

OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADVOCATE  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST  
REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

K #: 09-172 Opa Locka Vice Mayor Myra Taylor

Date Opened: December 14, 2009                      Date Closed:

Name of investigator: Arthur D. Skinner  
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**Allegation:**

This matter was predicated upon the receipt of information that a resolution in the City of Opa Locka allegedly sponsored by vice Mayor Myra Taylor for \$5,000.00 to sponsor a civil rights dinner to raise money for various local charities including one run by the Taylor's. This resolution was supposedly voted down by the city commission.

Section 2-11.1 of the Code of Miami-Dade County, the County's Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance. (d) *Further prohibition on transacting business with the County.* No person included in the terms defined in Subsections (b)(1) through (6) and in Subsection (b)(9) shall enter into any contract or transact any business through a firm, corporation, partnership or business entity in which he or any member of his immediate family has a controlling financial interest, direct or indirect, with Miami-Dade County or any person or agency acting for Miami-Dade County, and any such contract, agreement or business engagement entered in violation of this Subsection shall render the transaction voidable. The remaining provisions of Subsection (c) will also be applicable to this Subsection as though incorporated herein by recitation. Additionally, no person included in the term defined in Subsection (b)(1) shall vote on or participate in any way in any matter presented to the Board of County Commissioners if said person has any of the following relationships with any of the persons or entities which would be or might be directly or indirectly affected by any action of the Board of County Commissioners: (i) officer, director, partner, of counsel, consultant, employee,

fiduciary or beneficiary; or (ii) stockholder, bondholder, debtor, or creditor, if in any instance the transaction or matter would affect the person defined in Subsection (b)(1) in a manner distinct from the manner in which it would affect the public generally. Any person included in the term defined in Subsection (b)(1) who has any of the above relationships or who would or might, directly or indirectly, profit or be enhanced by the action of the Board of County Commissioners shall absent himself or herself from the commission meeting during the discussion of the subject item and shall not vote on or participate in any way in said matter.

**Investigation:**

On February 5, 2010, COE Investigators interviewed former Opa Locka City Commissioner Steve Barrett at his residence in Opa Locka, Florida (786) 444-8424. Mr. Barrett gave the following information: Barrett stated that the original Resolution 09-7975 failed on a 3-2 vote. At the January 13, 2010 Commission Meeting vice Mayor Taylor brought back the Resolution No. 10-7990 changing the wording to indicate that the proceeds would be given to child care centers within the city limits except for any child care center run by Taylor. The Resolution passed 4-1.

Obtained public records from the City of Opa Locka:

1. Copies of DVD's from the December 2009 and January 2010 City of Opa Locka Commission meetings.
2. Resolution sponsored by Vice Mayor Myra Taylor #10-7990 authorizing a contribution \$5,000.00 toward the "Civil Rights Supper" payable from account no. 79-579403.
3. Copy of the cancelled check( front and rear deposit information redacted) to the keynote speaker Cordy T. Vivian.
4. Flyer advertising the "Annual Civil Rights Supper" on February 27, 2010.
5. "Civil Rights Supper" agenda.

6. Check request from the City of Opa Locka authorizing a check for \$5000.00 to the keynote speaker Cordy T. Vivian of Fayetteville, Ga.
7. Copy of an E-mail from Vivian's Administrative Assistant accepting the \$5000.00 fee and request for airline tickets and hotel for Vivian and his assistant.

On May 6, 2010 Investigators Skinner and Penichet interviewed FMU Hospitality Coordinator Yvonne Bendross (305-474-4692) . Bendross stated that the banquet hall was rented by Myra Taylor for the "Civil Rights Supper" held on February 27, 2010. Bendross said Taylor paid \$900.00 by check, and she would give the COE a copy of the check.

On June 1, 2010 a copy of the check written by Taylor to FMU for \$900.00 check number 1009 and the note on the bottom left indicated that the purpose was for "Room Rental-Civil Rights Supper". The check is a business check for "The Opa Locka Educational & Cultural Foundation Inc. 13331 Alexandria Dr. Opa Locka, FL 33054" the account number was redacted by FMU.

The Florida Division of Corporations show "The Opa Locka Educational & Cultural Foundation Inc. **13495** Alexandria Dr. Opa Locka, FL 33054" and Myra L. Taylor as the Officer /Director. The latest annual report was submitted 01/13/2010/

**CONCLUSION:**

Summary of investigation should NOT include investigators opinion about whether probable cause exists or whether respondent/target is guilty or not.