



For Immediate Release: August 16, 2012
Contact: Joseph Centorino, Executive Director
(305) 350-0613 or centori@miamidade.gov

Letter of Instruction approved for City Commissioner

The Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust today approved a Letter of Instruction for South Miami City Commissioner Robert Welsh, who was found to have violated the County Ethics Code earlier this year. The complaint (**C 12-25**) alleged that the commissioner, who was elected in February, spoke with two bidders in April about a pending city contract while the proposals were still under consideration, which is prohibited by procurement rules. As part of a settlement agreed to in June, Commissioner Welsh paid \$250 in investigative costs and will accept the Letter, which specifically instructs him to abide by the “cone of silence” and to contact the Ethics Commission if he is uncertain about the applicability of ethics rules.

The Ethics Commission found No Probable Cause that Sweetwater Mayor Manuel Marono violated the ethics code by exploiting his official position. The complaint (**C 12-29**) was alleged by Florida Highway Patrol Corporal Carlos Ruiz, who coordinates trooper’s off-duty assignments for Florida Power & Light. He and another trooper were working at NW 109 Ave. & 18 St. in May when a Sweetwater police commander told him that a city ordinance requires that all off-duty police work in that city must be coordinated by the Sweetwater Police Department. As the off-duty work by Corp. Ruiz continued, Mayor Marono became involved and eventually FP&L removed Corp. Ruiz from that assignment. Since Sweetwater does have an ordinance requiring that city officers get priority for off-duty work within the municipality, the Ethics Commission determined the mayor did not exploit his official position by having Corp. Ruiz replaced.

A complaint (**C 12-30**) filed against former North Miami Beach Mayor Myron Rosner in connection with his membership on the Miami-Dade County Board of Rules and Appeals was found Not Legally Sufficient and dismissed. A citizen alleged that while he was running for re-election in 2011, Mayor Rosner accepted campaign contributions totaling more than \$10,000 from developer Russell Galbut, his family members and various corporations in which he has financial interests. While he lost the re-election bid, Rosner continued serving on the Board of Rules and Appeals and voted in favor of Galbut at two meetings of that board. The County ethics code permits elected officials who are also members of quasi-judicial boards to vote on matters related to campaign contributors as long as the member will not personally profit or be enhanced by the vote.

Also today, COE members were updated on Ethical Governance Day activities on October 12, 2012, and encouraged other local governments, civic organizations and educational institutions to get involved. Details can be found on the attached flyer or by visiting www.miamidadeethics.com.

The Ethics Commission was created in 1996 as an independent agency with advisory and quasi-judicial powers. It is composed of five members, serving staggered terms of four years each. Through a program of education, outreach and enforcement, the Commission seeks to empower the community and bolster public trust.

###