



Honesty - Integrity - Character

**Palm Beach County
Commission on Ethics**
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News Release

For immediate release:
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May 4, 2018
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Summary of Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics Meeting Held on May 3, 2018

The Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics (COE) took the following actions at its monthly public meeting held on May 3, 2018.

Four complaints were heard in executive session. The complete files for the following other cases are published on the COE website at: <http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/complaints.htm>.

C17-029: After considering the investigative report, probable cause recommendation, and statement of the COE advocate, the COE found probable cause did not exist and dismissed the complaint because the gift was not from a prohibited source.

C17-037: After considering the investigative report, probable cause recommendation, and statement of the COE advocate, the COE found probable cause did not exist and dismissed the complaint because the gift was not from a prohibited source.

C17-041: After considering the investigative report, probable cause recommendation, and statement of the COE advocate, the COE found probable cause did not exist and dismissed the complaint because Respondent incorrectly listed a gift that he did not actually receive.

C17-042: After considering the investigative report, probable cause recommendation, and statement of the COE advocate, the COE found probable cause did not exist and dismissed the complaint because the gift was not from a prohibited source.

Two advisory opinions were approved. The full opinions are published and available at: <http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/opinions.htm>.

RQO 17-021: A Palm Beach County Fire Rescue (PBCFR) Division Chief asked if a conflict of interest would exist for PBCFR if it enters into a contract with First Response Medical Consultants, LLC (FRMC) which provides mobile-integrated health (MIH) or community paramedicine (CP) services, where FRMC is owned by the PBCFR Medical Director and Associate Medical Director. **The COE opined as follows:** The Code of Ethics prohibits the Medical Director, Associate Medical Director, or their outside business from entering into a contract with PBCFR, unless an exception applies. Based on the facts provided, the sole source exception applies to their situation. Because FRMC is currently the only source of the MIH-CP services within the county, FRMC meets the sole source exception. In addition, they are prohibited from using their county positions to give themselves, FRMC, or any customers or clients of FRMC a special financial benefit. They must refrain from using or referring to their official positions, titles, county email, or wearing their county uniform while advertising or marketing their services to the general public while off duty. The code also prohibits them from using their official positions in any way that is inconsistent with the proper performance of their duties as the PBCFR medicals directors to corruptly secure a special privilege or benefit for anyone, including any of their clients. Thus, clients of FRMC cannot be given preference over other 911 calls for service.

RQO 18-008: A City of Boca Raton (city) firefighter asked if a conflict of interest exists for him if he accepts employment with a restoration company where he would introduce himself to fire department representatives during active fires to see if they would introduce him to the homeowner so he can offer restoration services to them.

The COE opined as follows: He is prohibited from using his position as a city firefighter to give the restoration company or himself a special financial benefit. Further, the code prohibits him from marketing, selling, or attempting to sell, the services of the restoration company while on duty. While off-duty, he must refrain from using or referring or alluding to his official position or title, from using his city email, and from wearing his city uniform while promoting or marketing the restoration company's services to the general public. In addition, he is prohibited from using his official position as a city firefighter to influence the fire department representative on scene to introduce him to the homeowners or for the fire department representative to refer or allude to his title or position with the city fire department while introducing him to a homeowner.

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

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