

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

DECEMBER 2, 2021

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

**COMMISSION CHAMBERS
WEISMAN GOVERNMENTAL CENTER**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS:

Peter L. Cruise, Chair
Michael S. Kridel, Vice Chair
Carol E. A. DeGraffenreidt
Michael H. Kugler
Rodney G. Romano

STAFF:

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

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:

Marisa Valentin, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller's Office

III. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

III.a

Chair Cruise stated that this would be Mr. Bannon's last meeting serving as the Commission on Ethics Executive Director, due to his December 31, 2021 retirement.

RECESS

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

RECONVENE

At 2:03 p.m., the meeting reconvened, and at Chair Cruise's request for a roll call, Commissioners DeGraffenreidt, Kridel, Kugler, and Romano were present.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION - C20-004

IV.a

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

Complainants, Michele Burns and Risa Mccarraher, filed the above referenced complaint on December 8, 2020, alleging Respondent, James Knight, a member of the Land Development Regulation Advisory Board (LDRAB) violated Section 2-443(a), *Misuse of public office or employment*, and Section 2-443(c), *Disclosure of voting conflicts*, of the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics by using his position on the LDRAB to give a special financial benefit to his brothers-in-law.

Pursuant to §2-258(a)¹ of the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics Ordinance, the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics is empowered to enforce the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics. On December 2, 2021, the Commission conducted a hearing and reviewed 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 did not exist because the evidence did not show that a violation had occurred.

Therefore it is:

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

DONE AND ORDERED by the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics in public session on December 2, 2021.

By: Peter L. Cruise, Chair

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

V. PROCESSED ADVISORY OPINIONS (CONSENT AGENDA)

- a. RQO 21-016
- b. RQO 21-017

c. RQO 21-018

MOTION to approve the consent agenda. Motion made by Rodney Romano, seconded by Michael Kugler, and carried 5-0.

VI. ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA – None

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMENTS

VII.a

Mark Bannon, COE Executive Director, expressed gratitude to his staff and the Commissioners for their service and support during his career with the Commission on Ethics.

MOTION to present Mr. Bannon with his nameplate from the dais. Motion made by Carol DeGraffenreidt, seconded by Rodney Romano, and carried 5-0.

VIII. COMMISSION COMMENTS

VIII.a

Chair Cruise and the Commissioners each expressed their gratitude and fond sentiments for Mr. Bannon and his years of service as Executive Director of the Commission on Ethics.

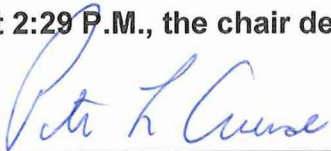
IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

IX.a

The following public speakers wished Mr. Bannon well on his well deserved retirement.

Alan Johnson, Verdenia Baker, Stuart Robinson, Richard Radcliffe, Norman Ostrow, John Cleary, Denise Coffman, Todd BonLarron, and Gina Levesque.

At 2:29 P.M., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.



Chair/Vice Chair