

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST



REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

#K11-139

Date Opened: 11/09/11

Date Closed: 02/16/12

Investigator: Sylvia Batista

On November 9, 2011, the COE received an e-mail regarding possible fraud in the City of Miami District 1 election. The information was provided by candidate Shawn Selleck (Selleck), who was defeated by incumbent Commissioner Willy Gort. Selleck said that throughout the election he became aware that there was extensive voter fraud involving absentee ballots (AB).

According to Selleck, Miriam Rodriguez (Rodriguez), manager of a public housing building named Three Round Towers (TRT), offered to help him win votes from building's residents. Selleck rejected the offer, which was made directly by Rodriguez. Later, Selleck was told by a third party that the price to have Rodriguez as a "consultant" was \$3000 and that in return she would gather the AB from residents of the TRT, and other buildings where she had relationships with the managers. Rodriguez complained that Commissioner Gort had not responded to requests from the TRT to provide a new

microphone and other audio visual equipment, therefore she was looking to support another candidate. Selleck provided information from Gort's itemized expenditures that reflect a donation to TRT in the sum of \$624.87 and a \$500 payment to Rodriguez for being a campaign advisor. Selleck does not know what Rodriguez did in return for the \$500 and/or the \$624.87 donated to TRT. Selleck explained that most of the residents of TRT feel threatened for fear of losing their privileges as a resident, so they would never speak out about anything that could risk them losing their home.

Selleck advised of a second apartment complex in District 1, which name he will disclose as soon as he completes additional research. According to Selleck, the apartment complex is managed by a woman who is a poll worker. Selleck has received information that the woman in question requests that residents fill out an AB request form as they come in to pay their rent. Selleck informed that he has thoroughly reviewed the voter history of the residents of the complex, and found that 79 absentee ballots were requested by its residents. Of those 79 AB, 20 were requested on 9/22/11 and 51 ballots were requested on 10/11/11. Selleck found that only 27 of these ballots were ever returned. The manager/poll worker in this building told residents how wonderful Gort was, that he provided backpacks to the youth in the complex, and that he also provided a turkey for Thanksgiving last year. Selleck informed that there were Gort signs all over the complex - some signs are still there today. According to Selleck, the manager of the complex went to the apartment units and attempted to collect AB from the residents that had requested them. Some residents also delivered completed, unsealed ballots to her office. Selleck said that he has proof of violation of the M-D County ordinance

prohibiting possession of multiple ballots of non-family members. Selleck said that other individual voters have told him that campaign workers, including Gort family members, have filled out residents' ABs, taken them and mailed them out for those residents. Selleck advised that he would have proof in the future of additional violations.

In a subsequent conversation, Selleck advised that he would be in touch with this investigator in the future with additional information and asked that the COE not contact anyone in connection with the subject allegations until he completes his research.

Numerous attempts to contact Selleck were made, to no avail.

Conclusion:

The COE Advocate determined that, in light of the fact that Selleck has not contacted this investigator as assured, the matter should be closed without further action.