

Meyers, Robert (COE)

INQ 08-83

From: Meyers, Robert (COE)
Sent: Friday, May 09, 2008 11:09 AM
To: Pizano, Sara (ASD)
Subject: RE: large animal follow up

Dear Dr. Pisano:

Thank you for your request for opinion. The critical facts are that you are the director of the Animal Services Department and the department donated \$10,000 from the Animal Services Trust Fund in October 2006 to the South Florida Society for the Prevention of Cruelty (SFSPCA) to augment its budget. It isn't clear to me whether another \$10,000 donation was given to SFSPCA in October 2007, but it does not have a bearing on my opinion. You further indicate in your email that you began dating a volunteer board member for the SFSPCA in March 2007 and the department is considering another donation to the SFSPCA.

Generally speaking, in order for a conflict of interest to exist under the county's Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance, an employee must use his/her official position to benefit a third party or the employee must reap a personal benefit from the action taken as a government employee. In the instant case, I see no direct or indirect financial benefit that would flow to you or the board member whom you are dating as a result of an annual allocation from the Animal Services Trust Fund to the SFSPCA. The board member in question occupies an unpaid position with the non-profit organization nor do you stand to benefit from this transfer of funds.

In conclusion, no conflict of interest occurs under the circumstances you have described and monies from the Animal Services Trust Fund can be donated to assist the operations of the SFSPCA.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

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

From: Pizano, Sara (ASD)
Sent: Thursday, May 08, 2008 4:26 PM
To: Meyers, Robert (COE)
Subject: FW: large animal follow up

Dear Rob,

When I began as director for Miami Dade Animal Services, I started working on large animal rescue and cruelty cases. The e-mail below is to give you an idea regarding the length of time I have been working on this. As per Florida State Statutes 588.21, 588.22 and 828, the county is responsible for the transport, impound and care of large animal victims of cruelty or abandonment. However, at this time, no department has been allocated the resources to do so.

In 1992, the South Florida Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SFSPCA), a 501c3 non-profit organization was formed to address those needs. For the last two years, the Animal Services Department has requested funds in the enhancement section of the budget to provide care to these animal victims. In an effort to help offset the \$150,000 annual budget, the department donated \$10,000 from the Animal Services Trust Fund in October of 2006 after the County Attorney's office was consulted.

In March of 2007, I began dating Roy Pressman, a volunteer board member for the SFSPCA. In the interest of full disclosure, please comment on any possible conflict of interest regarding the Animal Services department donating another \$10,000 from the trust fund and continuing a working relationship and assisting the SFSPCA in any way. Thank you for your time.

5/9/2008

Sincerely,
 Dr. Sara Pizano
 Director
 Animal Services

From: Armstrong, Bart H. (MDPD)
Sent: Friday, September 15, 2006 1:10 PM
To: Pizano, Sara (ASD); Pichardo, Carmen (MDPD); Peacock, Melisa A. (MDPD); Andress, Scott V. (MDPD)
Cc: Santos-Alborna, Robert (ASD)
Subject: RE: large animal follow up

FYI:

I spoke with Dana Cormany with advocate and she is in the process of gathering the information for all outstanding donations to the SPCA. I reread the appellate decision in the Bloom case and want to apologize for some misinformation. The Judgment is only for \$13,749.81. I will contact Dennis Kerbel with the County Attorney's Office today to find out the status of collecting that money.

With regards to the outstanding collections, once Dana and Dennis get back with me I will have the final amount.

Thanks again for all your help.

Bart

Bart H. Armstrong, Police Legal Advisor
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"Delivering Excellence Every Day"

From: Pizano, Sara (ASD)
Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2006 4:11 PM
To: Armstrong, Bart H. (MDPD); Pichardo, Carmen (MDPD); Peacock, Melisa A. (MDPD); Andress, Scott V. (MDPD)
Cc: Santos-Alborna, Robert (ASD)
Subject: large animal follow up

Thanks so much for coming to Animal Services today. Here is a follow up so we all know what we need to accomplish.

1. Dr. Pizano
 - a. Speak to other counties regarding how they handle large animal confiscation
 - i. will discuss at SFAWA meeting next week
 - ii. I contacted Broward Animal Control Director who does not have a formal program, they referred me to police but are willing to work together with us
 - iii. E-mailed Director at Palm Beach AC
 - b. Speak to Parks Department
 - i. Spoke with Frank Faragalli and presented dilemma....here's what I learned:
 1. they have 250 stalls at Tropical Park uninhabited except for horse shows which they host frequently, the issues they anticipate are: staffing, care, feeding, etc., issues with potential contagious diseases closely housed next to expensive show horses...they are open to discussions but are concerned about the length of time housing would be needed

5/9/2008

2. they have a small farm at Emelia Erhart Park with ponies, lamb and goats so that may be a potential.....they breed there with 4H so no infectious diseases allowed!
 3. The City of Miami owns the Enchanted Forest so I will contact them
 4. Frank will call me once he meets with his Director
- c. I spoke with Dennis Kerbel about our trust fund and to see if we could help the SFSPCA in this emergency situation, he is checking the resolution
 - d. I am speaking to my Assistant County Manager, Alex Munoz to see if we can meet with Commissioner Soto regarding short term funding.
 - e. I will contact Parkland Horse Association
2. Melissa
 - a. Provide baseline cost for care of
 - i. 100 horses
 - ii. 20-40 cows
 - iii. 100 goats/sheep/pigs
 - iv. (it would be helpful for me to have cost per animal per day and then per year)
 3. Bart
 - a. Contacting Dana Corvey to check how PTD donations are monitored
 - b. Could you also provide an estimate of outstanding income that needs to be collected? (or would we not know that until each case was reviewed?)
 4. Scott and Carmen
 - a. How did you get away without an assignment?

Thanks everyone! Let me know if I forgot anything. I asked Sherri to set a follow up phone meeting for us for the 25th or 26th and she will set up a meeting for you to meet with my Enforcement team regarding investigations.

Dr. Sara Pizano, Director
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Phone: (305) 805-5982
Fax: (305) 805-1619

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