



*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@palmbeachcountvethics.com](mailto:ethics@palmbeachcountvethics.com)

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Clevis Headley, Vice Chair  
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Anthony C. Bennett

**Investigator**

Abigail Irizarry

# News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact:

September 9, 2016

Mark E. Bannon, Executive Director

(561) 355-1937

## Summary of Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics Meeting Held on September 8, 2016

The Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics (COE) took the following actions at its monthly public meeting held on September 8, 2016.

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

**C15-013:** The COE reviewed and considered the investigative report, and statement and probable cause recommendation of the COE advocate. The COE found probable cause existed to believe that respondent violated Sections 2-443(a) and 2-443(b) of the Code of Ethics. However, the COE dismissed the case by a majority vote after determining that the public interest had already been served due to the extensive sanctions levied by a criminal court against respondent upon his conviction and adjudication of guilt after a jury trial regarding these events.

**C15-028:** Respondent and advocate entered into a negotiated settlement which stipulated that there was probable cause to believe that respondent violated the Code of Ethics when his outside business entered into a contract with his public employer but that the violation was unintentional and the public interest would not be served by proceeding further. The COE approved the negotiated settlement, issued a letter of instruction, and dismissed the case.

One advisory opinion was approved. The full opinion is published and available at:

<http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/opinions.htm>

**RQO 16-019:** A member of the Palm Tran Service Board asked if he is prohibited from soliciting donations on behalf of the Palm Beach County Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) of which he is the vice president and a board member.

**The COE opined as follows:** The code does not prohibit him from soliciting donations on behalf of NFB, since NFB is a registered 501(c)(3) charitable organization. However, his participation in fundraising for NFB would need to be in his personal name without any reference to his official title or connection to his official position as a member of the PTSB. This applies directly to him and to anyone indirectly soliciting on his behalf. If he solicits or accepts any donation in excess of \$100 from a vendor, lobbyist, or principal or employer of a lobbyist of the PTSB or of Palm Tran (the county department that is subject to PTSB's authority), he, or someone entrusted by him, must maintain a record of the solicitation and submit a log to the COE within 30 days of the event, or if no event is involved, within 30 days of the solicitation.

A detailed explanation of all agenda items is available at

<http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/meetings.htm>.

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