



MIAMI-DADE COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST

Summary of Minutes and Agenda Actions

Meeting of February 9, 2022

The Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust (COE) held a meeting on February 9, 2022. Physically present were Chairwoman Judith Bernier, Vice Chair Wifredo Gort, Commissioner Charlton Copeland and Commissioner Lawrence Schwartz. Also present were José Arrojo, Executive Director; Martha Perez, General Counsel; Radia Turay, Advocate, Loressa Felix, Staff Attorney; Drew Bunker, Staff Attorney; Etta Akoni, Staff Attorney; Leonardo Mendoza, Public Information Officer; Rachelle Ross, Commission Clerk; Investigators Nilda Olmo, Rodney Vega, and Karl Ross; and members of the public. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Chairwoman Bernier. A quorum was present.

I. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Gort made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2022, meeting. Commissioner Schwartz seconded it and it was approved **(3-0)**. *(Commissioner Copeland did not vote on this motion as he arrived minutes later at 10:07 a.m.)*

II. Public Comment

None.

III. Resolution 22-02

General Counsel Martha Perez presented Resolution (22-02) for consideration by the Commission recommending the adoption of the meeting schedule for the year 2022. Commissioner Schwartz moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Gort seconded it and it was approved **(3-0)**. *(Commissioner Copeland did not vote on this motion as he arrived minutes later at 10:07 a.m.)*

IV. Summary of Section 8 Landlord Requests

Staff Attorney Drew Bunker presented three requests from County employees in the month of January

wishing to contract under the Federally- funded Section 8 Program. In the case of eleven of these individuals, neither they nor any of their immediate family members were employed by the Miami-Dade Public Housing and Community Development Department, so Commission staff opined there was no conflict.

V. Public Housing and Community Development Housing Assistance Inquiries

Staff Attorney Drew Bunker presented a request from twelve individuals for the month of January seeking assistance through a program overseen by the Miami-Dade Public Housing and Community Development Department. In the case of eleven of those County employees, since neither they nor any of their immediate family members oversee or administer the program, so Commission staff opined there was no conflict. In the case of one individual, the COE had no jurisdiction.

VI. Monthly Summary of Inquiries

Staff Attorney Etta Akoni presented a Summary of Inquiries by the COE for January and presented **INQ 2022-05**. In this request for an informal opinion, Pat Santangelo, Vice President for Public Relations of the Little Haiti Inc., inquired as to whether there is any prohibited conflict of interest concerning Little Haiti FC's (LHFC) proposed contract with the City of Miami for use of Little Haiti Park based on the service of one of its corporate officers as a member of the Bayfront Park Management Trust.

Mr. Santangelo was advised that there is no prohibited conflict of interest entering into a contract between LHFC and the City of Miami for use of the Little Haiti Soccer by virtue of being on of LHFC's corporate officers because the contract will never come before the Bayfront Park Management Trust for review or enforcement, and the City of Miami's Conflict of Interest Ordinance does not prohibit such a transaction where the Bayfront Park Management Trust member is only affiliated with the entity contracting with the City.

VII. Executive Director's Report

- Executive Director Jose Arrojo advised the COE that he met with the Chair of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) Advisory Committee, with the intent to establish a formal referral protocol back to MDCPS when school employees seek ethics guidance from the Ethics Commission.
- Executive Director Arrojo advised the Commission of COE staff's continuing efforts towards providing tailored ethics training to local government agencies including County and municipal police departments, the County Fire Rescue Department and Jackson Health Systems Staff.
- Executive Director Jose Arrojo presented a status update on revisions to the Ethics Commission's Internal

Policies and Procedures.

VIII. Summary of Closed Investigations

COE Advocate Radia Turay presented the Commission with a summary of closed investigations and highlighted PI 21-21.

IX. Executive Session

COE General Counsel presented the Commission with new complaints filed in January 2022.

Advocate Radia Turay presented a recommendation to a finding of Probable Cause in complaint **(C 21-20-07)**. In open session, Commissioner Copeland made a motion to a Finding of Probable Cause. The motion was not seconded and failed.

Advocate Radia Turay presented a Stipulation to a finding of Probable Cause and Settlement Agreement in complaint **(C 22-02-01)**. In open session, Commissioner Schwartz made a motion to accept the Stipulation to a Finding of Probable Cause and accept the Settlement Agreement. It was seconded by Commissioner Copeland and unanimously approved **(4-0)**.

Advocate Radia Turay presented a Stipulation to a finding of Probable Cause and Settlement Agreement in complaint **(C 22-03-01)**. In open session, Commissioner Schwartz made a motion to accept the Stipulation to a Finding of Probable Cause and accept the Settlement Agreement. It was seconded by Commissioner Gort and unanimously approved **(4-0)**.

Advocate Radia Turay presented a Respondent's Request for Continuance in complaint **(C 22-04-02)**. Commissioner Schwartz moved to approve the Request for Continuance. It was seconded by Commissioner Copeland and unanimously approved **(4-0)**.

X. Subpoena Requests

Judge Schwartz made a motion to grant all requests for the issuance of subpoenas. It was seconded by Commissioner Copeland and unanimously approved **(4-0)**.

XI. Old Business

None.

XII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:23 AM.

Prepared by Leonardo Mendoza, Public Information Officer