

Meyers, Robert (COE)

JNQ 07-17

From: Meyers, Robert (COE)
Sent: Monday, February 05, 2007 2:16 PM
To: Peel, Jeff (F&E)
Subject: RE: Film Board

Hi Jeff,

Sorry for not responding sooner. Generally speaking, County personnel (including board members) are prohibited from soliciting gifts from third parties to underwrite events. There is an exception to this rule, which you may wish to pursue. Gifts that are solicited on behalf of the County for official County business are permitted. In order to receive the "official business" designation, I recommend that the County Commission or County Manager acknowledge in some official pronouncement that it would be beneficial to the County for your board to hold these receptions in order to create greater cohesiveness within the local entertainment industry. Once that happens, you would be able to seek donations to pay for the expenses associated with these events. Of course, the other option is to have the County make these funds part of your annual budget allocation.

If you wish to discuss in greater detail, feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Thanks,

Robert Meyers, Executive Director
 Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust
 (305) 350-0613

From: Peel, Jeff (F&E)
Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2007 5:24 PM
To: Meyers, Robert (COE)
Subject: Film Board

Hi Robert

Thanks for agreeing to do a County Boards ethics session for our Film and Entertainment Advisory Board next Thursday.

The issue I mentioned to you on the phone that needs an opinion I think is this:

The Board has decided that one of the issues they need to address is the lack of cohesion within the entertainment industry in Miami-Dade County. One strategy they would like to pursue to address this issue is to host quarterly networking receptions, with a guest speaker, a "state of the industry" address from the Board chair, and general networking.

In order to accomplish this initiative, the Board has proposed that they solicit sponsorship donations of money or in-kind services to underwrite the cost of the events. I am concerned that these sponsorships may put the Board in a bad light – with the appearance of a quid pro quo for the sponsors and an implied conflict of interest.

We have checked with a couple of other County Boards who do conduct receptions, but so far have found only those with associated non-profits (i.e. - ITC's relationship with the Sister Cities program) which allows the reception to be hosted by the non-profit and not the Board per se.

Is there a way for the Board to accomplish their purpose without running afoul of our conflict of interest ordinance, or in fact do you think this is a conflict at all?

Thanks for reviewing this for us...

2/5/2007

Jeff Peel, Director
Mayor's Office of Film & Entertainment

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2/5/2007