

Summary of the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust Meeting Held on October 12, 2022

MIAMI, FL (October 12, 2022) – The Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust held a public meeting on October 12, 2022. The following actions took place:



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COMMISSIONERS

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Judge Lawrence A.
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Probable Cause Found in Case Involving City of Miami Commissioner

C 22-52-09: The Ethics Commission unanimously found Probable Cause that City of Miami Commissioner, Alex Diaz De la Portilla, violated the Exploitation of Official Position Prohibited section of the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance.

The complaint alleged that Commissioner Diaz De la Portilla exploited his official position by permitting and/or securing the use of a City of Miami Vehicle, for the benefit of his friend, Ms. Jenny Nillo.

Complaint Filed Against Coral Gables City Attorney Found Not Legally Sufficient

C 22-53-09: A complaint filed against Coral Gables City Attorney, Miriam Ramos, was found to be Not Legally Sufficient and dismissed. The complaint alleged that Ms. Ramos violated the Truth in Government section of the Citizens’ Bill of Rights when she allegedly stated during a Commission meeting that the current mechanism for selecting who receives petitions for the City’s Business Improvement District is legal.

County Employee Stipulates to Probable Cause Finding

C 22-51-09: Miami-Dade County Internal Services Department (ISD), Lawanda Wright-Robinson, stipulated to a finding of Probable Cause and entered into a settlement agreement for violating the Prohibition on Outside Employment section of the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance. Ms. Wright-Robinson will be issued a Letter of Instruction and will be required to pay a fine in the amount of \$500.

A COE investigation revealed that Ms. Wright-Robinson failed to file, under oath, an annual report indicating the source of her outside employment and any amounts or type of money or other consider received as required by the Ethics Code.

No Probable Cause Found in Case Involving Town of Surfside Mayor

C 22-32-06: The Ethics Commission unanimously found No Probable Cause that Town of Surfside Mayor, Shlomo Danzinger, violated the Right to be Heard section of the Miami-Dade Citizens’ Bill of Rights when he allegedly repeatedly interrupted a citizen, during her remarks, and on the third instance, muted her microphone and had her escorted out of a Commission meeting during the Good and Welfare section of the meeting.

Complaint Filed Against Town of Surfside Civilian Police Employee Found Not Legally Sufficient

C 22-54-09: A complaint filed against Dina Goldstein, the Executive Assistant to the Town of Surfside Police Chief, was found Not Legally Sufficient and dismissed. The complaint alleged that Ms. Goldstein violated the County Ethics Code when she used her administrator position in the Nextdoor social application to remove negative postings aimed at the police department and other Town officials and personnel.

Complaint Filed Against Town of Surfside Commissioner Found Not Legally Sufficient

C 22-56-07: A complaint filed against Town of Surfside Commissioner, Marianne Meisheid, was found Not Legally Sufficient and dismissed. The complaint alleged that Commissioner Meisheid did not recuse herself from voting on a variance application presented by someone she allegedly “had a romantic relationship for nearly a decade.”

Complaint Filed Against Town of Surfside Mayor Found Not Legally Sufficient

C 22-57-09: A complaint filed against Town of Surfside Mayor, Shlomo Danzinger, was found Not Legally Sufficient and dismissed. The complaint alleged that Mayor Danzinger violated the County Ethics Code when, at a Town Commission meeting, he allegedly called on a lobbyist for an interested party that allegedly stood to benefit from proposed ordinance changes that were before the Town Commission and permitted him to make a statement in favor of the proposed ordinance changes.

No Probable Cause Found in Case Involving Attorney for City of Miami

C 20-48-12: The Ethics Commission unanimously found No Probable Cause that the Attorney for the City of Miami, Victoria Mendez, violated the Truth in Government and Right to be Heard sections of the Miami-Dade Home Rule Charter, Citizen’s Bill of Rights. The complaint alleged Ms. Mendez violated the Truth in Government section when she stated that all the recorded comments left by members of the public regarding a proposed ordinance were the same and by stating that her office got a verbal opinion from the Florida Attorney General’s office.

The complaint also alleged that Ms. Mendez violated the Right to be Heard section by failing to play the recorded comments left by members of the public, including the complainant, regarding a proposed ordinance at a Commission meeting.

The Ethics Commission was created in 1996 as an independent agency with advisory and quasi-judicial powers. It is composed of five members, serving staggered terms of four years each. Through a program of training, outreach and enforcement, the Commission seeks to empower the community and bolster public trust.