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# Memo

**To:** Michael Murawski, Advocate  
**From:** Manuel W. Diaz, Investigator  
**Date:** December 21, 2011  
**Re:** K11-150

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Philip Stoddard, the Mayor of the City of South Miami, expressed his concern to the COE, as to the appropriateness of an agreement between South Miami Commissioner Velma Palmer and South Miami City Attorney Thomas Pepe, Esq.

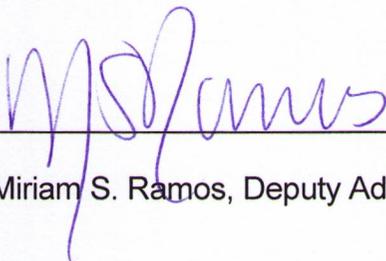
Mayor Stoddard was interviewed. He advised that Mr. Pepe was interviewed by the City Council prior to his appointment. As part of the interview process, Mr. Pepe explained that the agreement between Commissioner Palmer and himself was completed in 2008, long before the City Attorney position was advertised. Mr. Pepe also provided documentation to the Council verifying that the agreement between Pepe and Palmer was complete. During the interview process, Mr. Pepe provided the Council with a statement addressing any concerns that the Council had concerning possible conflicts of interest with any members of the Council or any employees of South Miami.

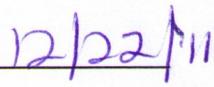
Mayor Stoddard also expressed concerns that Mr. Pepe and South Miami Councilman Walter A. Harris were long time friends. Again, according to Mayor Stoddard, this concern was addressed by the Council during the interview process.

Mr. Pepe, at the request of this office, provided documentation concerning the 2008 agreement between Councilperson Palmer and himself. The documentation indicates that Palmer gave adequate consideration to Mr. Pepe.

**Conclusion:**

Given that adequate consideration was provided, the instant case is closed without further action. It should also be noted that the actions in question occurred outside of the COE's three-year statute of limitations.

  
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Miriam S. Ramos, Deputy Advocate

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date