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## Summary of the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust Meeting Held on September 8, 2021

The Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public held a Commission Meeting on September 8, 2021. The following actions took place:

### **Town of Medley Councilwoman Stipulates to Finding of Probable Cause**

**C 21-13-05:** Town of Medley Councilwoman Lily Stefano stipulated to a finding of Probable Cause for violating the *Further Prohibition on Transacting Business with the County* and *Exploitation of Official Position* sections of the Miami-Dade County Ethics Code.

The complaint alleged that Councilwoman Stefano violated the Ethics Code during a Medley Council meeting by both sponsoring and voting to approve an agenda item to permit the Santana Moss Foundation permanent entrance to a Medley senior facility despite the fact that Ms. Stefano was the Executive Director and registered agent of the foundation.

The stipulated agreement includes a \$1,500 fine, plus \$500 for investigative costs, and the issuance of a Letter of Reprimand.

### **Former Director of Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works Stipulates to Finding of Probable Cause**

**C 21-11-05:** Former Director of the Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works, Alice Bravo, stipulated to a Finding of Probable Cause for violating the *Continuing Application After County Service* section of the Miami-Dade County Ethics Code.

The complaint alleged that Ms. Bravo violated the Ethics Code when she attended, but did not speak, during a meeting between three lobbyists, including a lobbyist for her current employer, and Miami-Dade Commission Chairman Jose "Pepe" Diaz within two months of her separation from the County, where the purpose of the meeting was to influence Chairman Diaz to take official action or make an official decision.

The Complaint was dismissed after the probable cause finding in accords with the stipulated agreement which includes \$500 for investigative costs, and the issuance of a Letter of Instruction.

### **County Vendor Stipulates to Finding of Probable Cause**

**C 21-22-08:** John Kennedy, a County vendor and the spouse of a Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department (WASD) employee, stipulated to a finding of Probable Cause for violating the *Prohibition on Transacting Business with the County* section of the Miami-Dade County Ethics Code.

A COE investigation revealed that Mr. Kennedy proceeded to transact business totaling \$2,336,873.55 with WASD despite having previously been provided a COE opinion advising him that the Ethics Code specifically prohibits him from contracting with WASD, the County department that employs his spouse.

The stipulated agreement includes a maximum allowable fine of \$1500, plus \$1000 for investigative costs, and the issuance of a Letter of Reprimand.

### **Complaint Filed Against City of North Miami Beach Clerk Dismissed**

**C 21-19-07:** A complaint filed against City of North Miami Beach Clerk Andrise Bernard was found to be Not Legally Sufficient and was dismissed. The complaint alleged that Ms. Bernard failed to follow statutory requirements under election statutes.

### **Complaint Filed Against Town of Bay Harbor Islands Director of Parks and Recreation Dismissed**

**C 21-21-08:** A complaint filed against Town of Bay Harbor Islands Director of Parks and Recreation Regine Choute was found to be Not Legally Sufficient and was dismissed. The complaint alleged that Ms. Bernard violated the County Ethics Code and the Bay Harbor Islands Charter when she engaged in intentional misrepresentation, tortious interference with a contract, and use of confidential information.

*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.*