



Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust

Report of Investigation

Investigator: Susannah Nesmith

Case: K18-45	Case Name: Andreana Jackson	Date Open: 8/23/2018 Date Closed:
Complainant(s): Richard Chervony	Subject(s): Andreana Jackson	CASE CLOSED Date: 11/19/18

Allegation(s):

It was alleged that North Bay Village Vice Mayor Andreana Jackson used her position as Vice Mayor to get two free tickets to a charity event.

Relevant Law:

Sec. 2-11.1

(g) Exploitation of official position prohibited. No person included in the terms defined in subsection (b)(1) through (6) and (b)(13) shall use or attempt to use his or her official position to secure special privileges or exemptions for himself or herself or others except as may be specifically permitted by other ordinances and resolutions previously ordained or adopted or hereafter to be ordained or adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.

Investigation:

Interviews:

On Aug. 23, 2018, this investigator spoke with Richard Chervony. He said that he did not witness Vice Mayor Andreana Jackson asking for free tickets to the "Hearts and Stars Gala." He said Julianna Strout told him about it.

On Aug. 24, 2018, this investigator took the sworn testimony of Julianna Strout, a candidate for

the North Bay Village council. She is also a volunteer ambassador for the annual gala of the Little Lighthouse Foundation, a charity for children.

Strout said she left flyers for the gala, which included information on how to buy tickets and the prices, with the Village Clerk.

Strout said Jackson called her the Friday before the event around 4:40 p.m. and asked if Strout could obtain free tickets for her and a friend. (2:09 on the recording.)

“She requested as the vice mayor that she wanted to attend the event and she wanted a “plus one,” (guest) Strout said.

Jackson then texted Strout with the name of her plus one guest.

Strout said she asked an employee of the Foundation (Pricilla Roman) via text message about “comping” tickets for politicians. (Strout provided the text messages to the COE.)

Strout said that when Jackson arrived at the event she met her and her “plus one” at the door. She said that Jackson and her friend followed her into the VIP Lounge. Regular tickets for the event cost \$500 per person. The VIP Lounge tickets included seating and bottle service, were closer to the stage than the general admission area and cost between \$5000 and \$7000 each.

Strout said no one else asked her for “comped” tickets.

On Aug. 30, 2018, this investigator took a sworn statement from Rosie Nwakanma. She said Jackson invited her to the gala.

“She didn’t really give much information, she just said that she had a friend that should be able to get us in,” she said. (.54 on the recording.)

On Sept. 28, 2018, this investigator, along with Advocate Michael Murawski and Executive Director Jose Arrojo, met with Jackson, who was accompanied by her attorney, David Raben. Jackson gave a sworn statement regarding her understanding of the tickets to the gala.

Jackson said she filed gift disclosures on August 21, listing the gala as a \$250 gift. She said she didn’t know that tickets to the gala actually cost \$500 each. (2:08 on the recording.)

She also brought with her an e-mail dated March 7, 2018 from the then Village Clerk, Yvonne Hamilton to the Mayor, Vice Mayor and the Commissioners.

“I did not solicit the ticket from her (Strout),” Jackson said. (3:30 on the recording.)

She said she did not have any text messages from Strout because she had her phone repaired last week. She did not lose any of the photos on her phone during this repair and showed this investigator selfies she took with Strout at the event.

Document(s) Reviewed:

A screen shot of the text message string between Strout and Jackson.

Jackson says at 4:42 on March 16:

“Thank you
Guest name Rosie Nwakanma
Vice Mayor Andreana Jackson”

At 9:17 a.m. on March 17, Strout texted:

“I’m running around volunteering but say hi to Connie and everyone if I don’t get to see u guys again.”

At 10:19 p.m. on March 17, Jackson texted:

“Hello”
Strout responded:
“Are u here”

Jackson said:

“Yes. But I am waiting on my plus 1”

Strout responded:

“Ok when u are both here let me know

Jackson said:

“Ok
Yes
Ready”

Strout responded:

“Perfect coming”

The text message string between Strout and Pricilla Roman of the Little Light House Foundation.

At 4:43 p.m. on March 16, Strout texted Roman:

“We have the Vice Mayor of North Bay Village wants to come Saturday, so we do anything like comp politicians tickets?
It’s her and her plus one
Guest name Rosie Nwakanma
Vice Mayor Andreana Jackson”

At 4:50 p.m. Roman responded:

“let me see if there’s anything we can do”

Strout said:

“If not please no worries
She just called me”

At 4:51 p.m. Roman wrote:

“Ok! I’ll keep you posted” and then a few minutes later “well add their names.”

Jackson filed Form 9s in July 2016 and July 2017. In them she declared gifts totaling \$630.70 in gifts from the municipality of North Bay Village and a \$120 dinner given to her by Brian Oppenheimer.

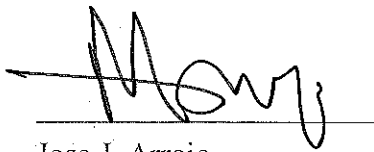
An e-mail dated March 7, 2018 from the then Village Clerk, Yvonne Hamilton to the Mayor, Vice- Mayor and the Commissioners. The e-mail bears the subject line "Hearts and Stars Gala." In the body of the e-mail, Ms. Hamilton wrote "I have left the original of the attached invitation from Juliana Strout in your mailbox." It also includes Ms. Strout's e-mail address and cell phone number.

Two Form 9s mailed to the Florida Commission on Ethics on Aug. 21, 2018 (after the July 1 deadline.) One discloses a gift from Juliana Strout of \$250 to attend a fundraiser and notes a "guest."

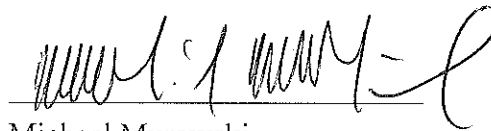
Conclusion:

After discussion with the Ethics Advocate, it was determined that the evidence was insufficient to warrant the filing of an ethics complaint against Ms. Jackson. Jackson claims she did not solicit tickets to the event. She explained that when she received the e-mail from the Village Clerk extending an "invitation" to the Hearts and Stars gala, she believed that to be an actual invitation to attend the event. She did file a gift disclosure for her entry to the event as well as that of her guest. The evidence was insufficient to determine whether Ms. Jackson remained exclusively in the VIP area or whether that area was even clearly marked as a place where attendees to the event would reasonably know that it was not for regular ticket holders.

Accordingly, this matter should be closed with no further action.



Jose J. Arrojo
Executive Director
November 19, 2018



Michael Murawski
Advocate
November 19, 2018



11/19/18