



Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust

Report of Investigation

Investigator: Sylvia Batista

Case No.	Case Name:	Date Open:	Date Closed:
K13-109	Cason personnel changes		
Complainant(s): Anonymous through counsel Joseph Rosenbaum, Esq.	Subject(s): Mayor Jim Cason, City of Coral Gables	03/22/13	8/29/13

Allegation(s):

The COE received a letter on 03/22/13 from Attorney Joseph Rosenbaum on behalf of an anonymous client. The letter contains multiple allegations against Coral Gables Mayor Jim Cason (Cason). The allegation investigated herein involves personnel changes allegedly made by Cason in the City Manager's office. The source alleged that Cason directed the City Manager to hire someone for a created position as Assistant to City Manager. Additionally, the source alleged that Cason promoted a new Assistant City Manager to avoid embarrassment because the person he promoted "knows where the skeletons are buried" in the Building & Zoning Department.

Relevant Law:

Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance, Sec. 2-11.1(g) *prohibition on exploitation of official position.*

Investigation:

Interviews

08/22/13 – Patrick G. Salerno, City Manager –

City Manager Patrick Salerno (Salerno) was interviewed in connection with several allegations anonymously brought forth against Cason. Salerno was asked about recent personnel changes in his office allegedly ordered by Cason.

Salerno explained that the City Manager's office has had two Assistant Manager positions for many years. Salerno said that he recently promoted Carmen Olazabal (Olazabal) to the Assistant City Manager position for operations. Cason had nothing to do with promoting Olazabal.

Prior to her recent promotion, Olazabal was Assistant Director of the Development Services Department. The Development Services Department oversees Building & Zoning. Olazabal, who came from the City of Miami Beach, was hired by the City of Coral Gables in 2010 as the Building and Zoning Director.

Salerno said that Olazabal is an extremely qualified individual with degrees in engineering and business from top schools. Salerno explained that Olazabal was pursuing a management position and was offered a job as Assistant City Manager in another city. Salerno said that he promoted her to her present position as Assistant City Manager for operations because he did not want to lose a valuable employee.

Salerno explained that he recently created a new position for his office titled Assistant to City Manager. The job duties for the Assistant to City Manager position are mostly customer services and community issue related. The position is presently vacant and a City intern is currently being considered for the job. The last person who held the post was Nicole Cueto (Cueto). Cueto resigned about 9 months ago to become press secretary for a senator. Cueto was an intern at the City when he recruited her to the position of Assistant to City Manager. Cason had nothing to do with creating this position.

Conclusion(s):

City Manager Salerno is in charge of making all personnel decisions for his office. There is no evidence to support the allegation that Cason created the alleged position, or promoted Olazabal into the City Manager's office. There is also no evidence that Cason influenced Salerno's decision in any way. Accordingly, this case is closed without further action.

Sylvia Batista

Sylvia Batista, COE Investigator

Approved by:

Michael Murawski

Michael Murawski, Advocate

Miriam S. Ramos

Miriam S. Ramos, Deputy General Counsel

Joseph Centorino

Joseph Centorino, Executive Director

9/18/13

Date