

**COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY**

IN RE:

ETHICS COMPLAINT

LAURA MUNILLA

C 22-25-05

RESPONDENT.

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PUBLIC REPORT AND FINAL ORDER

The Advocate filed this Complaint against Respondent, Laura Munilla, alleging that she violated Section 2-11.1(s) of the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance (hereinafter “Ethics Code”) entitled “Lobbying.”

Investigation showed that on April 16, 2021, while the procurement solicitation for RFQ MCC 9-18 was still pending, the Respondent sent an e-mail to Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioner Eileen Higgins. In the email, the Respondent wrote that she and her partners “acquired 100% of MCM in 2019.” She noted that she has “invested a significant portion of her personal net worth to own part of MCM, where [she] serves as the Chief Administrative Officer.” She specifically stated that she was writing to Commissioner Higgins “regarding the procurement of the MCC 9-18- airport contract.” She further stated that “[d]uring the procurement, the County interpreted the Code and Implementing Orders in such a way that it will affect all procurements going forward, to the detriment of Small and Local Businesses.”

The Respondent in her sworn statement to this office confirmed that she sent the subject email to Commissioner Higgins. The Respondent explained that during the RFQ process, MCM executives and lobbyists were strategizing as to how to gain support among Miami-Dade County officials with respect to the pending MCC procurement. She stated that none of the MCM officials or lobbyist seemed to have a relationship with Commissioner Higgins. She recalled that she had met the Commissioner through her involvement with the Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Trust and thought that maybe she could reach out to her and request a meeting. The meeting was not granted and Commissioner Higgins never replied directly to the Respondent regarding the subject email. The Respondent indicated that if the Commissioner had agreed to a meeting

regarding the pending RFQ, she would have “turned the meeting” over to her nephew, MCM President Daniel Munilla, and to the company’s lobbyists.

A review of Miami-Dade County’s lobbyist registration records showed, and the Respondent admitted, that she was not registered to lobby at the time she sent the April 16, 2021, email to Commissioner Higgins. The Respondent stipulated to Probable Cause.

On June 8, 2022, the Ethics Commission accepted the Stipulation; ratified a settlement agreement, accepting the Respondent’s plea of No Contest to the allegations contained in the Complaint; ordered that she pay a fine of \$500.00 (five hundred dollars); and accept a Letter of Instruction.

Wherefore it is:

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that Complaint C22-25-05 against Laura Munilla, is hereby concluded.

DONE AND ORDERED by the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust in public session on this 8th day of June, 2022.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS
& PUBLIC TRUST

By:

DocuSigned by:
Judith Bernier
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Judith Bernier

Chair

Signed on : 6/14/2022