

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

MARCH 6, 2014

**THURSDAY
1:31 P.M.**

**COMMISSION CHAMBERS
GOVERNMENTAL CENTER**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commission on Ethics (COE) Executive Director Steven Cullen stated that the first order of business was the swearing in ceremony of four commissioners. He added that the appointments were made under section 2-255 of the COE's ordinance, and that the identity of the appointing entities and the terms of appointment were available in the agenda packet.

II. SWEARING IN CEREMONY – CHIEF JUDGE JEFFREY COLBATH

II.a. Dr. Michael F. Loffredo, County Association of Chiefs of Police (Term ends 02/28/2016)

II.b. Dr. Carmine A. Priore, League of Cities (Term ends 02/28/2018)

II.c. Michael S. Kridel, CPA, Palm Beach Chapter of the Florida Institute of CPAs (Term ends 02/28/2018)

II.d. Dr. Clevis Headley, Florida Atlantic University (Term ends 02/28/2018)

(CLERK'S NOTE: Chief Judge Jeffrey Colbath administered the oath of office to newly appointed Commissioners Michael Loffredo, Carmine Priore, Michael Kridel, and Clevis Headley.)

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III. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS:

Clevis Headley, Ph.D.
Michael S Kridel, CPA
Michael F. Loffredo, Ph.D.
Dr. Carmine A. Priore
Salesia V. Smith-Gordon, Esq.

STAFF:

Mark E. Bannon, Commission on Ethics (COE) Senior Investigator
Steven P. Cullen, Esq., COE Executive Director
Christie E. Kelley, COE Staff Counsel
Gina A. Levesque, COE Intake Manager

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:

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

IV. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Mr. Cullen called for nominations for the office of chairperson.

Commissioner Michael Loffredo said that he would nominate Commissioner Salesia Smith-Gordon.

With no other names mentioned, Mr. Cullen said that the nominations were closed.

MOTION to nominate Salesia Smith-Gordon as chairperson. Motion by Carmine Priore, seconded by Salesia Smith-Gordon, and carried 5-0.

Chair Smith-Gordon called for nominations for the office of vice chairperson. She added that under Robert's Rules of Order, self-nominations would be closed since a chair had been elected. She said that she would nominate Commissioner Michael Kridel.

MOTION to nominate Michael Kridel as vice chairperson. Motion by Salesia Smith-Gordon, seconded by Michael Loffredo, and carried 5-0.

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VI. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 6, 2014**

Chair Smith-Gordon stated that the February 6, 2014, minutes were e-mailed to the COE members; however, only she and Vice Chair Kridel were present at the meeting.

MOTION to approve the February 6, 2014, minutes. Motion by Michael Kridel, and seconded by Salesia Smith-Gordon.

Chair Smith-Gordon stated that the remaining COE members would abstain from voting since they were not present nor commissioners at the time of the meeting.

UPON CALL FOR A VOTE, the motion carried unanimously. Clevis Headley, Michael Loffredo, and Carmine Priore abstaining.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Item V. was presented at this time.)

V. **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

Chair Smith-Gordon requested that phones be silenced. She said that agendas and comment cards were available for anyone wishing to speak on an agenda item. She added that the agenda item number should be written on the card.

VII. **PROCESSED ADVISORY OPINIONS (CONSENT AGENDA) – None**

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

IX. **PROPOSED ADVISORY OPINIONS**

IX.a. **Request for Proposal (RQO) 14-004**

Mr. Cullen said that:

- An attorney representing a town council member asked whether it would violate the Code of Ethics (Code) if the town council member's spouse sold a vacant lot owned by her to the town.

IX.a. – CONTINUED

- Staff submitted that:
 - The town council member was prohibited from using his official position or office to give anyone a special financial benefit.
 - The Code's contractual relationships section did not outwardly prohibit the transaction.
 - While the proposed property sale to the town was not prohibited by the Code, the town council member must be cautious not to use his position in a way that would give a special financial benefit.

MOTION to approve proposed advisory opinion letter RQO 14-004. Motion by Michael Kridel, seconded by Clevis Headley, and carried 5-0.

X. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMENTS

X.a.

DISCUSSED: Staff Introduction.

Mr. Cullen introduced the COE's staff counsel, Christie Kelley.

X.b.

DISCUSSED: Upcoming COE Goals.

Mr. Cullen said that in the next few months, he wanted to:

- establish a three-year long-range strategic plan, including possibly appointing some committees under article IV of the COE's by laws;
- continue evaluating training and education programs; and,
- discuss the previously gathered and analyzed performance evaluation data.

X.c.

DISCUSSED: Proposed Senate Bills.

Mr. Cullen stated that the legislative session began this week. He said that the Senate proposed two ethics bills. Senate Bill (SB) 846 proposed technical amendments to the State law, and SB 606 involved proposed changes to the State gift law, possibly affecting jurisdiction of local commissions.

XI. COMMISSION COMMENTS

XI.a.

DISCUSSED: Commission on Ethics Appointments.

Commissioner Priore said that he was excited to be appointed to the COE and about the work that the COE members performed.

Vice Chair Kridel said that he looked forward to working with the COE.

Commissioner Loffredo said that he was proud to be part of the COE.

Commissioner Headley said that he was pleased to be a COE member. He added that he looked forward to serving and doing his part to maintain faith in the democratic process.

XI.b.

DISCUSSED: Commission on Ethics Appointments, and Ethics Awareness Month.

Chair Smith-Gordon thanked the COE members for serving, and she said that she looked forward to working with them. She added that March was Ethics Awareness month.

Mr. Cullen stated that at its next meeting, the Board of County Commissioners would declare March as Ethics Awareness month. He added that the COE would hold events and conduct community outreach.


XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn. Motion by Michael Kridel, seconded by Carmine Priore, and carried 5-0.

At 1:49 p.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.

APPROVED:


Chair/Vice Chair