

NEWS RELEASE



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Summary of the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust Meeting Held on November 9, 2022

MIAMI, FL (November 9, 2022) – The Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust held a public meeting on November 9, 2022. The following actions took place:

Hearing Date Set in Complaint Involving City of Miami Commissioner

C 22-52-09: The Ethics Commission set March 27, 2023 through March 29, 2023, as the contested hearing dates for a complaint filed against City of Miami Commissioner Alex Diaz de la Portilla. The Commission previously found Probable Cause that Commissioner de la Portilla violated the Exploitation of Official Position Prohibited section of the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance by permitting the use of a City of Miami owned vehicle as a means for personal errands to be conducted on his behalf for his personal benefit and/or convenience; and permitting and/or securing the use of a City of Miami Vehicle, for the benefit of his friend, Ms. Jenny Nillo.

Formal Opinion Issued Regarding Right to be Heard Section of Citizens' Bill of Rights

The Ethics Commission issued a formal opinion requiring a municipality to afford citizens the right to address a municipal board on a matter within the board's jurisdiction, even if the matter is not on the board meeting agenda.

Complaint Filed Against North Bay Village Mayor Dismissed

C 22-55-09: A complaint filed against North Bay Village Mayor, Brent Latham, was dismissed at the request of the complainant. The complaint alleged that Mayor Latham violated the Exploitation of Official Position Prohibited section of the Miami-Dade Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance when he allegedly forced Village staff to sort through garbage from a Village garbage truck on behalf of a contractor.

Probable Cause Found in Case Involving Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department Employee

C 22-58-11: Miami-Dade County Water and Sewer Instrument Technician, Jean Monestime, 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.

The employee will be issued a Letter of Instruction and is ordered to pay a fine of \$500.

Complaint Filed Against Miami-Dade County Water and Sewer Supervisor Found Not Legally Sufficient

C 22-59-09: A complaint filed against Miami-Dade County Solid Waste Management Department Supervisor, Alfred Coleman, was found Not Legally Sufficient and dismissed. The complaint alleged that Mr. Gray violated the Protection of Employees Disclosing Specified Information section of the Miami-Dade County Code when he allegedly sent threatening and taunting messages through a third party in retaliation for filing a complaint with the COE against him.

Complaint Filed Against Candidate for Medley Town Council Seat Found Not Legally Sufficient

C 22-63-11: A complaint filed against Town of Medley Council candidate Yenni Lorenzo was found Not Legally Sufficient and dismissed. The complaint alleged that Ms. Lorenzo violated the Mandatory and Voluntary sections of the Ethical Campaign Practices Ordinance when she allegedly “authorized and allowed” a political action to publish untrue statements and “malicious” flyers about Ms. Lorenzo’s opponents.

Probable Cause Found in Cases Involving Magnum Construction Management (MCM) Employees

C 22-28-08, C 22-29-08, C 22-30-08: Three Magnum Construction Management (MCM) employees stipulated to a finding of Probable Cause and entered into a settlement agreement for violating the “Cone of Silence” section of the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance.

The Complaint was dismissed after the probable cause finding and each employee will be issued a Letter of Instruction as the violation was inadvertent, unintentional, or insubstantial.

No Probable Cause Found in Case Involving Miami Parking Authority Advisor

C 22-34-07: The Ethics Commission unanimously found No Probable Cause that Senior Executive Advisor at the Miami Parking Authority, Roland Galdos, violated the Public Records section of the Citizens’ Bill of Rights. The complaint alleged that Mr. Galdos failed or refused to provide public records that were requested.

Complaint filed against CEO of the Miami Parking Authority Dismissed for Lack of Jurisdiction

C 22-35-07: A complaint filed against the CEO of the Miami Parking Authority, Alejandra Argudin, was found Not Legally Sufficient for Lack of Jurisdiction and Dismissed. The complaint alleged that Ms. Argudin violated Section 23 (i) of the City of Miami Charter because she directed the Authority’s Board to enter into an agreement whereby the Authority’s expenses would be paid from sources other than off-street parking facilities. The Commission dismissed the complaint finding that it did not have jurisdiction to consider violations of Section 23 (1) of the City of Miami Charter.

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.