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The Ethics Commission was created in 1996 as an independent agency with advisory and quasi-judicial powers. It is composed of five members, serving staggered terms of four years each. Through a program of training, outreach and enforcement, the Commission seeks to bolster public trust.

Summary of the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust Meeting Held on November 13, 2019

The Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust took the following actions at its monthly public meeting held on November 13, 2019.

Ethics Commission Approves Opinion Regarding the County Ethics Code Applicability to The Children's Trust Members and Others Associated with the Trust

ROO 19-06: The Ethics Commission adopted the ethics staff recommendation to repeal a previous formal ethics opinion and accept the more recent ethics opinions regarding the applicability of the entire County Ethics Code to The Children's Trust, its members, employees, lobbyists, vendors, and all persons acting on behalf of The Children's Trust.

Ethics Commission Defers on "Bright-Line Rule" Opinion Regarding Voting Conflicts for Elected City and County Officials Until December Ethics Commission Meeting

ROO 19-04: The Ethics Commission deferred until the next Ethics Commission meeting on a formal ethics opinion that specifies that the voting conflict section of the County Ethics Code imposes a per se or automatic prohibition on an elected official's vote or participation on a matter if he or she holds a primary position with an entity that might be directly or indirectly affected by vote or action of the elected body. This holds true unless the affected entity is another governmental agency, or the vote is on an overall budget containing a small allocation to the affected entity.

Ethics Commission Inquiry into former State Representative Roy Hardemon and Dr. Mae Christian Ends in Several Recommendations Made

PI 18-38: After conducting an inquiry into allegations of Miami-Dade Ethics Code violations by former State Representative Roy Hardemon and Dr. Mae Christian regarding their involvement with the Model City Community Advisory Committee (MDCAC), a committee required by the County's Citizen Participation Plan to advise of expenditure priorities in the neighborhood, Ethics Commission prosecutors determined that their conduct did not warrant the filing of an ethics complaint.

Despite not filing an ethics complaint, the Ethics Commission staff reported that the actions of Mr. Hardemon and Dr. Christian created an appearance of impropriety suggesting at best, a lack of understanding of the ethical rules and regulations applicable to County board members. As a result, the Ethics Commission made several recommendations including deferring to other agencies as to whether the non-functional state of the MDCAC complies with the requirements of federal statutes requiring citizen participation plans as a prerequisite to obtaining HUD backed Community Development Block Grant Funds.

Mr. Roy Hardemon, Dr. Mae Christian, and Mr. Clarence Brown, Division Director at Miami-Dade Public Housing and Community Development, were present at the meeting and addressed the Ethics Commission.

Complaint Filed Against City of Miami Commissioner Joe Carollo is Dismissed

C19-38-10: The Ethics Commission voted to permit the dismissal of a complaint filed against City of Miami Commissioner Joe Carollo by Jim Riggs, President of Platinum Advisors. The original complaint filed alleged that Mr. Carollo, who was originally hired by Platinum Advisors to assist them in a search for a site to develop an observation Ferris wheel as a tourist attraction

in Downtown Miami, engaged in official conduct that was detrimental to Platinum Advisors after Mr. Carollo's contractual relationship with Platinum Advisors had ended. According to Riggs, Platinum is now pursuing a legal remedy against Mr. Carollo in a court of law.

Ethics Commission Finds no Probable Cause in Complaint Filed by Homestead City Council candidate William Rea against Councilmember Lawrence "Larry" Roth

C19-33-09: The Ethics Commission found there was No Probable Cause to sustain a complaint filed by Homestead City Council candidate William Rea against Councilmember Lawrence "Larry" Roth. The complaint alleged that Councilmember Mr. Roth violated the exploitation of official position section of the County Ethics code when he allegedly used the City of Homestead trademark logo and his City website photograph on what the complainant deemed campaign related material.

Letter of Instruction Issued to Attorney Paul Schwiep

C19-35-09: Attorney Paul Schwiep stipulated to a finding of Probable Cause for engaging in unregistered lobbying, but the complaint was dismissed with the agreement that Schwiep would accept a Letter of Instruction. Mr. Schwiep was present at the meeting.

Ethics Commission to Hear Arguments Regarding Evidentiary Issues in Case Involving State Representative Michael Grieco at the December Ethics Commission Meeting

C18-17-04: The Ethics Commission held a status conference in the case involving State Representative Michael Grieco and it was decided that the Commission will hear arguments regarding evidentiary issues at the next Ethics Commission meeting to be held in December.