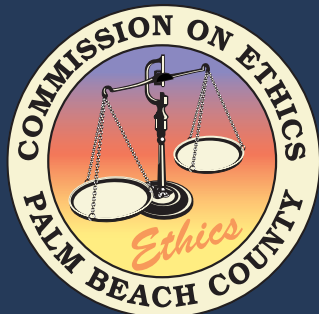


2013



**Palm Beach County
Commission On Ethics**



2013 ANNUAL REPORT

PALM BEACH COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS



300 NORTH DIXIE HIGHWAY
WEST PALM BEACH,
FLORIDA 33401



Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics

Commissioners

Robin N. Fiore, Chair
Patricia L. Archer, Vice Chair
Salesia V. Smith-Gordon
Michael T. Kridel

Executive Director

Steven P. Cullen

January 2, 2014

Chair Robin N. Fiore
Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics
300 N. Dixie Highway, Suite 450
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

Dear Madam Chair,

As you know, the Commission on Ethics (COE) has completed its third full calendar year of operation. Established in May, 2010, the COE has been given the legal responsibility to review, interpret, render advisory opinions and enforce the Countywide Code of Ethics, County Post-employment and Lobbyist Registration Ordinances. Additional duties include ongoing ethics training for public officials, employees, vendors, lobbyists and their principals as well as the delivery of community outreach programs.

With these duties and mandates in mind, I am pleased to present the 2013 annual report to the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics.

In 2013, COE staff processed 23 advisory opinions, 14 sworn complaints and 24 Inquiries based on anonymous or attributed unsworn "tips" and other information provided by the citizens of Palm Beach County. Additionally, staff handled 76 advisory opinion requests by referring the requesting party to prior COE opinions directly addressing the submitted issues. The office hot-line received 640 calls and visits to the COE website exceeded 35,000 for the year. COE staff made 75 referrals to other local, state or federal governmental agencies. We are currently staffed with four full-time employees. We anticipate filling the vacant staff counsel position in the first quarter of 2014.

Community collaborations, training and outreach remain critical components of our mission. In 2013, staff conducted over 58 live training sessions for public employees, officials, vendors and lobbyists as well as 9 community presentations, forums, workshops and other events before civic and social organizations, non-profits and professional associations. Over 100 training DVDs have been distributed. After much research and collaboration, staff created this year a new interactive training platform. With less technical language, more examples and audience involvement, the training has been very well received. A comprehensive 6 hour training program for Commissioners has been delivered. Staff also completed a 3 hour training for volunteer advocates with Florida Bar CLE credit awarded.

COE Staff continues to participate in Palm Beach County *Ethics Awareness Day*. Staff will serve as judges in the "Ethics Bowl" involving debate teams selected by the Palm Beach County School Board to participate in the National Ethics Bowl finals. We continue to maintain and develop a close working relationship with the Center for Applied Ethics at Palm Beach State College. These alliances, along with a broad outreach to community groups and organizations, provide a solid foundation for educating the public as to the functions and duties of the COE. It is hoped that these connections and efforts place the COE in the forefront of national local ethics commissions.

300 N. Dixie Highway, Suite 400, West Palm Beach, FL 33401 561.355.1904 FAX: 561.355.1915
Hotline: 877.766.5920 E-mail: ethics@palmbeachcountyethics.com
Website: www.palmbeachcountyethics.com

We continue to maintain a vibrant and viable virtual and social media presence including Facebook – www.facebook.com/pbccoe and Twitter – [@pbccoe](https://twitter.com/pbccoe). In addition to providing web-based training modules for public officials, employees and vendors, we maintain a public database for annual and quarterly gift reports, voting conflict of interest disclosures and outside employment waivers. We also continue to maintain links to Palm Beach County maintained databases, including lists of active registered vendors, registered lobbyists and their principals, as well as annual lobbyist expenditure reports. All sworn complaints, related documents and live hearings are posted to our website once the cases become public record. Additionally, all COE advisory opinions are posted and catalogued by subject matter. Our updated website is fully searchable including all processed complaints and advisory opinions. From our inception, through December 31, 2013, the commission has issued 282 advisory opinions.

Throughout 2012 we continued our efforts to save taxpayer dollars by utilizing cost saving initiatives such as the COE Volunteer Advocate Program. The Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County graciously helped us expand our roster this year. Experienced trial lawyers continue to volunteer their time to process complaints before the ethics commission on a pro bono basis. By continuing our careful stewardship in regards to staff, operational and procurement costs, the COE continues to come in under budget, resulting in a fiscal year 2012-2013 savings of approximately \$70,000.

Our move in June to the Historic 1916 Palm Beach County Courthouse places us in proximity to the center of government in Palm Beach County. It thus provides new opportunities for interaction and visibility.

This year, the COE underwent a legislatively mandated review by the Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability (OPPAGA). All of the documentation, emails, reports and responses are found at: <http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/OPPAGA.htm>. We are grateful for OPPAGA's finding that "The commission was created using several best practices and has achieved a number of milestones." The COE, both before and after the OPPAGA Report, has instituted a number of structural and procedural changes in its practices. These changes are detailed in Page 25 of this Report. The Ordinances under which the COE operates control its practices. Although the COE or other entities may propose changes to these laws, only the Palm Beach County Commission may change them. Existing Ordinances, Rules and practices contain many substantive and procedural safeguards designed to protect the due process rights of those accused of violating the Code of Ethics or other laws. The COE and its staff have always afforded full due process to respondents, and will continue to do so, while following all of the duties and mandates of the Ordinances.

On the legislative front, we will monitor this year the possibility that the state legislature may take up a bill addressing local ethics commissions.

I am personally privileged and pleased to serve as your Executive Director since April 2013. Former Executive Director Alan S. Johnson, in last year's report, predicted that I would "...find a vibrant, efficient, effective and fiscally prudent operation dedicated to increasing awareness of, and compliance with, county ethics rules." He was right. His great work, along with that of many Commissioners, staff, and stakeholders has served the COE well. I intend to work hard with staff over the next year to build on that solid foundation and make the COE even stronger. The citizens of Palm Beach County deserve no less. Thank you your support of our operations and your ongoing efforts to promote the highest standard of public service within Palm Beach County.

Sincerely,



Steven P. Cullen,
Executive Director

SPC/gal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	5
Mission Statement.....	6
History	6
An Independent Ethics Institution.....	7
About the Commission.....	8
The CommissionERS	9
Commission Staff.....	11
Education	12
Website	14
Fiscal Report.....	16
Advisory Opinions: Ask First, Act Later	16
Summaries of Notable 2013 Advisory Opinions.....	18
The Complaint Process.....	22
Complaints	23
Legislative Activities and Initiatives	24
Commission on Ethics Organizational Chart	24
Office of Program Policy Analysis & Governmental Accountability	25
Chart of Changes in the Procedures, Rules and Practices.....	25
COE Staff Major Projects for Calendar Year 2014.....	27

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics is to foster integrity in public service, to promote the public's trust and confidence in that service, and to prevent conflicts between private interests and public duties.

We strive to accomplish this mission by conducting ongoing educational programs, community outreach, providing clear and timely advice, and fairly and impartially interpreting and enforcing the conflict of interest and financial disclosure laws. In doing so, the commission is guided by principles of fairness, clarity, and common sense. We encourage you to spend time learning about our efforts by going to our website at www.palmbeachcountyethics.com and to contact our office with any questions or comments.

HISTORY

In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable government to control the governed, and in the next place, oblige it to control itself.

- Federalist #51

Now in its third year, the Commission on Ethics is an independent organization that administers and enforces the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics, Lobbyist Registration Ordinance and Post Employment Ordinance. The Code of Ethics is designed to help ensure that public officials and employees perform their public responsibilities impartially, do not use their public positions for private gain, and to foster public confidence in the integrity of local government. The Lobbyist Registration Ordinance was enacted to regulate certain lobbying activity and enhance lobbying transparency by establishing a central lobbyist registration and expenditure reporting system. While the commission has statutory license to punish offenders, commission staff strives to educate public employees, public officials, vendors, and lobbyists on how the new rules will affect governance and implementation of policy throughout the county.

Palm Beach County has a current estimated population of 1.35 million residents and has grown significantly in the past decade in terms of size and diversity. The county has over 6,000 full and part-time employees and approximately 1,000 volunteer officials staffing 95 committees and boards. There are 38 municipalities within Palm Beach County who are served by over 9,000 full and part time employees, 258 municipal boards and committees with more than 1,800 volunteer advisory board members, and 198 elected officials.

As recommended by a 2010 grand jury convened to monitor the progress of the new ethics measures, a county-wide referendum was included on the November 2010 ballot. Voters overwhelmingly supported the measure to place the Commission on Ethics provisions into the county charter, expanding the jurisdiction of the ethics commission to all local municipal governments. In 2012, the Lobbyist Registration Ordinance was adopted by 35 of the 38 municipalities within the County. Commission staff stands ready to inform citizen groups, county and municipal governments alike about the services and benefits of the Commission on Ethics and Code of Ethics initiatives.

AN INDEPENDENT ETHICS INSTITUTION

Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have the right to do and what is the right thing to do.
- Justice Potter Stewart

The Ethics Commission oversees, administers and enforces local governmental ethics laws; receives and investigates complaints; provides formal advice to persons who fall within the jurisdiction of the Commission; conducts training sessions for the community, municipal and county employees, and vendors; and proposes governmental ethics law reform.

Governmental ethics laws include the Ethics Ordinance, the Lobbyist Registration Ordinance, and the Post Employment Ordinance. The Ethics Commission accepts sworn complaints regarding alleged violations of these laws and protects individuals from retaliation for reporting violations.

Persons who fall within the jurisdiction of the Ethics Commission include:

- County and Municipal Elected Officials
- County and Municipal Advisory Board Members and other non-elected officials
- County and Municipal staff and contract employees
- Lobbyists and their principals
- Vendors
- Entities subject to jurisdiction pursuant to contract or Memoranda of Understanding

Our specific statutory authority is derived from Palm Beach County Code §2-254. This ordinance grants the Ethics Commission the power to review, interpret, enforce and render opinions regarding the above-mentioned County ordinances.

The key to our ethics commission is independence. In fact, by definition the Commission on Ethics is an independent office. The Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners Organizational Structure chart reflects this independence by designating the Executive Director as an “Independent Official.” Ethics commissioners cannot be removed or otherwise influenced by the County Commission and are appointed by various non-political civic, educational and professional organizations. The position of commissioner is non-partisan and non-political. Appointees may not participate in or contribute to a candidate for state or local office or allow his or her name to be used in support of or against a candidate or ballot issue. Appointees may not participate in or contribute to political action committees, campaign for office or referenda, and may not hold office in a political party or committee.

ABOUT THE COMMISSION

The Commission on Ethics is composed of five volunteer members who serve staggered terms of four years each. Each member of the commission on ethics must also have an outstanding reputation for integrity, responsibility, and commitment to serving the community. Moreover, as representatives of Palm Beach County, appointments are made with an eye towards the racial, gender and ethnic make-up of the community.

Members are appointed by the following individuals or institutions:

- **President of the Palm Beach County Association of Chiefs of Police**- one appointment with the following qualifications: A former law enforcement official with experience in investigating white collar crime or public corruption.
- **President of the F. Malcolm Cunningham, Sr. Bar Association, the President of the Hispanic Bar Association of Palm Beach County and the President of the Palm Beach County Bar Association** – one shared appointment with the following qualifications: An attorney with experience in ethics regulation of public officials and employees.
- **President of Florida Atlantic University (FAU)** - one appointment with the following qualifications: A faculty member who teaches at an institution of higher education with a campus located in the county and who has taught a course in professional legal ethics or has published or performed services in the field of professional legal ethics.
- **President of the Palm Beach Chapter of the Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants (CPA)** – one appointment with the following qualifications: A member with at least five (5) years experience as a CPA with forensic audit experience.
- **Palm Beach County League of Cities** - one appointment with the following qualifications: A person who has served as a former elected official for a governmental entity in the county.

This calendar year, two new commissioners were seated. Commissioner Michael Kridel was appointed by the President of the Palm Beach Chapter of the Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Commissioner Salesia V. Smith-Gordon was appointed by the Presidents of the three local bar associations.

THE COMMISSIONERS

Robin N. Fiore, Ph.D., Chair

Dr. Fiore joined the University of Miami Ethics Program at the University Of Miami Miller School Of Medicine in 2010. Previously, she served as the Adelaide R. Snyder Professor of Ethics at Florida Atlantic University. Dr. Fiore specializes in biomedical ethics and professional ethics. She has served as an ethics consultant or ethics advisory committee member for a number of governmental agencies, including the Florida Public Service Commission, Florida Department of Health, Florida Department of Corrections Bioethics Committee, Florida Department of Children and Families and Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.

Dr. Fiore earned her Doctorate in Philosophy from Georgetown University in Washington, DC, after post-baccalaureate studies in religion and ethics at Drew University Graduate and Theological School in Madison, New Jersey. From 1977 through 1990, she enjoyed a corporate career in employee benefits consulting.



Patricia L. Archer, Vice-Chair

Ms. Archer is a former Vice Mayor of Delray Beach and served as a Delray Beach City Commissioner from 1999-2006. Ms Archer has been a member of or served on the following boards: the Delray Beach Planning & Zoning Board, the Parking Management Advisory Board (founding member), the South County Regional Wastewater Treatment Board (former chair), the Regional Trans. Authority Citizens Advisory Committee (former vice chair), the Palm Beach County Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Florida League of Cities Inter-Government Affairs Committee, the Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce (former board of directors member), Chamber Government Affairs Committee (former co-chair), Rotary Club of Delray Beach (past president & member), AVDA (past president & member), Delray Beach Sister City Tanzania Committee (former member, lead first delegation to Tanzania), and the Sherwood Forest Home Owner's Association (former vice president).



Ms. Archer is a graduate of the following municipal programs: Florida League of Cities Municipal Leadership, the Delray Beach Citizens Police Academy, Leadership Delray, and Palm Beach County World Class Schools.

Ms. Archer has been a Real Estate Broker/Salesperson, a Mortgage Broker, a Life & Health Insurance Salesperson and held a Series 7 Securities License

Michael S. Kridel, CPA, CFF, CITP, CFA

Michael Kridel is a Principal with Rehmann Robson and practices primarily from the Boca Raton office. He is a practice leader in the litigation services area of Rehmann Consulting and its corporate investigation group. Mr. Kridel has practiced public accounting in South Florida since graduation from The George Washington University. Prior to joining Rehmann in 2013, he was a partner with a large Palm Beach County accounting firm for nearly 17 years. Since 1974, Mr. Kridel has provided litigation services in a broad range of matters including family law, stockholder actions, financial damages, fraud detection, criminal and civil tax matters, wrongful discharge and professional malpractice. Mr. Kridel is a frequent speaker, garnering numerous awards, at national and local conferences for accountants and attorneys on topics such as litigation services, professional ethics, eDiscovery, practice management, information technology and human resources. He is a certified ethics instructor in Florida and is an online instructor in fraud courses for the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He is a longtime member of the Editorial Review Panels of the Journal of Accountancy and Florida CPA Today. He is also active in several community service organizations and is a Partner in Education at numerous Broward County high schools. For more than twenty years, Mr. Kridel has facilitated an award-winning seminar, Ethical Decision Making in the Workplace and Society, for Broward County high schools, positively influencing nearly 1,500 students annually. He is also the profession's representative member of the Education Advisory Committee of the Florida Board of Accountancy.



Salesia V. Smith-Gordon, Esquire

Following in her mother's legal footsteps, Salesia is proudly a second generation lawyer. Completing pharmacy studies at Florida A & M University College of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences in 1989 and becoming a registered pharmacist was not enough. In 1992 Salesia graduated from Florida State University College of Law and opened her law practice in 1993.

Salesia has handled an array of cases in federal and state courts. Her boutique civil law practice concentrates its advocacy for justice on behalf of those who have suffered serious injuries or death through the wrongdoing of others. Her education and professional experiences as a pharmacist is an asset in understanding the complex medical issues suffered by her clients. Salesia Smith-Gordon is a civil trial specialist trained and experienced in the rules and procedures of law to help protect the public against large corporations and private entities that cause serious harm for which the remedy is compensatory justice. For over 20 years as a lawyer, she has zealously represented clients with competence and integrity with professional courtesy and civility. She has won multimillion dollar awards for clients through verdict and settlement. Twice the firm has been awarded the Christian Business of the Year Award.



Salesia organizes and balances her time between family, work, civil organizations, and hobbies. Appointed by the joint bar associations in Palm Beach County, she is the first African American

female to serve on the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics. Salesia is an active member of several professional and civic organizations to include F. Malcolm Cunningham Sr., Bar Association-President (2012-2013), National Bar Association-Life Member, and The Florida Bar Grievance Committee for the 15th Judicial Circuit Division D (chair 2010-2011), Palm Beach County Bar Association, Palm Beach Justice Association, Florida Pharmacy Association, American Society for Pharmacy Law. Her community service includes active participation in the West Palm Beach Chapter, The Links, Inc., Zeta Tau Omega Chapter, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Street Beat Inc. Board of Directors (2009-present), League of Women Voters of Florida and the Urban League of Palm Beach County. Salesia has received various honors including “25 Most Prominent & Influential Black Women in 2007” by Success South Florida magazine and named “25 of the most powerful & influential black business leaders of 2012” by Legacy Palm Beach. She is married to Lawrence Gordon, Councilman Town of Haverhill.

Commissioner appointed by the President of the Palm Beach County Association of Chiefs of Police (Currently Vacant)

COMMISSION STAFF

Steven P. Cullen, Executive Director

Coming to the position of Executive Director in April, 2013, Steve brings 30 years of legal experience. After receiving undergraduate and law degrees from the State University of New York, Steve was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1983. He is also admitted in New York, and the District of Columbia. He began his legal career representing plaintiffs in personal injury, medical malpractice, and commercial litigation with a small West Palm Beach firm. In 1987, at the age of 30, he was nominated by the Fourth District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission and appointed by Governor Martinez as a Judge of Compensation Claims.



Leaving the bench after 12 years, Steve founded a practice focused on mediation, arbitration and private judging. He has conducted in excess of 6000 dispute resolution proceedings with tens of thousands of litigants, lawyers and insurers. Throughout his career, he has served as a lecturer, panel discussant, and moot court judge for numerous professional societies. He is the author of continuing legal education materials for many groups as well as book reviews for the Florida Bar Journal. He has served on the Florida Bar Judicial Evaluation Committee, the Florida Bar Law Related Education Committee, and the Editorial Board of the Florida Bar Journal and News. As an attorney, judge, mediator and Executive Director, Steve always strives to maintain and promote the highest ethical standards. Adherence to such principles makes our personal and professional worlds better places.

Gina Levesque, Intake Manager

Ms. Levesque is a former certified law enforcement officer and worked at the Broward County Sheriff's Office for 4 years. In addition to her law enforcement experience, Ms. Levesque served as a legal assistant in the Office of the State Attorney, 15th Judicial Circuit from 1999-2010. Her duties included victim/witness coordination, expungement processing, attorney/witness travel facilitation, case file management and maintaining trial statistics.



Ms. Levesque graduated with a degree in education from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville in 1988.

Mark Bannon, Senior Investigator

A U.S Army veteran, Mr. Bannon spent nearly 25 years serving as a deputy sheriff, supervisor and Commander with the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office where he worked in patrol, investigative and community support assignments before retiring from policing in 2005.

He is a graduate of Florida Atlantic University, and holds a Master of Public Administration degree from Nova Southeastern University. Mr. Bannon attended law school at the University of Miami, and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 2005. He is also a former Assistant State Attorney who prosecuted criminal cases in the 15th Judicial Circuit before entering private law practice.

Mr. Bannon authored a book on criminal procedure for law enforcement officers, which was published in 2003 and has taught criminal justice courses to both police officers and undergraduate students. He brings a unique blend of law enforcement and legal education and experience to the Commission.



Anthony C. Bennett, Investigator

Joining the Commission in July of 2013, Anthony C. Bennett comes from a background that expands through both the public and private sectors.

Anthony spent 15 years serving the citizens of Broward County, Florida, while employed with the Broward County Sheriff's Office, rising through several ranks within the agency from Deputy Sheriff to eventually becoming the Executive Officer/Ombudsman to the Executive Director of the BSO's Detention and Community Control Divisions, before leaving public service for private sector employment. Anthony held an Executive level position as the Director of Corporate Security for an infrastructure company based in Washington D.C., and is a proud United States Army veteran, previously serving on active duty during the time of the first Gulf War, Operation Desert Storm.



Anthony holds a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Lynn University (Boca Raton, FL), is a graduate of the University of Louisville's Southern Police Institute Command Officers' Development Program, Nova Southeastern University's Executive Leadership Program, and is also a graduate of the United States Army Rehabilitation Training Instructor Course (Fort McClellan, AL). Anthony holds active State of Florida certifications in both Law Enforcement and Corrections.

EDUCATION

One of the Commission's critical responsibilities is to inform county and municipal employees, officials, persons with or seeking government contracts, lobbyists and the public about the ethical standards expected by the Code of Ethics and related ordinances. Commission staff also endeavors to keep Commissioners educated as to their particular duties and responsibilities under the Ordinances.

Commissioner Training

At their own request and in response to the OPPAGA review, staff organized a comprehensive training program for Commissioners. Palm Beach County Channel 20 videotaped and edited the 6 hour training program. All staff members (Executive Director, Staff Counsel, Senior Investigator, Investigator and Intake Manager) participated in the process. Topics included a comprehensive review of all ordinances, rules and

procedures, investigative overview, advisory opinions, quasi-judicial functions, best practices during final hearings, and the Sunshine Law. Staff will augment and update these training modules as necessary.

Employee and Official Training

Ethics training is required for all county and municipal elected officials, employees, contract employees and volunteer officials and advisory board members. The Commission and its staff seek at all times to be proactive in its outreach efforts and its relationship with the community in order to increase citizen understanding and participation in government accountability efforts.

This year, staff researched the nationwide successes of other state and local ethics commissions in presenting training. Academic literature was also consulted. The most successful training programs utilize an interactive format and minimize rote legal concepts. Trainees also benefit from specific examples. Staff, therefore, created new training materials in line with these concepts. Rather than just reviewing the statutes, the new training involves the audience and seeks to empower trainees with an understanding the key concepts and rationales. “Pocket Guides” containing a summary and full text of the Code of Ethics are distributed. A new survey form, distributed to the trainees, is utilized in an effort to critique the training and continue to examine ways to improve it.

In 2013, COE staff conducted over 58 in-person trainings and provided over 100 training DVD’s to County departments and municipalities. A video version of the training is available on the website. The timeframe and method of training continues to be under the control of the municipalities.

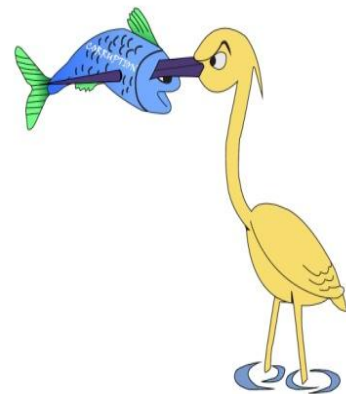
Other Training

Staff designed and conducted other ethics training seminars or presentations for both government and non-government personnel, including new specialized trainings for vendors and lobbyists subject to the code. This past year, these included:

- Lake Osbourne Presbyterian Church
- Lantana Chamber of Commerce
- FCC Anthem Educational College
- Palm Beach County Housing Authority
- The City of Delray Beach

Staff delivered general information presentations to a number of community groups including:

- The Center for Applied Ethics, Palm Beach State College
- Palm Beach County Criminal Justice Commission, 25th Citizen’s Criminal Justice Academy
- Palm Beach County Planning Congress
- Company “A,” Delray Beach, Florida



Volunteer Advocate Training

In December, staff delivered 3 hours of training for volunteer advocates. Palm Beach County Channel 20 videotaped the session for future use. The Florida Bar awarded the program 3.5 CLE credits through June, 2015. In addition to the general ethics training, topics included applicable ordinances, rules and procedures as well as practical considerations. Former staff counsel and an experienced volunteer advocate kindly served as guest lecturers.

Web-Based Training

In addition to the employee and official training programs provided by Commission staff, an interactive online quiz is also available. The Ethics Quiz addresses fifteen of the most frequently asked questions on the Code of Ethics.

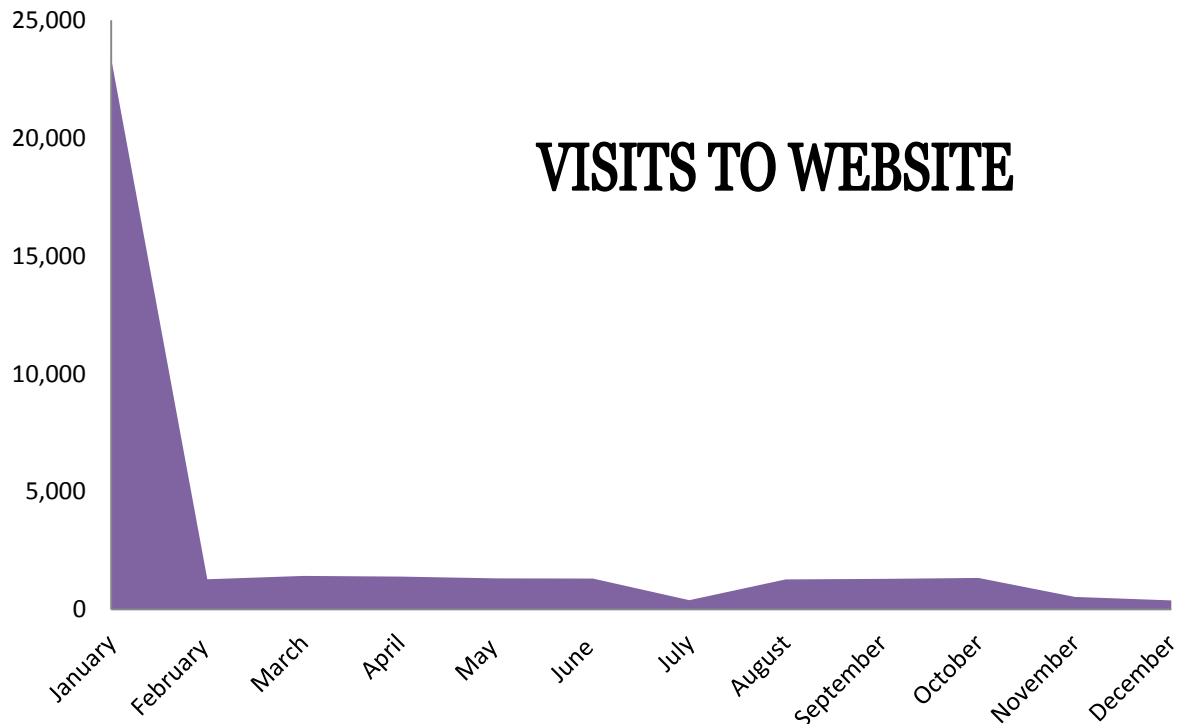
Social Media

With pages on Facebook and Twitter the public can now access the COE through their favorite new media sites. In this way, individuals as well as organizations can stay up to date with recent COE decisions, meeting dates, and related reporting on ethics within the county, state and nationwide. The COE looks forward to launching its own YouTube channel in 2013. You can contact the COE on Twitter at @PBCCOE or visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/PBCCOE.

WEBSITE

In 2010, Commission staff launched the COE website. This year, the entire site was rewritten with the assistance of Palm Beach County ISS. The new site employs a user-friendly format with improved capabilities and graphics. An e-book, designed to provide an interactive guide to the functions of the COE as well as the Code's major provisions, is prominently placed on the main page. The new format is compatible with wireless technology, tablets and mobile devices.

With over **35,000** visits to the website in 2013, the site is designed to enhance transparency, outreach efforts and provide public access to all relevant forms, documents, databases, advisory opinions and investigations.



Multimedia

Video of commission meetings, drafting committee meetings and channel 20 programming can be found under the Meetings tab at the top of the main page.

Complaints

All investigative materials, reports and audio files of sworn complaints referred to the COE are available for review under the Databases tab on the left side of the main page.

Training

Commission staff provides both in-person and video trainings. In addition to the over 58 in-person trainings provided to municipal and county employees and officials by COE staff and the over 100 DVD's distributed to the county and 38 municipalities, employees and officials can complete their training requirement by streaming training videos at home or at work. Under our training tab you will find a full text copy of the Code of Ethics and plain language guides for public employees and advisory board members. These trainings and guides are available not only to officials and employees, but also to members of the public who are interested in learning more about the Code of Ethics and its real world application. Employees, officials and advisory board members can always access their training acknowledgement forms via our website. Ongoing Code of Ethics training is mandatory for all public officials and employees. Most jurisdictions require ethics training every two years.

Searchable Databases

The commission website currently maintains gift reporting, outside employment and voting conflicts databases. This feature allows the public to view employee and official filings with the COE. Moreover advisory opinions are now searchable through a tab on the left side of the main page.

Other Information

Serving as a gateway to information on ethics both locally and nationwide, the COE website provides users with access and links to the Palm Beach County Inspector General, the State Attorney's Office, the Palm Beach County lobbyist registration database and county vendor database. The public, employees, and officials will always be able to access up to date information on the Code of Ethics, applicable forms and other resources on our site, including frequently asked questions.

FISCAL REPORT

In fiscal year 2012-2013, the COE expended eighty-eight percent of budgeted expenditures, a savings of four percentage points over projected savings, a savings of approximately \$70,000.

PALM BEACH COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES,
AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES

Budget and Actual- General Revenue Funds
October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013

REVENUES:

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance- Favorable</u> <u>(Unfavorable)</u>
Ad Valorem Funding	475,626	475,626	0
Fines/Other	<u>0</u>	<u>(258.70)</u>	<u>(258.70)</u>
Total Revenues	\$475,626	\$475,367.30	(\$258.70)

EXPENDITURES:

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance-Favorable</u>
Personal Services	477,442	464,652.70	12,789.30
Operating Expenses	63,903	41,463.86	22,439.14
Capital	<u>4,500.00</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,500.00</u>
Total Expenditures	\$545,845	\$506,116.56	\$39,728.44

BALANCES BROUGHT FORWARD:

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance-Favorable</u>
Balance Brought Forward 2010	70,770	70,770
Balance Brought Forward 2011	90,112	90,112
Balance Brought Forward 2012	(19,406)	(19,406)
Balance Brought Forward 2013	(30,749)	(30,749)
Cumulative department reserves	\$110,727	\$110,727

ADVISORY OPINIONS: ASK FIRST, ACT LATER

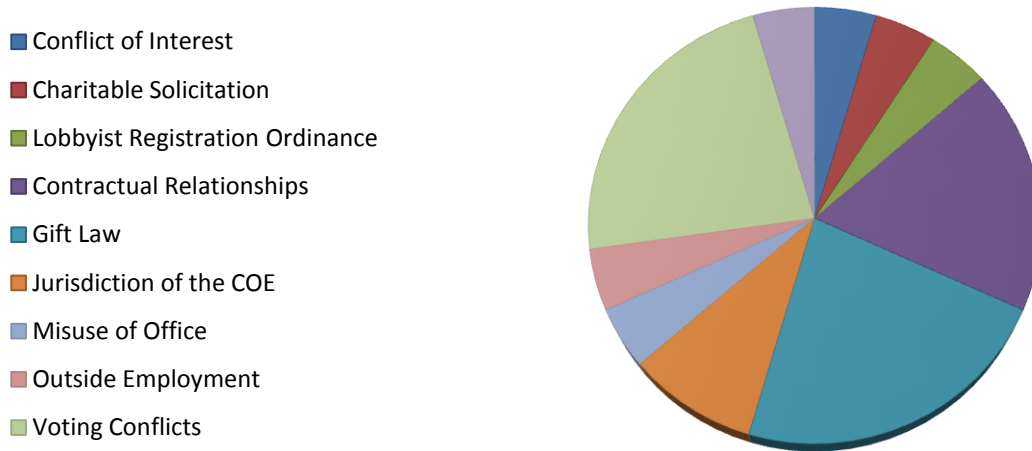
In 2013, the Commission on Ethics issued 23 advisory opinions. Staff is of the view that a steady decline in the number of requests for opinions is due to the fact that the Commission has already opined on many of the recurring questions under the code. This body of existing opinions serves as a “body of law” which may be relied upon in similar situations.

Advisory opinions are designed to assist employees, officials and advisory board members and any other persons or entities subject to the Code of Ethics or related ordinances in understanding their obligations under the codes. When in doubt about the applicability or interpretation of the ethics codes, employees, officials and advisory board members may submit the facts of their particular situation to the Commission on Ethics in writing and request an advisory opinion. As long as the facts submitted to the Commission are complete and accurate, the requesting party may rely on the Commission’s response. Advisory opinions concern only the application of the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics and do not analyze other rules or laws that may apply.

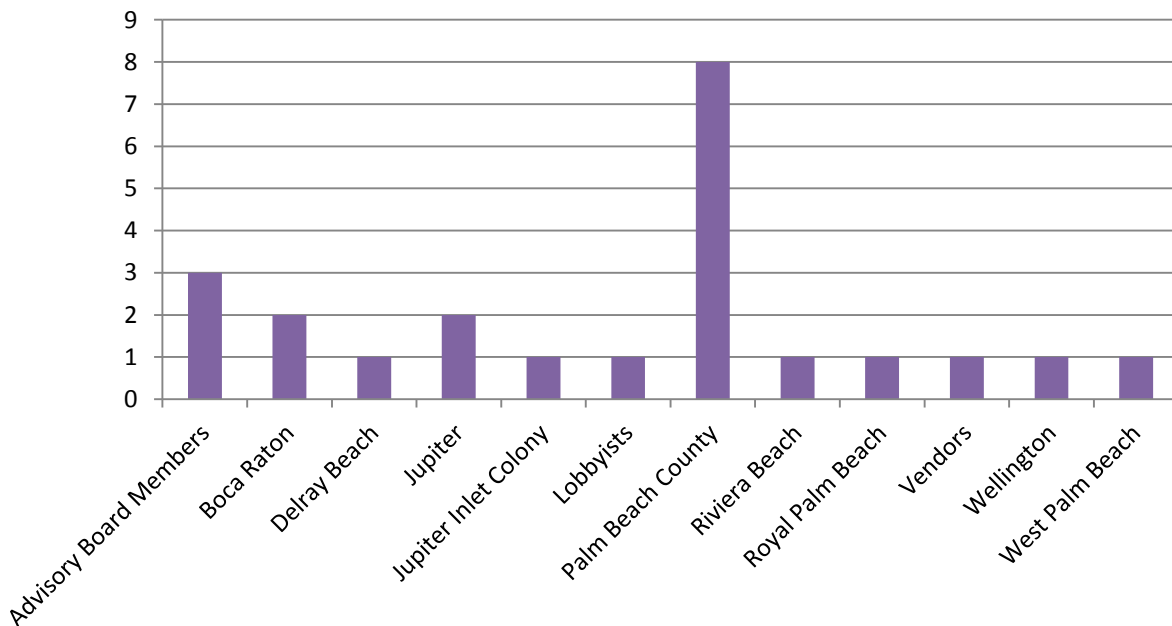
Copies of every advisory opinion issued since the Commission’s establishment are available in PDF format on the COE website. They are indexed by subject matter and are searchable by clicking on the Google search bar available at the top of each page.

As may be seen below, questions on voting conflicts, contractual relationships and misuse of office are the most common.

Advisory Opinions By Subject Matter



Advisory Opinions by Entity



SUMMARIES OF NOTABLE 2013 ADVISORY OPINIONS

The Code of Ethics is an 11 page document that does not account for every possible scenario or situation but provides overall guidance to employees, officials, government vendors, lobbyists and their principals. Accordingly, the COE must interpret the words of the code and offer common sense advice to those subject to its jurisdiction. The following summaries are based upon actual advice given in the form of advisory opinions issued by the Commission during 2013. They are included here for educational purposes only. Summaries are not intended as legal advice.¹ If you have a question, please ask commission staff to prepare an advisory opinion as each opinion is based upon the specific facts and circumstances associated with that opinion. On occasion, COE staff may refer callers to prior opinions when the issues involve settled general interpretation of the Code. Over the past year, Commission staff provided 58 referrals to existing opinions to local officials, employees, vendors, lobbyists, members of the public and the media.

Lobbyists and Lobbying

A lobbyist is defined as someone who is paid to lobby on behalf of a principal. A lobbyist can be an outside contractor or an employee whose principal responsibility is lobbying government on behalf of their employer. The Code of Ethics defines lobbying as seeking to influence a decision through oral or written communication or an attempt to obtain the goodwill of an official or employee with respect to the passage, defeat or modification of any item which may foreseeably be presented for consideration to the advisory board or governing body. The Code prohibits lobbyists from giving gifts in excess of \$100 to a person the lobbyist knows is an elected official or advisory board member of the county or municipality they are lobbying. Moreover, lobbyists engaged in lobbying activities are required to register pursuant to the Countywide Lobbyist Registration Ordinance effective April 2, 2012.

Question: An associate of a compliance firm asked whether he has to register as a lobbyist. His compliance firm contracts with investment funds and provides services to retirement system boards. Yearly, he meets with a city's retirement fund board members to review the investment portfolio. At these meetings, there is no attempt to influence any person on an issue to be presented to a municipal governing body or advisory board. ***RQO 13-010***

Answer: The city is subject to the Lobbyist Registration Ordinance. Under Sec. 2-352 of the Ordinance, a lobbyist is any person who is employed and receives payment, or who contracts for economic consideration for the purpose of lobbying on behalf of a principal. Lobbying is defined as seeking to influence a decision of a public employee or official on an issue which foreseeably will come before a municipal governing body or advisory board. Lobbyists must register unless a stated exception applies.

Here, Sec. 2-353(c) provides an exception for vendor representatives who meet with members of local governing bodies regarding issues related only to the performance of services under the contract. Because the associate here is meeting with retirement system members for the sole purpose of reviewing investment strategy, this exception applies. As such, the representative here does not need to register as a lobbyist.

¹ To the extent that these summaries differ from the language of the original advisory opinion or ordinance, the language in the ordinance and opinion controls.

Nepotism

The Anti-nepotism law within the Code of Ethics prohibits an official from appointing, employing, promoting or advancing a relative or domestic partner in the county or municipality in which the official is serving or over which he exercises jurisdiction or control. The official similarly may not advocate these actions on behalf of a relative or domestic partner. The section does not apply to board appointments, other than those with land-planning or zoning responsibilities, in those municipalities with less than 35,000 population. The section does not apply to persons who volunteer to provide emergency medical, firefighting, or police services.

Question: The County Administrator asked whether it would violate the Anti-nepotism law for his son to be hired as the Assistant Director of the Traffic Engineering Department. He would not be directly involved in the hiring or supervision process as these functions are delegated to other county employees. **RQO 13-014**

Answer: Under the Palm Beach County Code, the County Administrator is the "...chief administrative officer of the County." As such, he employs, appoints and supervises all county personnel unless an exception applies. Although the decisions involving the potential hiring of his son would be several administrative levels removed from his control, he is by Code the ultimate hiring authority. State law has held that this duty is non-delegable in this context. It would, therefore violate the Anti-nepotism law if his son was hired.

Question: An Assistant County Administrator asked whether the Anti-nepotism law prohibits his fiancé from continuing to work for the county after marriage. Additionally, he asked whether she would be precluded from receiving any promotion or advancement. **RQO 13-015**

Answer: The Anti-nepotism law does not require the discharge of a person who becomes a relative. Additionally, the Assistant County Administrator does not have hiring authority over his soon-to-be wife. As long as he does not advocate for any future promotion or advancement, there is no violation of the Code.

Misuse of Office

The Code of Ethics prohibits employees, officials and advisory board members from using their position to give a *special financial benefit*, not shared with *similarly situated members of the general public*, to 1) themselves; 2) a household member, spouse or domestic partner or their outside business or employer; 3) certain relatives or their outside business or employer; 4) their outside employer or business or someone who they know works for that business; 5) a customer or client of their outside employer or business (\$12,000 in goods or services over the preceding 24 months); 6) a debtor or creditor of an employee or official (at least \$10,000, not including financial institutions); 7) a non-profit organization where the employee or official serves as an officer or director. Simply put, a financial benefit is anything of value. Similarly situated means that everyone in the class of persons or entities affected by a decision benefits in the same way.

Question: A mayor asked whether it would constitute misuse of office to participate and vote in a matter coming before the city commission involving the sale of property to the city by a development company of which he is president. **RQO 13-017**

Answer: Because the mayor is the president of a development company which owns the property in question, any actions taken by the city on a purchase and sale agreement will result in a special financial benefit, not shared with similarly situated members of the general public to persons or entities specified under Sec. 2-443(a) (1) & (4) of the Code of Ethics. It would, therefore, constitute misuse of office for him to participate or vote on any matter relating to this issue. His conclusion, therefore, to abstain and not participate in the matter is correct.

Gifts

The Code of Ethics prohibits employees, officials and advisory board members from accepting anything of value in exchange for the past, present, or future performance of their job. This includes thank you gifts or tips for an official public action or legal duty performed, withheld, or violated. Employees and officials are prohibited from soliciting gifts of any value from someone they know to be a vendor, lobbyist or principal of a lobbyist who sells, leases or lobbies their governmental entity for their personal financial benefit, the benefit of a relative or household member, or another employee. Over the course of the calendar year, employees and officials may not solicit or accept gifts worth more than \$100 in the aggregate from a person they know or reasonably should know to be a vendor or lobbyist of their public employer. Gifts in excess of \$100 that are not prohibited are reportable unless one of several exceptions applies.

Question: A town police major asked whether it would violate the gift law section of the Code of Ethics to permit police officers to live in a residence located on property within the jurisdiction of the Police Department. The purpose of the officers living on the property is in attempt to diminish potential crime in the area. The officers would not pay rent but would be responsible for their normal household expenses. *RQO 13-013*

Answer: Police officers subject to the Code of Ethics are required to report gifts in excess of \$100 unless one of several exceptions applies. Based upon the facts submitted, the police officers selected to reside on the property will do so in connection with their ongoing service to the department. Additionally, they are subject to terms and conditions including a more restricted time off schedule. Any “benefit” of rent-free housing would be part of their overall compensation or expense reimbursement as employees of the department and not in the nature of a “gift.” Similarly, the facts submitted do not establish any other potential violation of the Code by this arrangement.

Voting Conflicts

Section 2-443(c), voting conflicts, addresses the scenario where, by participating or voting on an issue, an elected official would violate the misuse of office section of the code by giving a special benefit to one of the prohibited persons or entities listed under §2-443(a). In such a scenario officials and advisory board members must 1) disclose the nature of his or her conflict before their board discusses the issue; 2) abstain from any discussion or vote or otherwise participate in the matter; and 3) file a state voting conflict form (8B), submitting a copy to the recording clerk and the Palm Beach County COE.

Question: A city attorney asked whether an elected official who owns a property management company that provides services to a condominium association may vote on a matter that may financially benefit an investor whose family and/or business entities own a significant percentage of property within the condominium. *RQO 13-006*

Answer: There is an insufficient nexus here between the condominium association, the investor and the proposed project to prohibit the official from voting. The association is not involved in any way with the project and has no interest in it. Florida Statute §286.012 requires an official to vote on matters where there is no evidence of a financial conflict or other misuse of office. The official here may vote on the matter.

Question: An Aviation and Airports Advisory Board member asked whether he is prohibited from participating and voting on the selection of a fixed base operator for the Palm Beach County Park Airport where he leases two hangers from the existing fixed base operator. **RQO 13-011**

Answer: An advisory board member may not use his official position, including participation and voting on issues regarding the selection of a fixed base operator for an airport, where he leases 2 of 68 available hangers. Due to the limited class of persons or entities that stand to gain from the process and the absence of significant contingencies to obtain that gain if changes are approved, the potential financial benefit to the board member is not so remote and speculative as to eliminate a conflict of interest under the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics. Under these circumstances, the advisory board member is prohibited from participating and voting on the matter involving the selection of a fixed based operator.

Charitable Solicitation

The code prohibits an official from using his or her official position to give a special financial benefit to a non-profit organization if they are an officer or director of that organization. Therefore, solicitation of charitable donations made on behalf of a non-profit organization by an officer or director in one's official capacity, for example Commissioner or Police Chief, is *per se* a violation of section 2-443(a)(7), *misuse of office*, of the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics. In order for an official to use their official title to solicit donations on behalf of the non-profit they serve, they must resign their position with the charity. Public officials and employees may not solicit or accept anything of value because of the performance of an official act, or the past, present or future performance or violation of a legal duty. Nor may they solicit a gift of *any value* from a vendor, lobbyist, principal or employer or a lobbyist who sells, leases or lobbies the municipality they serve for their own personal benefit, the benefit of their relatives or household members or the benefit of another employee. If a public official or employee solicits on behalf of a charitable organization recognized under the Internal Revenue Code, the official or employee must maintain a log of any solicitation in excess of \$100 from vendors, lobbyists, principals or employers of lobbyists and submit the log to the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics within 30 days of the event, or if no event, within 30 days of the solicitation.

Question: A county employee asked whether she may solicit donations from friends to support the work of a non-profit organization. **RQO 13-019**

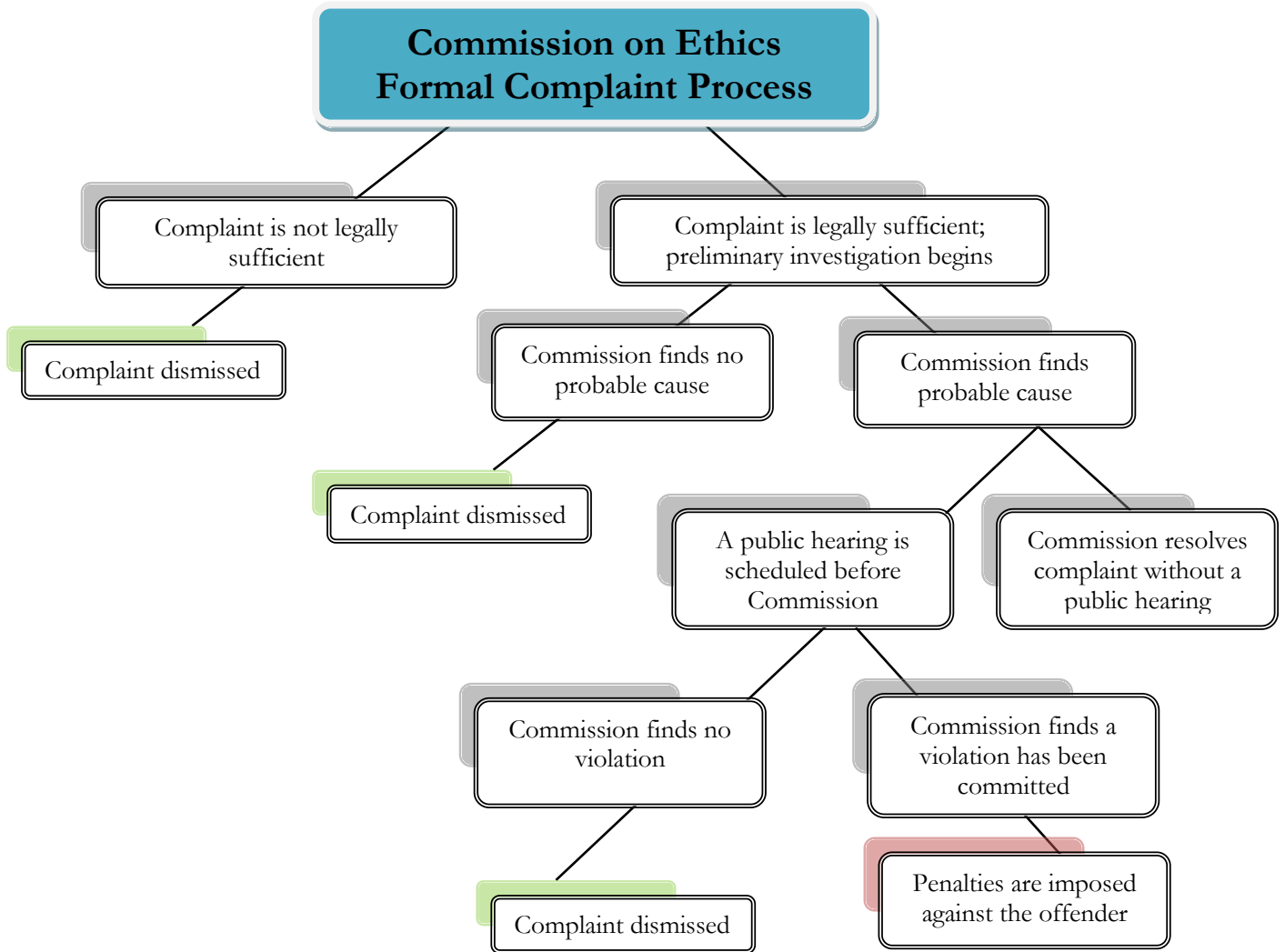
Answer: The Code of Ethics does not prohibit employees from participating and using their official title in charitable fundraising events, provided neither they nor their spouse or domestic partner is an officer or director of the organization. Any solicitation or acceptance of donations in excess of \$100 from a person they know, or should know with the exercise of reasonable care is a vendor, lobbyist, principal or employer of a lobbyist of their municipal government, must be transparently recorded and submitted in accordance with the charitable solicitation log requirements of the code.

Here, the employee is not on the board of the organization and is soliciting only from a limited class of persons (friends). The solicitation is thus permitted under these circumstances. She was cautioned that each such solicitation must meet these requirements to be non-reportable.

THE COMPLAINT PROCESS

Any person can file a complaint with the Commission on Ethics by submitting a written notarized complaint executed on an approved form available by mail or on our website (www.palmbeachcountyethics.com). The complaint must allege a violation of the code of ethics, lobbyist registration or post-employment ordinance, be based substantially upon personal knowledge and be signed under oath or affirmation by the complaining person. The commission maintains a searchable library of all public reports and final orders regarding the disposition of all sworn complaints. You may request a copy of a complaint form or visit our website.

In addition, citizens can leave information and tips anonymously on the Commission on Ethics hotline at 877-766-5920 or by email to ethics@palmbeachcountyethics.com. If you chose to remain anonymous, you must be sure to provide specific, detailed information that will allow investigators to determine the identity of persons may have personal knowledge of the alleged violation, as well as any available documentary evidence of a violation, or where such documents may be located.



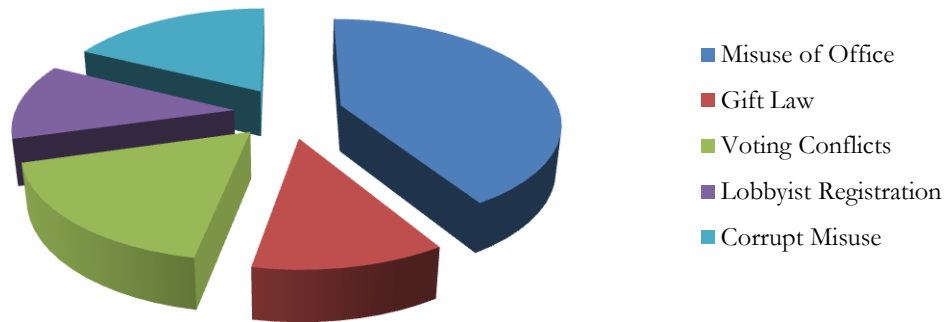
COMPLAINTS

STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS FILED JANUARY 1, 2013 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2013

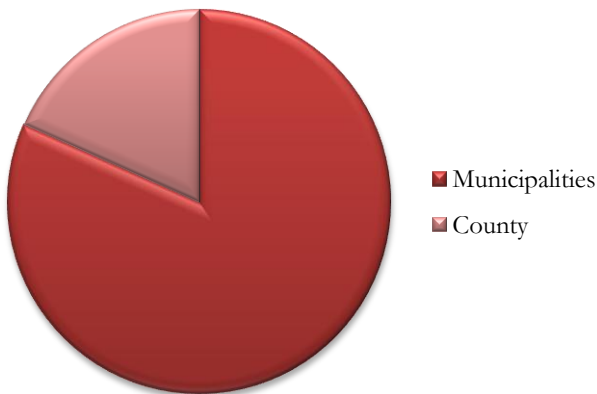
The COE receive 14 sworn complaints and self-initiated 2 complaints in 2013. There were 8 sworn complaints dismissed for lack of legal sufficiency and 7 sworn complaints found to be legally sufficient. There is 1 additional case pending legal sufficiency and probable cause determinations. Of the 7 cases found to be legally sufficient, 4 were dismissed at probable cause hearings and probable cause was found in the remaining 3 cases. All three cases, C13-001, C13-004 and C13-011 resulted in settlement agreements.

In addition to handling the 16 sworn complaints received in 2013, staff opened inquiries into 24 matters based upon information received other than by formal complaint. Of these inquiries, 17 were closed as not legally sufficient, 2 became the basis for a self-initiated complaint and 5 inquiries are ongoing. In 2013, the COE staff fielded approximately 640 calls on the COE Hotline (1-877-766-5920), 75 calls were referred to another agency and 13 calls resulted in an inquiry or investigation.

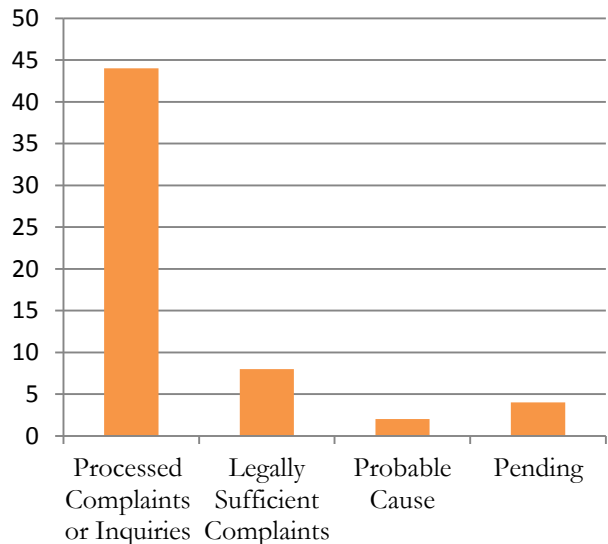
Subject Matter of Complaints



Complaint and Inquiry Origination



Complaint and Inquiry Disposition



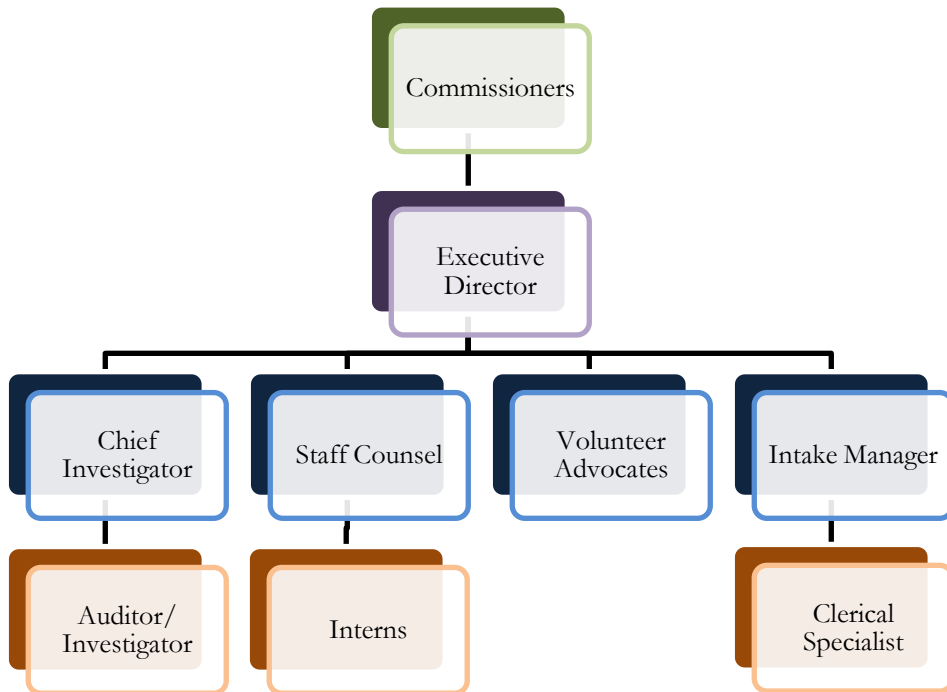
LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES

The Commission on Ethics is charged with reviewing statutes and ordinances relating to ethics in government and making policy recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. After the 2010 referendum, a drafting committee was established to review and revise the Commission on Ethics and Code of Ethics Ordinances. The Commission, through the Executive Director, was actively involved in developing and revising the Code of Ethics to include municipal governments. The revised code of ethics contains a number of substantive changes and took effect on June 1, 2011. For example, and perhaps most notably, the revised code includes vendors in those sections dealing with prohibited gifts.

Public employees and officials may not accept a gift over \$100 annually in the aggregate from a vendor, lobbyist, principal or employer of a lobbyist. Similarly, vendors and lobbyists have a duty under the revised code not to offer a prohibited gift to someone they know is a public employee or official who is employed by or serves a government the vendor or lobbyist vends, leases or lobbies. Holding vendors responsible for knowing violations of the gift law sends a strong message to the business community that the giving of prohibited gifts is actionable under the law. Provisions such as these make the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics among the most proactive in the United States.

Also, the Commission worked with the Palm Beach County League of Cities and Palm Beach County Administration to establish a county-wide lobbyist registration ordinance regulating certain lobbying activities and creating a central registration database. Effective April 2, 2012, lobbyists in 35 municipalities and the county will need to register, provide yearly expenditure reports and sign contact logs maintained by the public entity they lobby. In addition, vendors and lobbyists are subject to a “cone of silence” contact prohibition when bids and proposals are pending.

COMMISSION ON ETHICS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



OFFICE OF PROGRAM POLICY ANALYSIS & GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTABILITY

On March 26, 2013 the Commission was notified that the Florida Legislature directed a Florida Legislature's Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability (OPPAGA) review of the agency. In April, the OPPAGA team visited the offices, interviewed many persons, and obtained documents from staff. On September 6, a Draft Report was issued. The Commission met in two public sessions on September 12 and October 13 to discuss the report and a response. A formal response was filed on October 11. OPPAGA subsequently issued its Final Report No. 13-10. All of the documents, e-mails, reports and response may be found at <http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/OPPAGA.htm>.

CHART OF CHANGES IN THE PROCEDURES, RULES AND PRACTICES

Procedures, Rules and Practice Changes

Several significant events have brought about a number of changes in the procedures, rules and practices of the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics in calendar year 2013. A new Executive Director took office in April. A review by OPPAGA was completed in October. The composition of the Commission has also changed with the appointment of two new commissioners. It is anticipated that two more new commissioners will be seated in the first quarter of 2014. A new Chair and Vice-Chair have been elected. Commission staff changes include a new investigator and soon to be new staff counsel.

The following changes have been implemented:

OPPAGA Finding 1: *“Commission practices sometimes blur the roles of investigators and the staff counsel”*

The roles of investigators and staff counsel have been administratively clarified. Investigators are responsible for the field and professional work involved in the investigation of inquiries triggered by anonymous information and sworn complaints. Investigators gather information and write reports but do not make recommendations as to probable cause findings. Staff counsel serves as a general legal advisor to the commission. As long as there is no overlap of roles in a particular case, staff counsel may serve as advocate. The volunteer advocate program has been expanded with the addition of new pro bono attorneys. A comprehensive training program for these attorneys will be delivered in December. If necessary, a full or part-time advocate position may be added.

OPPAGA Finding 3: *“Conflict of interest provisions continue to be a source of concern for commissioners and others”*

Commissioners are obligated by Fla. Stat. §286.012 and Palm Beach County Code of Ethics §2-443 to vote on business before the Commission unless grounds for recusal based upon a special financial benefit exist. At the November 7, 2013 meeting, the Commission passed new Rule of Procedure 1.6 regarding disclosure of other conflicts which do not require recusal. Under this new rule, Commissioners shall disclose such other past, present and current relationships and affiliations of a personal, professional or financial nature. This new rule clarifies when these other disclosures are necessary.

OPPAGA Finding 4: *“The Commission could benefit from clarifying commissioner disqualification terms and procedures”*

A party seeking disqualification of a Commissioner at a probable cause hearing or a final public hearing for alleged bias, prejudice or interest may utilize the process in Rule of Procedure 6.4. At the November 7 meeting, the Commission passed an amendment to that rule removing a requirement that any such motion be brought at least 5 days prior to the hearing. Parties may now file such a motion “as soon as practicable.”

OPPAGA Finding 6: *“Vendors and lobbyists are now subject to the county ethics Ordinance but are not required to receive training”*

Live training is offered by staff upon request to vendors and lobbyists under the jurisdiction of the code. Training materials are also available prominently on the new COE website. Staff is available, in the event that the code is amended to require training for lobbyists and vendors, to provide the same.

OPPAGA Finding 7: *“The commission could benefit from enhanced commissioner training”*

Commissioners have been provided with a 4 DVD set containing approximately 7 hours of training completed by staff. Topics include all applicable codes, ordinances, rules, policy and procedure manual, Sunshine Law, advisory opinions, quasi-judicial hearing practices and best practices when serving as a “judge.” Commissioners will review these independently and discuss the material at the next three successive meetings. Commissioners have also been provided a comprehensive manual of the current codes, ordinances, rules and procedures as well as the Florida Sunshine Manual.

OPPAGA Finding 8: *“The commission could improve its performance accountability system”*

Before the OPPAGA report issued, additional performance measures designed to improve accountability were established. Website analytics are used to track patterns of usage in order to enhance online content. Stakeholder surveys are utilized at trainings to evaluate the effectiveness of presentation and gauge the effects of ethics reforms. These data will be analyzed over the next year with the goal of making evidence-based enhancements.

Rule Change: Rule of Procedure 4.2 has been amended to provide for dismissal of legally insufficient complaints by the executive director. Upon notice of such a finding, any Commissioner may direct that the matter instead be brought for review in executive session. Absent such direction, the Executive Director will issue a final finding of no legal sufficiency. This process will expedite complaint processing and conserve commission resources.

Policy and Procedure Manual Change: Recording of executive sessions: PPM §4.3.4 has been amended to establish a procedure to record beginning and ending announcements.

The following changes may be studied further by the Commission or other entities:

The following changes, suggested by OPPAGA, would require legal amendments to the Code of Ethics, Commission on Ethics or the Palm Beach County Lobbyist Registration Ordinance:

OPPAGA Finding 2: *“Commissioners determine both probable cause and the outcome of a final hearing”*

OPPAGA Finding 5: *“The commission’s expanded jurisdiction changes the nature of appointments and could diminish its independence”*

OPPAGA Finding 6: *“Vendors and lobbyists are now subject to the county ethics Ordinance but are not required to receive training”*

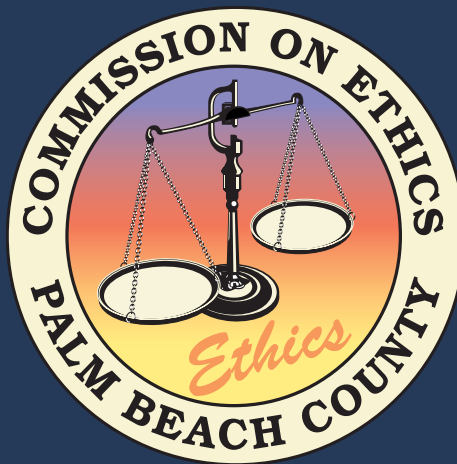
Under Article VIII, Sec. 8.2 of the Palm Beach County Charter, the Commission on Ethics is established. Charter Sections 8.4(a), (b) & (c) establish the process for creation of the empowering ordinances. Section 8.4(d) governs the amendment of the ordinances. Under that section, various entities and persons may propose amendments to the county commission. A drafting (review) committee is then convened to make a recommendation. Any change recommended by the review committee may be adopted by the county commission upon a 4 vote majority. The county commission may make amendments not recommended by a review committee upon an affirmative vote of 5 commissioners.

While the Commission on Ethics may propose amendments, it is without power to change the ordinances. The commission, or other entities, may in the future propose such changes for consideration by the county commission. Absent any changes to the ordinance(s), the Commission is obligated to follow existing law.

COE STAFF MAJOR PROJECTS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2014

Anticipated		Description	Expected Results
Start	Finish		
1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	Staff visit with all municipalities to complete Customer Service Survey	Provide personal contact and service, gather survey data, improve operations
1 st Quarter	1 st Quarter	Complete review of existing Advisory Opinions and create a "Head Note Summary"	Increase search and catalog capabilities of advisory opinions
1 st Quarter	3 rd Quarter	Develop a 3 year long range strategic plan	Establish a formal plan and improvement goals
1 st Quarter	3 rd Quarter	Continue to evaluate training effectiveness and consider improvements	Deliver the most effective training
1 st Quarter	4 th Quarter	Gather and analyze data from existing performance metrics	Use results to improve operations
1 st Quarter	4 th Quarter	Continue to update and improve COE Website	Maintain best possible information portal for public use

The Historic 1916
Palm Beach County Court House
300 North Dixie Highway, Suite 450
West Palm Beach, Florida 33401



Main: (561) 355-1915
Fax: (561) 355-1904
Hotline: (877) 766-5920

Email:

Ethics@PalmBeachCountyEthics.com