



Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust

Investigative Report

Investigator: Robert Steinback

Case No.	Case Name:	Date Open:	Date Closed:
K13-077	Water/Sewer Bond		
Complainant(s): Armando Gutierrez and Susan Fried	Subject(s): Steve Marin, Al Lorenzo, Brian Goldmeier, Carlos Gimenez Jr., Keith Donner	May 17, 2013	Sept. 6, 2013

Allegation(s):

Commission on Ethics (COE) Executive Director Joe Centorino (Centorino) on Thursday, May 16, 2013, sent this investigator a memo stating that on Wednesday, May 15, 2013, at a Miami-Dade Board of County Commission meeting, well-known lobbyists Susan Fried (Fried) and Armando Gutierrez (Gutierrez) “pulled me aside to complain that there were people lobbying on the big Water and Sewer bond issue who had not registered as lobbyists.” The executive director initiated this investigation.

Relevant Ordinances:

Subjects alleged to be in violation of Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance Sec. 2-11.1 (s) (2): *All lobbyists shall register with the Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners within five (5) business days of being retained as a lobbyist or before engaging in any lobbying activities, whichever shall come first.*

Investigation:

Interviews

Summary of interview

During the course of the week of May 20, 2013, this investigator spoke with each of the complainants, to ask for more detail regarding the allegations.

Asked for names of alleged violators, Fried named prominent political operatives Steve Marin and Al Lorenzo. She subsequently named three more individuals, Brian Goldmeier (Goldmeier), Carlos Gimenez Jr. and Keith Donner. These five individuals' names were not included on a list of registered lobbyists provided by the county lobbyist registrar in May.

Fried complained that these are people who are hired to do public relations, then say, "I'll charge you \$150,000, and avoid the lobbying registration, but they lobby anyway under the name of public relations."

Asked for specific instances when any of the five might have been engaged in lobbying, Fried could offer no specifics. She said they have "infiltrated everywhere, including the Mayor's office." She said that Goldmeier may have sent e-mails to certain commissioners.

Fried explained that the source of her concerns were clients of hers who passed along to her their belief that others are flouting the lobbyist laws. It was evident that Fried's motivations for expressing her concerns to Centorino was primarily distress over these clients' concerns rather than first-hand knowledge of improper lobbying activities. She also did not offer to put this investigator in touch with any clients who might be willing to file a formal complaint.

This investigator also spoke briefly with Gutierrez, who provided neither names of potential violators nor specifics of alleged violations.

Document/Audio/Video Review:

Summary of findings

On May 27, 2013, this investigator initiated public records requests of the 13 County Commissioners, requesting copies of the commissioners' visitor sign-in log sheets for the period March 1 through May 27, 2013.

None of the five subject names provided were found on the visitor log maintained at the main desk of the Board of County Commissioners, chaired by Rebecca Sosa (Sosa). This log would cover all commissioners who receive visitors in their downtown offices. Sosa's staff separately sent copies of the Chairwoman's sign-in sheet for her District 6 office.

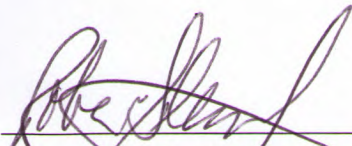
None of the five subject names provided were found on visitor logs for Diaz, Monestime,

Jordan, Bell, Edmonson, Heyman, Moss, Barreiro or Sosa.

Four commissioners' aides reported that sign-in logs are not maintained at the commissioners' district offices: Souto, Zapata, Suarez and Bovo.

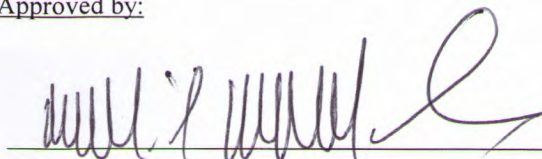
Conclusion(s):

Given the lack of specificity of the original complaint, this investigator could not turn up hard evidence of lobbying on the part of the subjects. Therefore, the instant case is closed without further action.

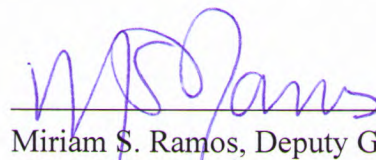


Robert Steinback, COE Investigator

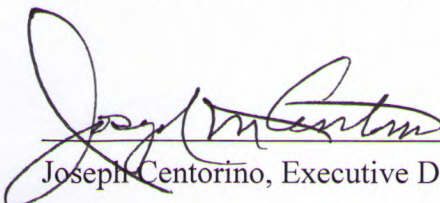
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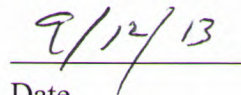
Michael Murawski, Advocate



Miriam S. Ramos, Deputy General Counsel



Joseph Centorino, Executive Director



Date