will agree to expedite and place this correspondence on the agenda of the Board of County Commissioners for action as soon as possible.

Respectfully submitted,



John E. Futch
Retired Marion County Judge