

Frigo, Victoria (COE)

From: Frigo, Victoria (COE)
Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2013 4:09 PM
To: Gordon, Derrick (MDT)
Cc: Harris, Linda Ann (MDT); Libhaber, Bruce (CAO); Bokor, Alexander (CAO); Chen, Hugh (MDT); mgallo@gallob2b.com; Centorino, Joseph (COE)
Subject: Transit Bus Summit (INQ 13-35)

Mr. Gordon,

You asked if WASD employees could travel to Texas to attend the Transit Bus Summit funded by private grants that would cover airfare, hotel, meals, and other costs associated with the event.

Under the Miami-Dade County Code at Sec. 2-11.1 (w), County employees cannot accept travel expenses, *directly or indirectly*, from County vendors, contractors, service providers, bidders, or proposers. Travel expenses include, but are not limited to, transportation, lodging, meals, registration fees, and incidentals. This prohibition can only be waived by a majority vote of the Board of County Commissioners in public session.

I spoke today with Mike Gallo, the coordinator of the Transit Bus Summit, to determine the source of funds for the grants. It is my understanding that companies that provide goods and services to transit agencies are sponsoring the event so that employees of transit agencies can attend at no cost.

Before making a decision about whether WASD employees may accept these grants, our office will need a complete list of sponsors of the Transit Bus Summit to determine if any of them are, or are foreseeably likely to become, County vendors, contractors, service providers, bidders, or proposers.

If WASD employees are permitted to accept the grants, they would be required to disclose the grants as gifts in the quarter following receipt of the gifts. Gifts over \$100 must be disclosed, as per Sec. 2-11.1 (e)(4) of the County Code.

Mr. Gallo stated that all of the grant money offered for the summit in February has been depleted. Consequently, if WASD employees wish to attend a future event, I recommend that they contact us early in the application process so that we can identify the source of the grant money.

If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

VICTORIA FRIGO, SENIOR STAFF ATTORNEY

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From: Harris, Linda Ann (MDT) **On Behalf Of** Gordon, Derrick (MDT)
Sent: Friday, February 08, 2013 4:59 PM
To: Centorino, Joseph (COE)
Cc: Harris, Linda Ann (MDT); Libhaber, Bruce (CAO)
Subject: FW: Transit Bus Summit

Thanks Bruce.

Hi Joe,

Can you please give me an opinion as it relates to me attending a conference which will be paid for by a grant through the organization in the attached documents? Thanks in advance.

From: Libhaber, Bruce (CAO)
Sent: Friday, February 08, 2013 4:47 PM
To: Gordon, Derrick (MDT)
Subject: RE: Transit Bus Summit

Derrick:

The County's Ethics Ordinance, as it pertains to employees, reads in relevant part that employees "shall disclose as provided herein any gift, or series of gifts from any one person or entity, having a value in excess of one hundred dollars (\$100.00). Said disclosure shall be made by filing a copy of the disclosure form required by Chapter 112, Florida Statutes, for "local officers" with the Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners simultaneously with the filing of the form with the Secretary of State." That being said, any official opinions or interpretations of the County's Ethics Ordinance comes from the Ethics Commission, not the County Attorney's Office. For an official Ethics Commission opinion, you would need to contact Mr. Joseph Centorino at 305-579-2594 or via e-mail at centori@miamidade.gov.

Thanks,
Bruce

From: Harris, Linda Ann (MDT) **On Behalf Of** Gordon, Derrick (MDT)
Sent: Friday, February 08, 2013 3:55 PM
To: Bokor, Alexander (CAO)
Cc: Harris, Linda Ann (MDT); Libhaber, Bruce (CAO)
Subject: FW: Transit Bus Summit

Hi Alex, we are unable to reach Bruce for an opinion and time is of the essence. Can you please advise if by attending this conference that is being paid by a grant, will I be violating any ethic rules? Thanks in advance.

From: Harris, Linda Ann (MDT) **On Behalf Of** Gordon, Derrick (MDT)
Sent: Friday, February 08, 2013 12:41 PM
To: Libhaber, Bruce (CAO)
Subject: FW: Transit Bus Summit

Hi Bruce,

Mr. Chen forwarded you the email below on my behalf, since we are pressed for time, I would like to know if it was okay with me to attend this conference? His concern was to make sure that we are not violating any ethic rules. Thanks

From: Harris, Linda Ann (MDT) **On Behalf Of** Gordon, Derrick (MDT)
Sent: Thursday, February 07, 2013 4:53 PM
To: Chen, Hugh (MDT)

Cc: Harris, Linda Ann (MDT)
Subject: FW: Transit Bus Summit

Hugh, I would like to attend this conference. This is a way of building relationships with other agencies across the country in an effort to obtain information on what other agencies doing to rectify some of the issues that Miami-Dade Transit Bus is having. Also, there is no cost to MDT.

From: Katie Sieracki [<mailto:ksieracki@gallob2b.com>]
Sent: Thursday, February 07, 2013 3:06 PM
To: Gordon, Derrick (MDT)
Subject: Transit Bus Summit

Mr. Gordon,

I host a group of transit directors for a meeting and a couple of them mentioned that they'd like to have someone from Miami Dade join the conversation.

Here's a little bit about what we're doing: The Transit Bus Summit is a two-day meeting for about 50 transit executives from around the country and members of the vendor community from February 25 – February 27 near Austin, TX. The format includes roundtable discussions, vendor presentations, and one-on-one sessions. It's unlike any tradeshow or conference, and the great thing about it is there is no cost to the agencies to attend. A private grant covers your airfare, hotel, meals, and other costs associated with the event. It's 48 hours of user-generated content and meetings with 50 peers from around the country and vendors.

I have attached the information for your review. We've been full for a few weeks, but we had a couple of cancellations, so we have just a couple spots to fill. Could you give me a quick call to discuss today or tomorrow morning?

I look forward to the opportunity to speak with you about the possibility of hosting you at our unique event.

Thanks,
Katie

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The Transit Bus Summit
February 25 - 27, 2013
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