

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

**MAY 7, 2026**

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

**COMMISSION CHAMBERS  
WEISMAN GOVERNMENTAL CENTER**

**MEMBERS:**

Rodney G. Romano, Chair  
Allan I. Blass, Vice Chair  
Peter L. Cruise  
Michael H. Kugler  
Kristin A. Vara-Garcia

**COMMISSION ON ETHICS STAFF PRESENT:**

Mark Higgs, COE Investigator II  
Abigail Irizarry, COE Investigator II  
Christie E. Kelley, COE Director III  
Gina Levesque, Intake and Compliance Manager  
S. Lizbeth Martin, Communications and Education Manager  
Kevaughn Simpson, COE Intern

**CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT & COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE**

Karla Perez, Deputy Clerk

**I. Call to Order**

The chair called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.

**UNSCHEDULED ITEM**

The commissioners recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. Introductory Remarks**

No comments were made.

**III. Roll Call**

**Present:** Chair Romano, Vice Chair Blass, and Commissioner Cruise

**Absent:** Commissioner Kugler and Commissioner Vara-Garcia

**IV. Processed Advisory Opinions (Consent Agenda)**

**a. RQO 26-010**

**MOTION to approve the consent agenda. Motion by Vice Chair Blass, seconded by Commissioner Cruise, and carried 3-0.**

**V. Items Pulled from Consent Agenda**

No items were pulled from the consent agenda.

**VI. Executive Director Comments**

Ms. Kelley reported the following updates:

1.

Staff attended many outreach events last month at the West Boca Library.

2.

Staff conducted in-person ethics training at the Town of Juno Beach.

3.

Staff delivered presentations at various municipalities.

4.

The Spring-Summer 2026 newsletter had been finalized and would be distributed to all liaisons, municipalities, as well as the County.

5.

The online training materials were being updated, with a completion date of Mid-June 2026.

6.

On Tuesday, May 5, 2026, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved the amendments to the COE's ordinance, noting full compliance with state law.

7.

It was announced that today was COE Intern Kevaughn Simpson's last day, and he was recognized for his leadership and dedication in the COE office. A new promotional brochure that Kevaughn helped create for the COE was also introduced and would be available soon.

8.

Inspector General John Carey was thanked for his leadership and dedicated service to the community.

## **VII. Commission Comments**

Commissioner Cruise stated that his delay to the meeting was due to a zoom conference with the FAU President and noted that he would convey the well wishes.

## **VIII. Public Comments**

No comments were made.

## **IX. Adjournment**

**At 1:44 P.M., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.**

**MOTION to adjourn. Motion by Commissioner Cruise, seconded by Vice Chair Blass, and carried 3-0.**

APPROVED:

  
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Chair/Vice Chair