



For Immediate Release: July 10, 2014
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Advisory Board members put on notice

Citizens who serve on advisory boards, quasi-judicial agencies, task forces, committees and other organizations created by the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners will be removed from their positions if they fail to provide financial disclosure as required by their appointments. The Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust today expressed support for the ordinance passed by the County Commission last week. It establishes procedures to remove delinquent individuals who do not submit the forms as required by July 1 after each year of board service. The Ethics Commission will notify the offenders six months after that. If they fail to comply within 31 days after receiving notice, they will be removed from the board. The delinquent member would also be subject to fines and other penalties.

No Probable Cause was found to a complaint (**C 14-28**) filed against city leaders in Miami Springs, accused of acting unethically by failing to enforce the city's noise ordinance. Margaret Rivas-Amaya lived near Woody's Tavern and had complained several times about its loud music. The investigation found that the venue is located in a business district and is in compliance with the City Code, and that neither the mayor, city manager nor city council members exploited their positions through any association with the owner of Woody's, so the complaint was dismissed.

A complaint (**C 14-29**) of retaliation by a former South Miami Police Department employee was found Not Legally Sufficient because of the time differences involved. Michael Weissberg had filed grievances against the department command staff between 2011 and August 2013, when he left the agency. In April of this year, he was notified that he is the subject of an internal affairs investigation for events that occurred during his employment. He claims the investigation is in retaliation for filing the grievances, but because an investigation is not included in the definition of "adverse personnel action," and the complaint was not filed within the required 60-day time period, it was dismissed.

Ethics Commissioners agreed to change the schedule of its regular meetings to the second Wednesday of each month. The next meeting will be **Wednesday, August 13, 2014, at 10 a.m.**

Also today, Executive Director Joseph Centorino announced that the third annual Ethical Governance Day will be held in mid-October, prior to the general election, on a date to be confirmed by officials of Miami-Dade Public Schools. On that day, volunteers will be placed in 12th grade government and economics classes throughout the district to discuss the importance of civic engagement with the teenagers, many of whom will be voting for the first time just a few weeks later. Those wishing to take part can contact the Ethics Commission at 305-579-2594 or email ethics@miamidade.gov.

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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