



Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust

Preliminary Inquiry Report

Investigator: Breno Penichet

Case No.: PI 13-037	Case Name: Walk-in Complaint Community Relations Board (CRB)	Date Open:	
Complainant(s): Renita Holmes	Subject(s): Members of the CRB	December 2, 2013	

Allegation(s):

Renita Holmes (Holmes) provided information of a possible violation of the Citizen's Bill of Rights. Holmes advised that she was denied a request to address the CRB. Holmes also advised that she was denied a copy of the agenda by Amy Carswell (Carswell), Board Staff Member. Holmes further stated that she was confronted by Vice Chair Reinaldo Valdes (Valdes) when she attempted to bring the matter to the board's attention.

Relevant Ordinances:

Citizen's Bill of Rights (A)

"5. *Right to be Heard.* So far as the orderly conduct of public business permits, any interested person has the right to appear before the Commission or any municipal council or any County or municipal agency, board or department for the presentation, adjustment or determination of an issues, request or controversy within the jurisdiction of the governmental entity involved;...Matters shall be scheduled for the convenience of the public, and the agenda shall be divided into approximate time periods so that the public may know approximately when a matter will be heard. Nothing herein shall prohibit any governmental entity or agency from imposing reasonable time limits for the presentation of a matter."

Investigation:

Interviews

Renita Holmes
350 NW 4th Street Apt. 104
Miami, FL

On 11/25/2013, Holmes came to the offices of the Miami Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust (COE) in order to provide information on a possible violation of the Citizen's Bill of Rights. Holmes advised that she was denied her request to address the CRB, and was not placed on the agenda to speak. Holmes also advised that she was denied a copy of the agenda in the last meeting Carswell, a staff member at the CRB. Holmes further stated that when she tried to complain, she was confronted by Valdes and told to sit down. Holmes advised that she feels her complaints are not being addressed by the Board.

Amy Carswell
Community Relations Board
111 NW 1 Street, Suite 1034
Miami, FL 33128
305-375-1406

On 1/23/2014, Carswell was interviewed by COE investigator via telephone in order to provide information on a possible violation of the Citizen's Bill of Rights. Carswell advised that she is the Board Program Officer 2, for the CRB. Carswell advised that in her position she has had contact and has spoken to Holmes many times. Carswell advised that she never denied a copy of the agenda to Holmes. She said that sometimes the agendas run out and she has to send them to the persons who arrives late after the meeting is over, because she cannot leave to make copies. Carswell also advised that Holmes is given ample opportunity to speak on matters that are on the agenda for the discussion, but sometimes she wants to get off topic and that is when she is told her time is up by Valdes. Carswell advised that Holmes also participates in committees that are appointed to address different topics of interest to the community.

Document/Audio/Video Review:

Note: Holmes advised she would provide copies of documents that would back up her allegations. As of this writing no documents have been received. COE investigator has followed up by calling Holmes at the number provided with negative results.

Conclusion(s):

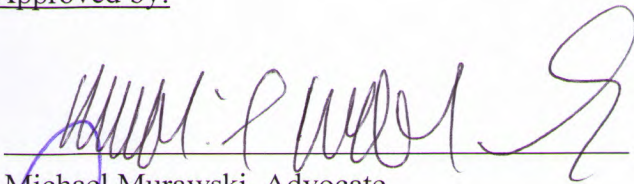
From the information gathered it appears that Holmes is permitted to address the CRB on topics being discussed at the meetings, but at times must be cut short in order for the meeting to continue. The CRB Chair has the authority to set a reasonable time limit on the comments in order to maintain order and keep the meeting moving.

Advocate Michael Murawski advised that no further action would be taken since there does not appear to be any Ethics related violations. Accordingly, it is recommended that the above case be closed.

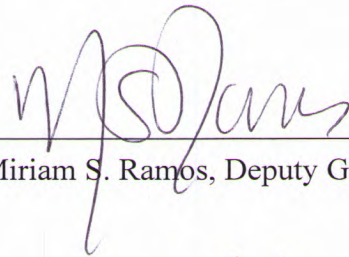


Breno Penichet, COE Investigator

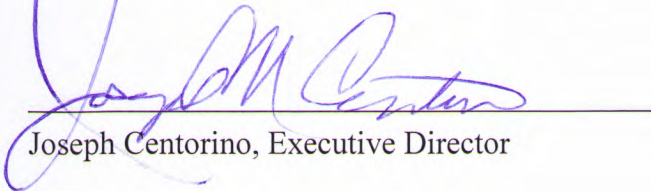
Approved by:



Michael Murawski, Advocate



Miriam S. Ramos, Deputy General Counsel



Joseph Centorino, Executive Director

Date Closed: 2/7/14

**CASE
CLOSED**

Date: 2/7/14