



**Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust**

**Preliminary Investigative Report**

**Investigator: Nilda Olmo**

<b>Case:</b> PI 18-33	<b>Case Name:</b> Beckham-MLS	<b>Date Opened:</b> 07/05/2018	<b>CASE CLOSED</b>  Date: <u>8/8/18</u>
<b>Complainant(s):</b> Inquiry predicated on email received from Joey Flechas, Miami Herald Staff Writer	<b>Subject(s):</b> David Beckham Jorge Mas		

**Allegation(s):**

On July 5, 2018, COE Executive Director Joe Centorino (Centorino), received an email from Joey Flechas, Miami Herald Staff Writer, regarding the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce invitation-only Cocktail Party with special guests David Beckham and Jorge Mas. The reception was scheduled for Wednesday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018 in Miami Beach at the Setai at 5:30 PM.

As a result of the inquiry and concern of possible lobbying and Sunshine Law violations, a preliminary investigation was conducted.

**Relevant Law:**

Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance, Sec 2-11.1(s) **Lobbying**. As used in subsection (s)(1)(b) of the ordinance, Lobbyist means all persons, firms, or corporations employed or retained by a principal who seeks to encourage the passage, defeat, or modifications of (1) ordinance, resolution, action or decision of the County Commission; (2) any action, decision recommendation of the County Manager or any County board or committee...

**Florida Sunshine Law**, Sec. 286.011, Florida Statutes



**Investigation:  
Interviews**

An initial inquiry revealed that both Jorge Mas (Mas) and David Beckham (Beckham) were registered with the City of Miami to lobby on behalf of Miami Beckham United, LLC. Mas registered on 03/06/18 and the ethics course requirement was satisfied on 04/13/18 (Exhibits #1 and #2). Beckham registered on 07/11/18 (Exhibit #3) and has 60 days from the registration date to take the ethics course.

Under the County Code § 2-11.1(s)(2), prior to lobbying, you must register with the Clerk of the Board within 5 business days of being retained *or* before engaging in lobbying, whichever comes first. Within 60 days after registering as a lobbyist, a certificate of completion of the ethics course provided by Miami-Dade COE must be obtained along with a registration fee of \$490 per year. A principal lobbying on behalf of his/her organization, although is required to register, is exempt from paying a registration fee. Finally, each employee lobbying on the principal's behalf is required to pay the registration fee of \$490.00.

Jerry Libbin, (Libbin), MBCC President and CEO, was contacted and stated that the reception was an invitation-only<sup>1</sup>, for upper level board members and elected officials, with the exception of City of Miami officials. After speaking with Victoria Mendez, City of Miami Attorney, Libbin indicated the City's elected officials "were disinvited" in order to avoid an appearance of impropriety or any Sunshine Law issues. "The Commissioners were advised not to attend the event."

The cocktail reception at the Setai was sponsored by the MBCC and was one of several events throughout the day for the Beckham-Mas team.

Libbin stated the reception was a "meet and greet" focused on Beckham giving his global vision for MLS and in no way an attempt to lobby or persuade government officials in any way. Furthermore, it was not exclusive to elected officials.

<sup>1</sup> Invitees receiving the invitation could bring one guest.

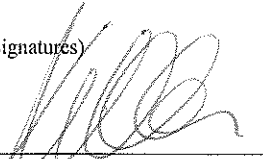
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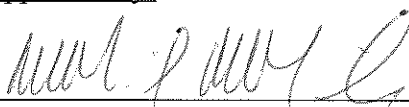
**Records Review:**

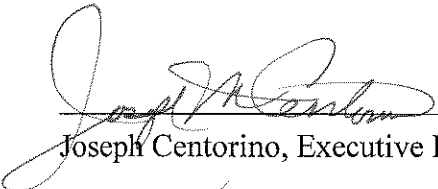
- City of Miami Clerk’s Office Lobbyist search conducted on David Beckham and Jorge Mas.
- Certificate of Completion, Jorge Mas, COE Professionalism and Ethics Seminar for Lobbyists course, 04/13/18.
- MBCC Reception invitation.

**Conclusion:**

Based upon the fact that both Beckham and Mas were registered lobbyist this matter is closed with no further action.

(Signatures)  
  
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Nilda Olmo, COE Investigator

Approved by:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Murawski, Advocate

  
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Joseph Centorino, Executive Director

Date: 8/08/2018