

## Sanchez, Rodzandra (COE)

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**From:** Diaz-Greco, Gilma M. (COE)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 12, 2017 9:26 AM  
**To:** Sanchez, Rodzandra (COE)  
**Subject:** Michael Karukin, Commissioner, Town of Surfside (Voting conflict) INQ 17-142

INQ 17-142 Karukin

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**From:** Centorino, Joseph (COE)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 23, 2017 4:11 PM  
**To:** 'mkarukin@townofsurfsidefl.gov' <mkarukin@townofsurfsidefl.gov>  
**Cc:** 'lmiller@townofsurfsidefl.gov' <lmiller@townofsurfsidefl.gov>; Turay, Radia (COE) <Radia.Turay@miamidade.gov>; Perez, Martha D. (COE) <perezmd@miamidade.gov>; Diaz-Greco, Gilma M. (COE) <Gilma.Diaz-Greco@miamidade.gov>  
**Subject:** INQ 17-142 Michael Karukin, Commissioner, Town of Surfside (Voting conflict)

Commissioner Karukin:

You have inquired concerning whether a voting conflict may have been created in connection with a potential business interaction you had with an attorney who will be representing a client before the Surfside Commission on a zoning variance issue. You sit as a member of the Town of Surfside Commission. In your private life you are a retired medical research scientist and you are in the process of seeking employment as a consultant on medical research issues within your professional expertise. You belong to an organization known as Associates of Clinical Research Professionals.

On May 13, you attended a meeting of the South Florida chapter of that organization. At that meeting you met a land use attorney by the name of Lillian Ser, with whom you were not previously acquainted. Ms. Ser was attending the meeting because her husband is a doctor with a clinical legal research practice, and she is assisting him in some of his work. She informed you that she had a matter coming before your board, and you told her about your being a consultant. You did not engage in any substantive discussion about the matter coming before your board. Sometime after that meeting, Ms. Ser contacted you in reference to the possibility that you might be retained as a consultant for her husband's practice. However, upon further discussion, it was decided that the services you provide would not be of use to her husband's practice. No business relationship was either offered or concluded in your dealings with her. There is no reason to believe that you will have any business relationship with Ms. Ser or her husband's practice in the future.

You have informed that you have consulted with your Town Attorney, and it is now understood that, although you did not engage in any substantive conversation with Ms. Ser about the pending zoning issue, your contact with Ms. Ser may be viewed as an ex parte communication with a party to the issue coming before your board in a quasi judicial setting, and, therefore, you will be disclosing the conversation on the record during the upcoming hearing. You do not feel that the interaction with Ms. Ser would, in any way, affect your decision on the issue that will come before you and expect to vote on the issue following the hearing.

Based on the foregoing, you do not have any business relationship with Ms. Ser that would create a voting conflict under Section 2-11.1(d) of the County Ethics Code. Further, I do not see any reasonable possibility that you would profit or be enhanced by the vote, so it is my opinion that you may participate in the hearing and vote on the issue.

Sincerely,

Joe Centorino

*Joseph M. Centorino*

Executive Director and General Counsel  
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