

**Meyers, Robert (COE)**

JNQ 08-133

**From:** Meyers, Robert (COE)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 05, 2008 1:48 PM  
**To:** Sosa, Rebeca (DIST6)  
**Cc:** Milian, Lourdes (DIST6); Marante, Roly (DIST6); Salichs, Suzanne (Mayor's Office); Sanchez, Gerald (CAO)  
**Subject:** RE: The Gonzalez Family

Dear Commissioner Sosa:

I spoke to Gerald Sanchez earlier in the day and he indicated that you would appreciate an ethics opinion regarding this matter. As I understand it, one of your constituents has fallen on difficult times and your office and Mayor Alvarez' office have been contacted in an effort to assist the family. The family appears to need help at many different levels, but I will focus on the question of rebuilding the family's home and the extent to which you and your staff may solicit funds to pay for the costs associated with rebuilding the home.

The crucial point here is that the funds and supplies necessary to complete the project will be go through the Habitat for Humanity, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The county's Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics ordinance permits elected officials (the Mayor and members of the County Commission) to solicit contributions on behalf of any nonprofit organization for use by that organization where neither the elected official nor his or her staff receives any compensation as a result of this solicitation. In light of the fact the funds raised will go to the Habitat for Humanity to disperse to the appropriate parties to rebuild the Gonzalez home, I find you and Mayor Alvarez may solicit funds for this project.

Unfortunately, the rule that permits you to solicit funds for non-profit agencies is limited to elected officials and does not extent to your to staff. As I see, in order for your staff to be permitted to solicit for this purpose there should be an official declaration by the County finding that this project is official County business. With such a declaration, your staff would be allowed to solicit funds for Habitat for Humanity in the performance of their official duties for use by the County in conducting its official business. Without such authorization, directive or resolution, the best course of action would be for you as the elected official to solicit funds for this Habitat for Humanity project.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Robert Meyers, Executive Director  
Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust  
(305) 350-0613

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**From:** Sanchez, Gerald (CAO)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 05, 2008 9:54 AM  
**To:** Meyers, Robert (COE)  
**Subject:** FW: The Gonzalez Family

Please call me to discuss when you get a moment. Thanks, Gerald

Gerald K. Sanchez  
Assistant County Attorney  
111 N.W. 1st Street, Ste. 2810  
Miami, Florida 33128  
P: (305) 375-5151

8/5/2008

F: (305) 375-5634

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**From:** Cuevas, Jr. R.A. (CAO)  
**Sent:** Monday, August 04, 2008 6:31 PM  
**To:** Sanchez, Gerald (CAO)  
**Cc:** Milian, Lourdes (DIST6); Sosa, Rebeca (DIST6); Marante , Roly (DIST6)  
**Subject:** FW: The Gonzalez Family

Gerald,

Pleas contact Lourdes about the questions she raises in her e-mail below.  
THX, CUEV

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**From:** Milian, Lourdes (DIST6)  
**Sent:** Monday, August 04, 2008 6:26 PM  
**To:** Cuevas, Jr. R.A. (CAO)  
**Cc:** Sosa, Rebeca (DIST6); Marante , Roly (DIST6)  
**Subject:** FW: The Gonzalez Family

Mr. Cuevas,

I would like to speak to you regarding a project that many of us (Mayors Office personnel, City of West Miami, Dept. of Human Services, Team Metro, Building Department, City of West Miami, Commissioner Sosa's office, etc.) are working together to rebuild the house of a citizen of the City of West Miami.

Commissioner Sosa initiated the interest in assisting this person, because his house was going to be demolished, and so far with the assistance of all of the above mentioned departments, and some others I may have left out, we have been able to avoid the demolition so far of his house and work with the possibility of repairing his house and try to keep the family together..

One of the things now needed as part of this effort is to raise funds to cover, construction expenses. Can I, as a county employee working for a Commissioner be involved in events to raise fund for this project. So far the suggestion has been to try to contact the Banks within the City of West Miami for assistance, plus other sources. Please see below Suzanne Salich's, from the Mayor's office, clarification regarding this matter.

Also can you advise us as to any other assistance our office can provide without being a conflict of interest?

Just as a matter of clarification, Mr. Gonzalez, residing within Commissioner Sosa's district (City of West Miami) for a few years he has been in contact with Commissioner Sosa's staff, including myself, venting out the problems he was confronting with his family, the house, etc. so he has built a bond with Commissioner Sosa's staff.

I would greatly appreciate it if you can call us.

Thank you, Have a Great Day!  
Lourdes G. Milian, District Office Manager  
Commissioner Sosa, District 6  
[305-267-6377 Office](tel:305-267-6377)  
[e-mail: lmilian@miamidade.gov](mailto:lmilian@miamidade.gov)

Miami-Dade County is a public entity subject to Chapter 119 of the Florida Statutes concerning public records. E-mail messages are covered under such laws and thus subject to disclosure. All E-mail sent and received is captured by our servers and kept as a public record.

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**From:** Salichs, Suzanne (Mayor's Office)

8/5/2008

**Sent:** Monday, August 04, 2008 5:44 PM  
**To:** Milian, Lourdes (DIST6)  
**Cc:** Sosa, Rebeca (DIST6); Aguirre, Betty (DIST6)  
**Subject:** Re: The Gonzalez Family

Lourdes:

We certainly want to make certain there is no conflict of interest and that we are following all rules.

As county employees, we do not solicit donations. However, we can seek private funding through grantwriting opportunities and that is what we discussed doing with the local banks. As we discussed, all funds and supplies will go through Habitat for Humanity, a 501 (c) 3.

I will remove you from this area. In what other area would you like to serve?

I will revise the plan appropriately and will change the word fundraising to grant writing or something similar.

Best,

Suzanne

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Sent from my BlackBerry Wireless Handheld

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**From:** Milian, Lourdes (DIST6)  
**To:** Salichs, Suzanne (Mayor's Office)  
**Cc:** Sosa, Rebeca (DIST6)  
**Sent:** Mon Aug 04 09:50:23 2008  
**Subject:** RE: The Gonzalez Family

Thank you, Suzanne. If we can come up with something different to add, we will let you know. I like the Commissioner to review it, since my name comes in the session of fund raising. I need to check with her to be sure that there is no conflict of interests.

Thank you, Have a Great Day!  
Lourdes G. Milian, District Office Manager  
Commissioner Sosa, District 6  
305-267-6377 Office  
e-mail: [lmilian@miamidade.gov](mailto:lmilian@miamidade.gov)

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**From:** Salichs, Suzanne (Mayor's Office)  
**Sent:** Friday, August 01, 2008 6:45 PM  
**To:** Milian, Lourdes (DIST6); Roig, Ricardo (Building); Garcia-Navarro, Millie (Mayor's Office); Jimenez, Beatriz J. (DHS); Medel, Ali (DHS); Ortega, Maritza (Team Metro); 'cheryllawoffice@bellsouth.net'; 'caren@gpdc.org'; 'ariel@gpdc.org'; 'GMR99@msn.com'; 'cwmyaguilar@bellsouth.net'; 'pepev@aol.com'; 'ray@authenticconstruct.com'; 'jazze@bellsouth.net'; 'bill\_riley@ibew349.org'; carlos@tcr-usa.com; p.whitman@tcr-usa.com  
**Cc:** Morales, Denis (Mayor's Office); Gazitua, Luis Andre (Mayor's Office); Sosa, Rebeca (DIST6); Danger, Charles

8/5/2008

(Building); Szep, Ronald (Building)

**Subject:** RE: The Gonzalez Family

Good Afternoon:

I just want to provide you with updates regarding the Gonzalez Family:

- Architect Jorge Azze conducted the home inspection on Tuesday, July 29, accompanied by representatives from the Building Department, GC Ray Castellanos, representatives from Taylor Roofing & Contractors, and representatives from DHS and the Guardianship Program.
- A meeting was held the following day where representatives from the City of West Miami, including City Manager Yolanda Aguilar joined us. During this meeting several items were discussed including relocating the family to a location close to the home. West Miami City Manager Yolanda Aguilar offered to contact the owners of a trailer park nearby, Sunnyside, to see if the family could reside there while the home is being repaired. Yolanda also arranged to have a dumpster placed at the family home on August 11, so trash and destroyed items from the home can be disposed of properly. Yolanda and the City are also working on securing a Pod (storage container) so the Gonzalez family can safely store any of their their personal items while the home is being repaired.
- Spoke with Ms. Marie Rodrigo of Generational Care Management Resources. She has made referrals for the daughter and grandchildren to the Agency for People with Disabilities. In addition, she has made a referral to place the grandson, Christopher, into a program that specifically serves mentally retarded individuals with behavioral issues.

I have attached a draft of the rebuild plan. Please provide me with your comments and suggestions.

I want to again thank all of you for your involvement in helping the Gonzalez family.

Best,

**Suzanne Salichs, Special Projects Coordinator**

Office of Mayor Carlos Alvarez

Miami-Dade County

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