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### HALLANDALE BEACH NEWS

## Mega payout for city manager fired six years ago: \$4.4 million

By Susannah Bryan  
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HALLANDALE BEACH — Daniel Rosemond collected no severance pay when he was fired from his \$180,400-a-year job as city manager of Hallandale Beach in December 2016.

But on Friday, a Broward County jury awarded him \$4.4 million in damages after determining he was the [victim of wrongful termination](#). His lawyer says the amount is exactly what Rosemond asked for down to the penny — and 48 times more than the \$92,000 severance pay he would have collected in December 2016 had he not been fired for alleged misconduct.

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“Mr. Rosemond was absolutely wronged and the jury saw it,” said Brian Lerner, his attorney. “They ruled there was retaliation.”

The amount in damages takes into account the pain and suffering Rosemond endured in the years since he was fired, his attorney said.

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“He lost friends,” Lerner said. “He lost family. His colleagues and his career were taken away from him on Dec.

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Rosemond, 57, has since moved to California with his family and is no longer working in government.

“It’s something that scares you,” he said of his termination and the fallout that came afterward.



Hallandale Beach commissioners fired City Manager Daniel Rosemond on Dec. 28, 2016 in a 3-2 vote. On Friday, Rosemond won a jury award of \$4.4 million after filing a wrongful termination lawsuit. (Sun Sentinel)

Lerner says Rosemond was forced to find work outside government because of “the stigma” of being [fired with cause](#).

Then-commissioner Keith London insisted Rosemond be fired with cause because he’d used a city credit card to buy an airline ticket for his daughter and awarded a contract that exceeded the city manager’s \$25,000 spending limit.

Lerner says Rosemond took a business trip to Seattle in 2015 when he was deputy city manager and used his city credit card to buy both tickets only after getting permission from his boss, the city manager. He later reimbursed the city.

Rosemond would have collected five months of severance pay had he been fired without cause.

### Day in court

The 3-2 vote to fire him came on Dec. 28, 2016 during a special hearing in which Rosemond’s

personal attorneys were given the chance to plead his case.

Mayor Joy Cooper, one of the no votes in firing Rosemond that night, argued it might cost the city a fortune down the road.

Commissioner Michele Lazarow, one of the three yes votes, had this retort: “If Mr. Rosemond is being wrongly accused, then he should have his day in court.”

[\[ RELATED: Fired city manager sues Hallandale Beach \]](#)

Within a month of being fired, Rosemond filed a wrongful termination lawsuit.

He applied for other jobs but ran into brick wall after brick wall, his attorney said.

“Dan could not get a job,” Lerner said. “He applied for more than 40 jobs all over the country and could not get hired because of the stigma of being accused of stealing. He had to sell his house and move into his daughter’s apartment in California to survive.”

When the verdict was read on Friday, Rosemond says both he and his wife broke down into tears.

“It was surreal,” he said Monday. “There was a lot of raw emotion after the verdict was read. I tried to console my

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## Taking the stand

During the trial, Rosemond took the stand, testifying over the course of four days. London, Lazarow and Lima-Taub were also called to the stand. But in the end, the jury sided with Rosemond.

“The jury came back with a verdict in an hour and 10 minutes,” Lerner said. “And they awarded what we asked down to the penny.”

On Monday, Lazarow said she was stunned by the verdict.

“We are going to seek appeal,” she said. “We have strong grounds for appeal and we intend to do so.”

If Hallandale Beach were to cut a check tomorrow, it would have to come out of emergency reserves. That’s because the city is self-insured, a city official said.

Rosemond won’t be getting the money anytime soon because of Hallandale Beach’s plans to appeal.

“Nothing will be final until all the appeals have been exhausted,” City Attorney Jennifer Merino said. “It could take years.”

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The city could end up paying Rosemond’s legal fees, too. That will be decided by a judge at a later hearing.

Lerner said his client’s legal fees would “likely hit seven figures.”

Rosemond served as city manager from January through December 2016.

He was fired three days after Christmas when Lazarow joined Commissioners Keith London and Anabella Lima-Taub in voting for his ouster.

London, who is no longer on the commission, said he was shocked by the astronomical amount of Rosemond’s win.

“Oh my God,” London said. “You never know what a jury is going to do.”



The taxpayers of Hallandale Beach may be on the hook for \$4.4 million in damages awarded to former City Manager Daniel Rosemond. But the powers that be at City Hall say they plan to appeal. (Sun Sentinel File Photo/Courtesy)

**‘He wants his name back’**

On Monday, London said he regrets nothing.

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Cooper defended Rosemond on the night he was fired. But on Monday, she said she supported the city’s plan to appeal.

“While I did not support the firing of City Manager Rosemond, as mayor I will support protecting our taxpayer dollars,” Cooper said via text.

Rosemond, intent on putting the past behind him, is now working in real estate and started a nonprofit to

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“He just wants his name back,” his attorney said. “And this is the first step to getting it back. And hopefully he can rebuild his life.”

On Monday, Rosemond was still processing his win.

He had one word to describe how he’s feeling now: “Vindicated.”

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