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Summary of the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust Meeting Held on June 10, 2020

The Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust held a virtual Commission Meeting on June 10, 2020 by way of the ZOOM platform. The following actions took place:

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Jose Arrojo provided a brief summary of COE PI 18-21 A&B concerning a March 2018 County business developmental trip to Asia that included the Mayor, two County Commissioners, County department heads and other County staff. Mr. Arrojo pointed out that the report has garnered significant amount of media coverage and that it was discussed extensively at the most recent Board of County Commissioners meeting. Mr. Arrojo also noted that given some of the findings in the report, Commissioner Eileen Higgins, wished to reconsider her vote on the Baylink Project and that the Inspector General issued a follow-up memorandum that discussed the report findings and suggested that a reconsideration of the procurement process might be appropriate. After the presentation, Mr. Arrojo addressed questions from the Commission.

Updates were provided regarding the COE's upcoming move to the Overtown Village North building and also on the new online Ethics Training available for persons that lobby Miami-Dade County, Jackson Health Systems and City of Miami Officials as required by the County Ethics Ordinance.

No Probable Cause Found in Case Involving North Miami Beach Commissioner

C 20-16-03: The Ethics Commission found No Probable Cause that North Miami Beach Commissioner Mary Estime-Irvin violated the Truth in Government Section of the Citizen's Bill of Rights.

Cases Against Current and Former North Miami Beach Officials Dismissed or Withdrawn

C 20-17-04 A,B,C,D,E: Complaints filed against the following individuals were found Not Legally Sufficient by the Ethics Commission and were Dismissed: *Outside Counsel of North Miami Beach (NMB) Christopher Stearns, Former City Attorney of NMB Sarah Johnston, Mayor of NMB Anthony DeFillipo, and Commissioner Barbara Kramer of NMB.*

A complaint filed against NMB City Clerk Andrise Bernard was withdrawn.

Miami Beach Lobbyist Fined for Non-Compliance

Lobbyist Joaquin Vargas received a reduce fine of \$1,040.00 for failure to file expenditure and compensation statements as required by the City of Miami Beach Lobbyist Ordinance.

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 empower the community and bolster public trust.

