

MIAMI-DADE COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST



REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Case # K12-076/C12-026

Date Opened: April 26, 2012

Date Closed: June 7, 2012

Name of investigators: Breno Penichet and Kennedy Rosario

Miami resident Al Crespo (Complainant) filed complaint C12-026 against City of Miami Mayor Tomas Regalado (Respondent) on April 18, 2012. Crespo alleged, that on March, 21 2012, Respondent traveled to Lima, Peru on a trip that was paid for by the Latin Builders Association (LBA). Crespo alleged that Regalado accepted the trip and did not report it as a gift. Crespo advised that he made a public records' request to the State of Florida for a copy of the disclosure (Form 9) covering that period of time and no disclosure was found.

Investigation:

COE Investigators reviewed the exhibits attached to the original. From the information provided, it appeared that Regalado traveled to Lima, Peru as part of a delegation representing the City of Miami, along with members of the LBA and the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce (GMCC).

COE Investigators became aware that the trip could have been sponsored by the Miami Mayor's International Council (MMIC), a non profit authorized to solicit contributions from private donors in order to fund projects that could enhance the quality of life and bring business to the City.

COE Investigators contacted City of Miami Assistant City Attorney Maria Chiaro (Chiaro) regarding this complaint. Chiaro advised, that according to City Code, the non-profit MMIC was established to solicit contributions for City projects. Originally the Council was funded totally by the City, but because of the current financial situation the non-profit was created. Chiaro directed us to Isabel De Quesada (De Quesada), Executive Director for the MMIC.

COE Investigators contacted De Quesada regarding the complaint, De Quesada advised that she is employed by the City of Miami to oversee the MMIC and that her position comes under the City Manager's Office. She stated that her job is to promote the City and to develop educational and cultural opportunities. De Quesada also advised that she is the International Affairs Administrator for the MMIC, the non-profit arm of the council created to solicit contributions from private individuals and corporations in order to bring businesses to the City along with cultural events and the sister cities program.

De Quesada advised that the meetings of the MIC are open to the public and are noticed via the City Clerks Office. The board meetings of the MMIC are not open to the public, but minutes are maintained. De Quesada advised that the trip to Lima, Peru was not discussed by the directors of the non-profit MMIC or the MIC, due to the fact that it was sponsored and paid for by the LBA and the GMCC. De Quesada referred us to Mirtha Aguirre (Aguirre), MGA Accountants & Consultants. According to De Quesada, Aguirre has control of the bank accounts for MMIC.

COE Investigators contacted Bernie Navarro (Navarro), President of the LBA. After being advised of the nature of the complaint and the need to know if the LBA had paid for Mayor Regalado to travel to Lima, Peru, Navarro referred us to the LBA's General Council Alexis Gonzalez, P.A.

