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### **Ethics Commission dismisses complaints against local leaders**

The Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust (COE) dismissed two complaints (**C 19-22-05** and **C 19-23-05**) filed against Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez and Michael Liu, Director of Public House and Community Development. Diana Strozier-Bryant claimed that the two took away the right for her to call meetings of the Overall Tenant Advisory Council, but she had been removed from her position two years ago by a vote of Council members after Strozier-Bryant was accused of misappropriating funds. The investigation determined that her complaints were unsupported and therefore, Not Legally Sufficient.

The Ethics Commission found No Legal Sufficiency to a complaint (**C 19-17-04**) filed against Miami City Commissioner Joe Carollo based on two letters written by the head of the Fraternal Order of Police. They alleged that Carollo intimidated and was condescending to an on-duty police officer during a concert and that the Commissioner slandered the same officer during a radio show. None of the remarks or behavior cited in the letters can be considered a violation of the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance.

The COE settled a complaint (**C 19-20-04**) filed against Dawn Meyers alleging she failed to register as a lobbyist when she represented Trulieve in a Miami Beach Planning Board meeting regarding the regulation of medical cannabis treatment centers. Meyers waived a probable cause hearing and will accept a Letter of Instruction.

Ethics Commissioners issued a Letter of Instruction to a sales manager for Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc., who last month agreed to pay \$500 in investigative costs in exchange for dismissal of the complaint (**C 17-36**) that he violated the Cone of Silence. The investigation found that Bill Hein sent three emails to County officials while his company was under consideration to provide helicopters to the Fire Rescue Department in 2017 that were not copied to the Clerk of the Board, as required. The Letter acknowledged that Mr. Hein's violations were relatively minor but instructs him and others that failure to abide by the Cone of Silence "damages the integrity of the procurement process which the County is committed to protect."

A physician who filed a complaint against Jackson Health System, claiming his termination in February 2018 was retaliation for his reporting on the negligent treatment of patients, failed to follow the County's Whistleblower Protection Ordinance. Because Dr. Emlyn Louis did not exhaust the administrative remedies available, the complaint (**C 19-25-05**) was dismissed as Not Legally Sufficient.

A complaint (**C 19-27-05**) filed against the recently-elected Mayor of North Miami alleging conflicts of interest from when Philippe Bien-Aime was a Councilman in 2014 was dismissed as Not Legally Sufficient. The statute of limitations for prosecution of the ethics code is three years.

*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 education, outreach and enforcement, the Commission seeks to empower the community and bolster public trust.*

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