



Honesty - Integrity - Character

**Palm Beach County
Commission on Ethics**
The Historic 1916 Courthouse
300 N. Dixie Hwy, Suite 450
West Palm Beach, FL 33401
561.355.1915
FAX: 561.355.1904
Hotline: 877.766.5920
E-mail:

ethics@palmbeachcountyethics.com

Commissioners

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

Executive Director

Mark E. Bannon

General Counsel

Christie E. Kelley

Intake & Compliance Manager

Gina A. Levesque

Investigator

Abigail Irizarry

Investigator

Mark A. Higgs

News Release

For immediate release:
Contact:

October 4, 2019
Mark E. Bannon, Executive Director
(561) 355-1937

Summary of Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics Meeting Held on October 3, 2019

The Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics (COE) took the following actions at its monthly public meeting held on October 3, 2019.

Mark Higgs was introduced as the COE's newest investigator.

Four complaints were heard in executive session. The complete files are published on the COE website at: <http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/complaints.htm>.

C18-005: After considering the investigative report, probable cause recommendation, and statement of the COE advocate and Respondent, the COE found probable cause did not exist and dismissed the complaint because there was no evidence that any violation had occurred.

C18-006: After considering the investigative report, probable cause recommendation, and statement of the COE advocate, the COE found probable cause did not exist and dismissed the complaint because there was no evidence that any violation had occurred.

C18-007: After considering the investigative report, probable cause recommendation, and statement of the COE advocate, the COE found probable cause did not exist and dismissed the complaint because there was no evidence that any violation had occurred.

C18-008: After considering the investigative report, probable cause recommendation, and statement of the COE advocate and Respondent, the COE found probable cause existed and will set the matter for a final hearing within 120 days.

One advisory opinion was approved. The full opinion is published and available at: <http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/opinions.htm>. One advisory opinion, RQO 19-016, was tabled.

RQO 19-017: A city of Boynton Beach (city) commissioner asked if the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics (code) prohibits her from accepting employment with Leadership Palm Beach County (LPBC), a nonprofit organization that is a vendor of the city.

The COE opined as follows: No, the code does not prohibit her from accepting this employment because it meets the sole source exception. If she becomes the executive director of LPBC, she must fully disclose this interest in LPBC to the city and the COE prior to any future contract or transaction between LPBC and the city. Any participation in fundraising for LPBC would need to be in her personal name without title or connection to her official position as a city commissioner. She would also be prohibited from participating in or voting on any matter that would result in a special financial benefit being given to LPBC. Finally, since LPBC is a 501(c)(3) organization, should the commissioner, her staff at LPBC, or anyone else acting under her direction solicit or accept a donation in excess of \$100 from a vendor, lobbyist, or principal or employer of a lobbyist of the city, she must maintain a record of the solicitation and submit the record to the COE within 30 days of the event, or if no event, within 30 days of the solicitation.

A detailed explanation of all agenda items is available at <http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/meetings.htm>.

###