

# Hallandale's London not sexist or racist, report says



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**T**he yearlong investigation that cleared Commissioner Keith London of allegations of discrimination should have been capped in both price and scope, his attorney said Monday during a special meeting called by the mayor.

City Attorney Lynn Whitfeld, who is black, accused London of gender and racial discrimination a year ago after learning he planned to push for her termination. At the time, London told the Sun Sentinel he had lost confidence in her ability to provide unbiased advice to the commission.

On Monday, Mayor Joy Cooper commended the city attorney for having the courage to lodge a complaint against London.

While the report cleared London of the bias claims, it admonished him for being aggressive and rude. But Monday, several residents came to London's defense, saying he helped people regardless of race.

Commissioner Michele Lazarow lauded London for being a watchdog and denounced the report as "character assassination."

"I think we should let this go and call it a day and not continue on with this witch hunt," she said.

Commissioner Bill Julian agreed.

"As far as I'm concerned the case is closed," Julian said. "The man has been cleared of all charges. I think we should move forward as a commission and try to get along a little bit better than we do. We have city business that is more important than this."

City officials tapped the Bryant Miller Olive law firm to handle the investigation. The report, released in mid-February, cost around \$100,000.

London's legal bills were capped at \$3,200 while the city-hired law firm's were not, said Dana Gallup, attorney for London.

The investigation "mushroomed into these other issues that had nothing to do with the initial scope," Gallup said. "It seems as though this investigation was used as a political vehicle to find reasons to embarrass or censure or punish Commissioner London."

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