SpencerFane®

John E. Dorman

Of Counsel

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Overview

John Dorman leans on more than three decades of extensive municipal law experience to provide clients with creative solutions to resolve complex issues in a favorable manner.

Prior to joining Spencer Fane, John spent time as City Attorney for the City of Stillwater, Oklahoma, after previous stints as Assistant City Attorney for the cities of Edmond and Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, and Litigation Division Manager for the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

At Stillwater, he served as the Chief Legal Officer for a community home to Oklahoma State University and managed a municipal department that rendered all legal services, including litigation, for the city council and its subordinate boards, commissions, and quasi-judicial tribunals; city administration; and city-operated public utility, airport, and economic development trusts. This also included being directly responsible for handling complex transactional, real estate, and regulatory matters.

John steered the Stillwater Utilities Authority through the financing, acquisition, and construction of a new state-of-the art municipal electric power generating facility, and the rebuild of a significant portion of the city's water distribution system. He assisted the Stillwater Regional Airport with several large federally funded construction projects and was one of the principal actors responsible for bringing daily American Airlines passenger service to the city.

John created the Stillwater Economic Development Authority and Western Payne County Ambulance Trust, and reformed the Kaw Reservoir Authority, a key component of the north central Oklahoma regions' water supply. His efforts resolving conflicts with rural electric and rural water entities have produced model cooperative agreements and helped to secure Stillwater's future growth in the region.

John's litigation background is equally diverse. At Tulsa, he successfully defended numerous federal civil rights cases involving the Tulsa Police Department. He litigated Title VII and other employment claims. At Stillwater, John won important decisions involving constitutional debt limitation, electric power deregulation, taxpayer (*qui tam*) lawsuits, election law issues, and tort claim defenses.

During his tenure in Broken Arrow, John served as primary legal advisor to the planning and code enforcement departments, defending zoning appeals and prosecuting condemnation actions in state courts. He also assisted with Broken Arrow's annexation efforts in Wagoner County, the region that has accounted for much of that city's growth over the past decade.

John has served as an adjunct professor of political science at Tulsa Community College and Oklahoma City Community College.

Education

- Oklahoma City University School of Law (J.D.)
- University of Oklahoma (M.A.)
- University of Central Oklahoma (B.A.)

Bar Admissions

- Oklahoma
- Texas

Court Admissions

- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma

Distinctions

- International Municipal Lawyers Association, Local Government Fellow, 2007-present
- *405 Magazine*, Top Attorneys, Government and Administrative, 2026

Memberships

- Oklahoma Bar Association
- State Bar of Texas
- Oklahoma Association of Municipal Attorneys
  - Board of Directors, 2004-present
- International Municipal Lawyers Association
  - State Chair, 2008-present
  - University Cities Committee Chair, 2019-present
  - Fellows Committee, 2007-present

Presentations and Publications

- "Qualified Immunity after *Pearson v. Callahan*: New Hope for Expeditious Dispositions?" *Municipal Lawyer*, November / December 2009

- "Defending Positional Asphyxia Claims," *Municipal Lawyer*, July / August 2008
- Frequent presenter at Oklahoma Association of Municipal Attorneys and International Municipal Lawyers Association continuing legal education programs and events