

**OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES  
OF THE  
PALM BEACH COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS  
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**MAY 2, 2019**

**THURSDAY  
1:30 P.M.**

**COMMISSION CHAMBERS  
GOVERNMENTAL CENTER**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. ROLL CALL**

MEMBERS:

Sarah L. Shullman, Chair  
Bryan Kummerlen, Vice Chair  
Peter L. Cruise  
Michael S. Kridel  
Rodney G. Romano – Arrived later

STAFF:

Mark E. Bannon, Commission on Ethics (COE) Executive Director  
Anthony Bennett, COE Chief Investigator  
Abigail Irizarry, COE Investigator I  
Christie E. Kelley, Esq., COE General Counsel  
Gina A. Levesque, COE Intake and Compliance Manager

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:

Julie Burns, Deputy Clerk, Clerk & Comptroller's Office

**III. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS – None**

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 4, 2019**

**MOTION to approve the April 4, 2019 minutes. Motion by Peter Cruise, seconded by Michael Kridel, and carried 4-0. Rodney Romano absent.**

**V. PROCESSED ADVISORY OPINIONS (CONSENT AGENDA)**

**V.a. Request for Opinion (RQO) 19-006**

**V.b. RQO 19-007**

**MOTION to approve the consent agenda. Motion by Bryan Kummerlen, seconded by Peter Cruise, and carried 4-0. Rodney Romano absent.**

**VI. ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA – None**

**RECESS**

**At 1:31 p.m., the chair declared the meeting recessed for an executive session.**

**RECONVENE**

**At 2:03 p.m., the COE reconvened, and at Chair Sarah Shullman's request for a roll call, Vice Chair Kummerlen, and Commissioners Cruise, Kridel, and Romano were present.**

**VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – C18-004**

Vice Chair Kummerlen read the following Public Report and Final Order of Dismissal:

Complainant, Richard Giorgio, filed the above referenced complaint on November 20, 2018, alleging that Respondent, Keith James, who was a City Commissioner at the time of the allegations, violated §2-443(a), §2-443(b), and §2-443(c) of the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics by voting favorably on matters involving the Wantman Group, Inc. (WGI) in exchange for a reduction of rent by Respondent's landlord, who is a lobbyist for WGI.

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Pursuant to §2-258(a)1 of the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics Ordinance, the COE is empowered to enforce the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics. On May 2, 2019, the Commission conducted a hearing and reviewed the Memorandum of Inquiry, the Report of Investigation, and the Probable Cause Recommendation submitted by the COE Advocate. After an oral statement by the Advocate and Respondent, the Commission concluded that probable cause does not exist to believe any violations of §2-443(a), §2-443(b), or §2-443(c) occurred because the evidence showed that Respondent's broker found the property for him, Respondent did not know who the property owner was prior to entering into the lease agreement, and Respondent did not receive any special benefit, financial or otherwise, because his monthly rent payment is above fair market value for similar properties.

Therefore, it is:

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that the complaint against Respondent, Keith James, is hereby DISMISSED.

DONE AND ORDERED by the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics in public session on May 2, 2019.

By: Sarah L. Shullman, Chair

(CLERK'S NOTE: The clerk added the language as printed in the Public Report and Final Order of Dismissal.)

#### **VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

##### **VIII.a.**

**DISCUSSED:** Ethics Awareness Month.

Mark Bannon, COE Executive Director, said that Commissioner Weinroth would be presenting a proclamation at the May 5, 2019 BCC meeting declaring May 2019 as Ethics Awareness Month.

#### **IX. COMMISSION COMMENTS – None**

**X. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None**

**X.a.**

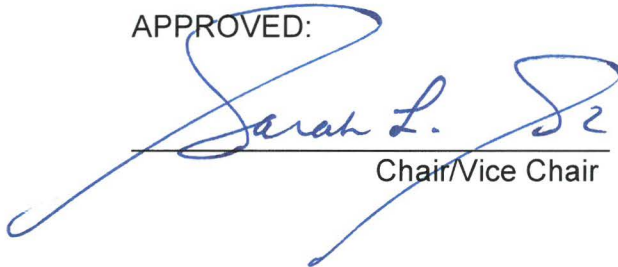
**DISCUSSED:** Commendation.

Richard Radcliffe, League of Cities Executive Director, commended the COE and staff for instilling public trust and deciding not to discuss certain aspects of an investigation during a “political season” or election because complaints made against individuals during an election could negatively affect them.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

**At 2:09 p.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.**

APPROVED:

  
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Chair/Vice Chair