

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST



REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

#K12-034

Date Opened: 03/05/12

Date Closed: 10/22/12

Investigator: Sylvia Batista

On or about March 5, 2012, the COE was contacted by Natasha Colebrook-Williams (Colebrook-Williams), Constituent Services Coordinator for the Office of the Mayor and Council of the City of North Miami (NM). Colebrook-Williams advised that the spouse of NM Mayor Andre Pierre had recently approached Johnson & Wales University in order to inquire whether they could use their facilities for the Mayor's upcoming birthday party. Colebrook-Williams asserted that the university offered their facility, along with all catering, free of charge for the Mayor's party. She inquired whether such a gift to the Mayor was subject to the disclosure requirements set forth in the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance Section (e) *Gifts*.

Investigation:

Loreen Chant, President, Johnson & Wales University

COE investigator spoke to the president of Johnson & Wales, Loreen Chant (Chant). Chant advised that Colebrook-Williams called the university and spoke to their events coordinator. According to Chant, Colebrook-Williams wanted to know whether they could use their facility free of charge. Chant explained that her events coordinator told Colebrook-

Williams that they could use the facility, but that they could not accommodate them free of charge. Chant advised that Colebrook-Williams said she would call back, but she did not. Chant explained that if they did use their facility, they would not be able to accommodate them free of charge, or provide free food of any kind.

4/2/12 – Barry Vogel, Director of Administration, Johnson & Wales University

COE investigator spoke with Barry Vogel (Vogel) who stated that no one inquired from him to use the facility for a party of any kind. Vogel said that, to the best of his knowledge, the university has not accommodated a party for the Mayor of NM or any other elected official. He said that they normally do not rent out their facilities and do not lend out space unless it is an event that fits into their curriculum. Sometimes they offer classes that are required to simulate certain types of events, but the groups that come in are groups that are supporting their curriculum.

4/3/12 – Natasha Colebrook-Williams, Constituent Services Coordinator

COE investigator spoke with Colebrook-Williams who advised that, to the best of her knowledge, no party was held to celebrate the Mayor's birthday this year.

Conclusion:

In view of the fact that no gift was ultimately given to the Mayor by Johnson & Wales University, there is no violation of the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance. For that reason, no further action will be taken on this matter.