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Summary of the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust Meeting Held on February 10, 2021

The Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust held a Commission Meeting on February 10, 2021. The following actions took place:

Attorney Bruce Jacobs Stipulates to Probable Cause

C 21-02-01: Attorney Bruce Jacobs stipulated to a finding of Probable Cause for violating the Lobbying section of the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance. A COE investigation revealed that Mr. Jacobs did not register as a lobbyist as required by the County when he lobbied City of Miami Commissioner Ken Russell and possibly other City officials. In an agreed settlement, the complaint was dismissed with the agreement that Mr. Jacobs will accept a Letter of Instruction.

No Probable Cause Found in Case Involving North Miami Beach Councilman

C 20-34-09: The Ethics Commission found No Probable Cause that North Miami Beach Councilman Michael Joseph violated the Exploitation of official prohibited section of the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics. The complaint alleged that Mr. Joseph exploited his official position for personal gain by improperly attempting to coerce the City Attorney and outside law firms to issue an incorrect legal opinion stating that North Miami Beach Mayor Anthony DeFillipo could not run for re-election.

No Probable Cause Found in Case Involving Former Miami-Dade County Commissioner

C 20-38-09: The Ethics Commission found No Probable Cause that former Miami-Dade County Commissioner Esteban Bovo violated the Exploitation of official prohibited section of the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics. The complaint alleged that Mr. Bovo exploited his official position for personal gain by using his position as Census Taskforce Chairman and County resources to advance his Mayoral candidacy and promote himself in flyers distributed to residents during a food distribution event in Brickell.

City of Miami Beach Employee Stipulates to Probable Cause

C 21-01-01: City of Miami Beach employee, Justin Karr, who works as a real estate asset specialist, stipulated to a finding of Probable Cause for violating the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance entitled Prohibition on outside employment. Records provided by the Miami Beach Office of the Inspector General suggested that Mr. Karr may have used his city computer and email account while providing legal representation to private individuals and businesses. Mr. Karr pled No Contest failure to disclose his outside employment with the agreement that Mr. Karr will accept a Letter of Instruction and pay a \$500.00 fine.

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 training, outreach and enforcement, the Commission seeks to empower the community and bolster public trust.