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Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust

Memo

To: File

From: Karl Ross, ethics investigator

Date: July 13, 2011

Re: K10-172 Sunny Isles Beach Mayor Norman Edelcup

Close-out and referral: At the instruction of the Ethics Advocate, the above-captioned case is being closed out at this time regarding Sunny Isles Beach Mayor Norman Edelcup and any alleged improper relationship with developer J. Milton & Associates of Coral Gables. Several sources had contended that projects developed by J. Milton received preferential treatment from Edelcup and other city officials.

The investigation did find that J. Milton & Associates co-hosted a fundraiser for the Edelcup re-election campaign on March 16, 2010, along with state Sen. Gwen Margolis, and that those in attendance donated \$500 each to the mayor's campaign. The event was held at the St. Tropez Condominiums, 200 Sunny Isles Boulevard, a project that was developed by Jose Milton, the firm's principal.

On May 15, 2010, the Edelcup campaign reported an in-kind contribution of \$3,488.48 in connection with said event, listing the contributor as J. Milton & Associates of 3211 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Suite 301, Coral Gables, FL 33134.

This office subsequently consulted Keith Smith, an investigator with the Florida Elections Commission, 107 West Gaines Street (suite 224), Tallahassee, FL 32399, phone: (850) 922-4539 x112. Mr. Smith advised that this in-kind contribution exceeds the state limit for campaign contribution of \$500 and would therefore be improper.

While there is no evidence that Mayor Edelcup sought to conceal the existence of said contribution, the accommodations provided by J. Milton & Associates did afford the campaign a platform for raising thousands of dollars in additional contributions.

This case was opened by Independent Ethics Advocate Mike Murawski in order to further an ongoing criminal inquiry by the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office (SAO) surrounding the November 2010 municipal elections in Sunny Isles Beach. It is the opinion of the Advocate that any formal complaint or referral to the Florida Elections Commission should be handled by SAO so, accordingly, this case has been closed and is referred to SAO. No further action will be taken by this office at this time.