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Summary of the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust Meeting Held on May 11, 2022

The Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust held a public meeting on May 11, 2022. The following actions took place:

Ethics Commission Recognizes Departing Commissioner

COE Chairwoman Judith Bernier recognized outgoing Commissioner Charlton Copeland and presented him with a plaque in appreciation for his years of service to the Miami-Dade County community.

Ethics Commission Briefed on Right to be Heard provision of the Citizens' Bill of Rights

COE Executive Director Jose Arrojo briefed the Ethics Commission on an issue that has arisen in one of the municipalities relating to a citizen's right to be heard before an elected commission on a non-agenda item that is within the government entity's jurisdiction. Mr. Arrojo advised the Ethics Commission that he was scheduled to meet with the municipality's representatives and that he would report back at an upcoming meeting.

Complaint Filed Against Former Miami Springs City Attorney, City Planner, and City Manager Found Not Legally Sufficient

C 22-14-03, C 22-15-03, C 22-16-03: Complaints filed against former Miami Springs City Attorney Dan Espino, current City Planner Chris Heid, and Manager/Finance Director William Alfonso were found to be Not Legally Sufficient and dismissed.

The complaints alleged that the City officials violated the Truth in Government provision of the Citizens' Bill of Rights when they allegedly failed to correct an erroneous statement made by a Board member during a public hearing.

Complaints Filed Against Small Business Owners Dismissed

C 22-24-05, C 22-26-05, C 22-27-05: The Ethics Commission found Probable Cause in three complaints involving small business owners for failing to register as lobbyists, a violation of the Lobbying section of the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance.

The Commission dismissed the three complaints and ordered that a letter of instruction be issued to each respondent. The dismissals were based on a finding that the public interest would not be served by proceeding further and the lobbying violations were inadvertent, unintentional, or insubstantial.

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.