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NMB Councilman accused of threatening code officer

The Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust (COE) today found Probable Cause that North Miami Beach Councilman Frantz Pierre abused his position by threatening a code compliance officer and threatening to fire city officials when he was cited for property violations. According to the investigation of the complaint (**C 16-34**), Councilman Pierre had been issued two code violations in February 2015. After failing to address them, a code enforcement officer went to his home two months later to post a notice that a hearing had been scheduled on the cases, when Pierre allegedly told her "... if you want to keep your job, don't even look at this house." The councilman also allegedly stated he would fire the city manager and code compliance director, then tore down the posted notice and threw it in the direction of the officer's car. The charge against Pierre is "exploitation of official position," under the County's Code of Ethics Ordinance, and is subject to a fine, legal costs and/or a reprimand.

The COE found No Probable Cause to a complaint (**C 16-29**) filed against Miami Beach City Commissioner Kristen Rosen-Gonzalez by Steve Ross, who alleged that she used her official city email to campaign for a state senate candidate. While the August 12th email endorsing former City Commissioner Michael Gongora did appear to originate from "kristen@miamibeachfl.gov," it was actually sent from her personal email address to a private vendor who also distributes the commissioner's legislative updates to constituents. The investigation determined that the vendor mistakenly used the official email address when he was specifically told to send it from her personal address. Since there was no evidence that commissioner Rosen-Gonzalez intentionally exploited her official position, the complaint was dismissed.

Probable Cause was found to a one aspect of a complaint (**C 16-24**) filed against Surfside Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo, accusing him of engaging in outside employment, participating in conflicting employment and failing to disclose his financial interests. The investigation revealed some confusion regarding the occupation of the manager's son who has the same name, but did determine that the senior Olmedillo was the principal of a corporation known as Olmedillo X5, Inc., when he was hired by Surfside two years ago. His employment agreement with the city, which was publicly vetted, noted that Olmedillo could continue to serve existing clients until their matters were finalized but would not take on any new business. The investigation found no conflict. Olmedillo did admit he failed to file an Outside Employment Disclosure. Since he immediately fulfilled the requirement, the Ethics Commission determined that the violation was unintentional and directed staff to issue a Letter of Instruction to Olmedillo.

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.