

# MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST



## REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

K #: 12-163

Date Opened: 10/23/12

Date Closed: 11/1/12

Name of Investigator: Manuel W. Diaz

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### **Allegation:**

Town of Palmetto Bay (PB) Vice Mayor Brian Pariser (Pariser) contacted Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust Executive Director Joseph Centorino. Pariser is a candidate for re-election to Vice Mayor in November 2012. Pariser questioned an election campaign flyer circulated by an opponent John Dubois (Dubois). The flyer was distributed by a Florida Electioneering Communication Organization (ECO), Floridians for an Ethical and Responsible Government (FERG). In support of his inquiry, Pariser submitted copies of three (3) campaign flyers (Copies have been included in the investigative file.)

### **Applicable Legislation:**

2012 Florida Statutes, ELECTORS AND ELECTIONS Chapter 106 CAMPAIGN FINANCING

106.03 Registration of political committees and electioneering communications organizations.—

(1)(a) Each political committee that receives contributions or makes expenditures during a calendar year in an aggregate amount exceeding \$500 or that seeks the signatures of registered electors in support of an initiative shall file a statement of organization as provided in subsection (3) within 10 days after its organization. If a political committee is organized within 10 days of any election, it shall immediately file the statement of organization required by this section.

(b)1. Each group shall file a statement of organization as an electioneering communications organization within 24 hours after the date on which it makes expenditures for an electioneering communication in excess of \$5,000, if such expenditures are made within the timeframes specified in s. 106.011(18)(a)2. If the group makes expenditures for an electioneering communication in excess of \$5,000 before the timeframes specified in s. 106.011(18)(a)2., it shall file the statement of organization within 24 hours after the 30th day before a primary or special primary election, or within 24 hours after the 60th day before any other election, whichever is applicable.

2. c In a municipal election, an electioneering communications organization shall file a statement of organization with the officer before whom municipal candidates qualify.

(1)(d) Any electioneering communications organization that would be required to file a statement of organization in two or more locations need only file a statement of organization with the Division of Elections.

**Investigation:**

The copies of the campaign flyers submitted by Pariser were examined. Two of the flyers were distributed by the ECO FERG, the third was distributed by the campaign of John Dubois for Vice Mayor of Palmetto Bay. The flyers distributed by the ECO FERG were considered.

The data base maintained by the Miami-Dade County Supervisor of Elections was queried. Two ECO filings for FERG were found.

The ECO FERG was first registered on May 20, 2011. The Chairman and Treasurer ECO were listed as Charles A Safdie, 13899 Biscayne Boulevard, Suite 130, North Miami Beach, FL 33181. This filing was listed as Inactive-Disbanded. FERG was re-registered on October 30, 2012. The Chairman and Treasurer ECO were listed as Charles A Safdie, 13899 Biscayne Boulevard, Suite 130, North Miami Beach, FL 33181. This filing is listed as Active.

**Interviews:**

Charles A. Safdie (Safdie), Chairman and Treasurer of Floridians for Ethical and Responsible Government

Safdie was contacted. He acknowledged that FERG was initially created in 2011. FERG was re-registered on October 30, 2012 to distribute election campaign materials in two municipal

elections: Village Palmetto Bay and the Town of Miami Lakes. Safdie advised that developer Wayne Rosen contributed to the FERG.

Safdie advised that he has some administrative problems in re-registering the ECO with the Miami-Dade Supervisor of Elections Office. He advised that he submitted the necessary documents via U.S. mail. He later learned that the registration had not been entered. He advised that he visited the Supervisor of Elections' Office on October 30, 2012 and resubmitted the documents necessary to register the ECO.

**Conclusion:**

Finding no evidence of a violation, the instant case is closed without further action.