



**Palm Beach County
Commission on Ethics**
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Commissioners
Salesia V. Smith-Gordon, Chair
Michael S. Kridel, Vice Chair
Michael F. Loffredo
Carmine A. Priore
Clevis Headley

Executive Director
Steven P. Cullen

Staff Counsel
Christie E. Kelley

Intake Manager
Gina A. Levesque

Senior Investigator
Mark E. Bannon

Investigator
Anthony C. Bennett

News Release

For Immediate Release
Contact:

March 7, 2014
Steven P. Cullen, Executive Director
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Summary of Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics Meeting Held on March 6, 2014

The Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics (COE) took the following actions at its monthly public meeting held on March 6, 2014.

Four new commissioners were sworn into office by Chief Judge Jeffery Colbath, 15th Judicial Circuit, in and for Palm Beach County, Florida.

- Dr. Michael F. Loffredo was appointed by the Palm Beach County Chiefs of Police Association; his term ends February 28, 2016.
- Dr. Clevis Headley was appointed by the president of Florida Atlantic University; his term ends February 28, 2018.
- Michael S. Kridel, CPA, CFF, CITP, CFS was reappointed by the Palm Beach Chapter of the Florida Institute of CPAs; his term ends February 28, 2018.
- Dr. Carmine A. Priore was appointed by the Palm Beach County League of Cities; his term ends February 28, 2018.

After the new commissioners were sworn and seated, they elected Salesia V. Smith-Gordon, R.Ph., Esq., as chair and Michael S. Kridel, CPA, CFF, CITP, CFS as vice chair of the Commission on Ethics. Each position has a two-year term.

One (1) advisory opinion was approved. The full opinion is published and available at:
<http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/opinions.htm>

RQO 14-004: The city attorney for the town of Cloud Lake asked on behalf of a town council member, whether the town could purchase a parcel of real property located near a town-owned drainage pump, where that real property was owned solely by the wife of the council member.

The COE opined as follows: Since the real property in question is owned solely by the wife of a town council member, the Code of Ethics does not prohibit her from selling this real property to the town. The “contractual relationships” section of the code only prohibits such contractual relationships between the town and the official or employee (not spouses, domestic partners of family members), unless an exception exists. Where the council member himself has no ownership interest in the property, the code does not prohibit this sale. However, under the “Misuse of public office or employment” section of the Code of Ethics, the council member must proceed cautiously and take care not to use his official position as a council member to give a special financial benefit to his spouse. This means that he must not participate in any discussions concerning the proposed sale, and must abstain from voting on said sale of property. Further, the COE opined that in order to avoid even an appearance of impropriety on the part of the council member in this matter, his spouse may want to negotiate the sale to the town through an unrelated third-party, such as a Realtor.

Executive Director Steven P. Cullen introduced Christie E. Kelley as new staff counsel for the commission. Ms. Kelley earned her B.A. in business administration (summa cum laude) from

the University of Florida and her J.D. from the University of Florida Levin College of Law (cum laude). Ms. Kelley's full biography is available at http://palmbeachcountyethics.com/staff/christie_kelley.htm.

Executive Director Steven P. Cullen announced that March is Ethics Awareness Month and invited everyone to attend the Board of County Commissioners meeting on March 11 where Mayor Priscilla Taylor will present a proclamation. The COE is expected to consider, at a future meeting, the formation of committees to promote education and outreach and establish a formal three-year strategic plan.

A detailed explanation of all agenda items is available at <http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/meetings.htm>.

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