



Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust
Report of Inquiry

Investigator: Sylvia Batista

Case: PI18-030	Case Name: City of Doral Councilwoman Christine Fraga.	Date Opened: CASE	
Complainant(s): Anonymous	Subject(s): Misrepresenting herself as Vice-Mayor of the City of Doral.	06/09/18 CLOSED Date: <u>8/7/18</u>	

Allegation(s):

An anonymous source sent an e-mail to the COE alleging that City of Doral Councilmember, Christine Fraga (Fraga), is misrepresenting herself as the Vice-Mayor of the City.

Source said that Fraga uses the title "Vice-Mayor" on the following websites:

- Fraga's home page, www.christifraga.com;
- Fraga's *About* page on her website <http://www.christifraga.com/about-1>;
- Fraga's Government Official Social media (Facebook) page, <https://www.facebook.com/ViceMayorChristiFraga/>; and
- Fraga's Facebook About page, <https://www.facebook.com/pg/ViceMayorChristiFraga/about/>.

The COE initiated an inquiry to find out whether Fraga's action is a violation of the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance.

Relevant Laws:

Citizens' Bill of Rights; 2. Truth in Government –

No County or municipal official or employee shall knowingly furnish false information on any public matter, nor knowingly omit significant facts when giving requested information to members of the public.

Interviews:

07/09/18 - Councilwoman Christi Fraga –

Councilwoman Christine Fraga (Fraga) spoke to this investigator who explained the reason for the inquiry. Fraga was interested in knowing who called in the complaint about her and suggested that the allegation was frivolous. Fraga said that she was appointed to the seat of Vice-Mayor for 2014 or 2015. She is not sure. Fraga said that she held the Vice-Mayor post for an additional year because of a charter change. She said that she does not recall whether she served for two consecutive years as Vice-Mayor.¹ Fraga said that she will be appointed as Vice-Mayor again in 2019. Fraga said that she will running for Mayor at the next City election.

Fraga said that she was unaware that there are websites on which her title is still “Vice-Mayor.” Most of these websites are dormant and she has not updated the information in them for a while. Any misrepresentation of her title was not done deliberately. After the last election, they did not have the time to make the changes and did not think it was important, plus it costs money to get someone to make the changes. Once things appear on the internet, they are there forever.

Fraga added that sometimes people continue using a title even if they no longer hold it. Fraga gave Hillary Clinton as an example. Hillary Clinton is no longer Secretary of State, but she is still referred to as “Secretary Clinton.” Fraga was advised that should she and other councilmembers who have been appointed as Vice-Mayor continue using the title, they would all be referred to as Vice-Mayor.

Fraga said that now that there are residents that need to know that she is running for Mayor, she will make the corrections on the sites.

¹ Councilmember Christine Fraga served as Vice-Mayor of the City of Doral from November 2013 to November 2014, and for a second term from November 2015 to November 2016.

Websites Reviewed:

- Fraga’s home page, www.christifraga.com ; Fraga’s page identifies her as the Vice-Mayor of Doral;
- Fraga’s About page on her website <http://www.christifraga.com/about-1> ; Narrative identifies Fraga as the youngest Vice-Mayor in Miami-Dade County appointed by the City Council. Fraga continues to be referred to as the Vice-Mayor throughout the narrative;
- Fraga’s Government Official Social media (Facebook) page, <https://www.facebook.com/ViceMayorChristiFraga/> ; Fraga uses the title of Vice-Mayor; and
- Fraga’s Facebook About page, <https://www.facebook.com/pg/ViceMayorChristiFraga/about/> Fraga uses the title of Vice-Mayor.

Information provided by City of Doral:

Please note that as of the 2014 City Charter, the Vice-Mayor position is a rotating post.

(b) Vice-Mayor. During the absence or incapacity of the Mayor, the Vice-Mayor shall have all the powers, authority, duties and responsibilities of the Mayor. At the Council meeting following certification of the election results for the regular City election, or in any calendar year in which there is no regular City election, at the first Council meeting in the month of November, the Vice-Mayor shall be appointed to serve a one year term as follows: In 2014, the Vice-Mayor shall be the Councilmember occupying Seat 1. In 2015, the Vice-Mayor shall be the Councilmember occupying Seat 3. In 2016, the Vice-Mayor shall be the Councilmember occupying Seat 2. In 2017, the Vice-Mayor shall be the Councilmember occupying Seat 4. This rotation shall continue each year thereafter.

Council appointments made for Vice-Mayor for the following years:

- November 2013 – Christi Fraga
- November 2014 – Sandra Ruiz
- November 2015 – Christi Fraga
- November 2016 – Pete Cabrera
- November 2017 – Ana Maria Rodriguez
- November 2018 – Claudia Mariaca

Conclusion:

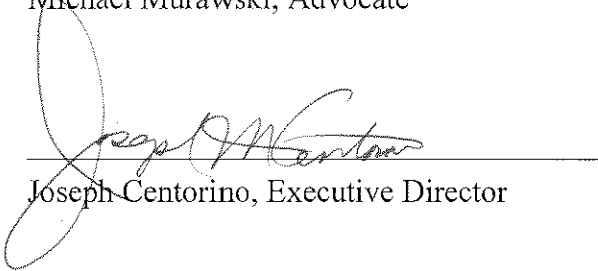
After discussion with the ethics Advocate it was determined that these allegations did not warrant the filing of an ethics complaint. The complained of activity consisted of old websites that still referred to Fraga as Vice-Mayor however there is no allegation or evidence that Fraga is going out and intentionally misrepresenting herself as the current Vice-Mayor. Fraga indicated that she is attempting to clean up the old websites.


Sylvia Batista, COE Investigator

Date: 8/7/18


Michael Murawski, Advocate

Date: 8/7/18


Joseph Centorino, Executive Director

Date: 8/7/2018