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MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST

In re: NANNI V. SOCHIN

C 13-09

**PUBLIC REPORT
AND
FINAL DISMISSAL ORDER**

Arthur Nanni, a private citizen, filed the above-referenced complaint against Ernie Sochin, Vice-Mayor of the Town of Cutler Bay. The complaint contained two allegations—first, that lobbying contacts with the Vice-Mayor prior to a public meeting had not been disclosed by an unregistered Town lobbyist and, second, that a gift had been solicited on behalf of the South Florida Boys Choir, a nonprofit entity, by the Vice-Mayor.

If true, failure to timely register as a lobbyist and to disclose lobbying contacts with an elected official prior to the public meeting at which the matter will be heard might violate the Town Charter at Sec. 7.6. Regarding the allegation about a gift solicitation, the County Ethics Code at Sec. 2-11.1 (e)(2)(g) allows elected officials to solicit gifts on behalf of nonprofit organizations “for use solely by that organization where neither the [vice-mayor] nor his or her staff receives any compensation as a result of the solicitation.”

Pursuant to the Code of Miami-Dade County at Secs. 2-1068 and 2-11.1 (y), the Ethics Commission has jurisdiction to enforce municipal lobbying ordinances and the County Ethics Code against municipal elected officials and lobbyists.

An investigation into the allegations revealed that the lobbyist referenced in this complaint had timely registered with the Town prior to contacting Vice-Mayor Sochin, but no public hearing had been scheduled to address the matter purportedly

discussed in the lobbying contacts. Consequently, no disclosure of lobbying contacts was required. Additionally, the solicitation of a gift on behalf of the South Florida Boys Choir, a nonprofit entity, by an elected official does not violate the County Ethics Code as per Sec. 2-11.1 (e)(2)(g).

On July 11, 2013, the Ethics Commission dismissed the complaint for lack of probable cause on the recommendation of the Advocate, who proffered that no reasonably trustworthy facts had been found to charge the Respondent with violating the County Ethics Code or the Town Charter of Cutler Bay.

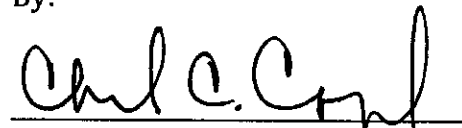
Therefore it is:

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED THAT the complaint against Ernie Sochin is hereby dismissed.

DONE AND ORDERED by the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust in public session on July 11, 2013.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS
& PUBLIC TRUST

By:



Charlton Copeland
Chair

Signed on this date:

8/8/2013