

Biscayne Building  
19 West Flagler Street  
Suite 220  
Miami, Florida 33130  
Phone: (305) 579-2594  
Fax: (305) 579-2656

## Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust

# Memo

**To:** Mike Murawski, ethics advocate  
**From:** Karl Ross and Kennedy Rosario, investigators  
**Date:** February 26, 2016  
**Re:** KO5-109, Joe Arriola

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**Close-out Memo:** After interviewing the relevant parties and conducting a review of Miami City Manager Joseph Arriola's business assets and obligations, there is insufficient evidence to corroborate claims by Florida Marlins team officials that Miami city officials – and in particular Mr. Arriola – attempted to subvert stadium negotiations in order to facilitate a sale to a third-party buyer. This investigation did confirm that a meeting took place between Mayor Manny Diaz and representatives of the Cisneros Group of Companies in March 2004, and that the status of the stadium proposal was discussed at that time. However, there is no indication Mayor Diaz or any other city official acted on behalf of the group and to the detriment of the Marlins present ownership following that meeting. The claims by Marlins President David Samson that Mr. Arriola pressured him to sell the club to Gustavo Cisneros, chairman of the Cisneros Group, could not be corroborated as any such remarks were made during private conversations between Samson and Arriola and no witnesses would have been present. The investigation also reveals Mr. Cisneros approached Major League Baseball about acquiring an ownership stake in a professional club, but it is not clear whether the Marlins were the target franchise – and officials at Major League Baseball declined to cooperate with this inquiry, citing confidentiality. Lastly, Miami-Dade County officials involved in the stadium negotiations did not support the Marlins' contentions that Miami city officials acted inappropriately. County Manager George Burgess and Tax Collector Ian Yorty felt Miami officials acted diligently and in the best interest of city taxpayers.

