



PALM BEACH COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS
300 North Dixie Highway, Suite 450, West Palm Beach, Florida 33401
Hotline: 877-766-5920 or 561-355-1915

COMPLAINT FORM

1. Complainant (Person bringing Complaint) Add pages, if necessary.

Please list all information where you would like to be contacted. Our preference is email.

Name: John Szerdi E-Mail: john@livingdesignsgroupfla.com
Address: 217 South Palway
City: Lake Worth Zip: 33460
Home #: (561)578-0776 Work #: (561)578-0776 Cell #: (561)578-0776

2. Respondent (Person against whom complaint is made) Add pages, if necessary.

Please provide as much information as possible.

Name: Ryan Maier E-Mail: _____
Address: 609 2nd Avenue South
City: Lake Worth Zip: 33460
Home #: _____ Work #: _____ Cell #: _____
Title/Office Held or Sought: Lake Worth City Commissioner

3. IF KNOWN, CHECK THE BOX OR BOXES THAT APPLY

Allegation is against person in
County/Municipal Government

Allegation is about County:
Whistleblower Retaliation

4. STATEMENT OF FACTS BASED ON YOUR PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE

In a separate attachment, please describe in detail the facts and actions that are the basis of your complaint, including the dates when the actions occurred. Also attach any relevant documents as well as names and contact information of persons who may be witnesses to the actions. If known, indicate the section of the ordinance you believe is being violated. For further instructions, see page 2 of this form.

5. OATH

I, the person bringing this complaint, do depose on oath or affirmation and say that the facts set forth in the foregoing complaint and attachments are true and correct, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

[Signature]
Signature of Person Making Complaint

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF P Beach

Sworn to (or affirmed) and subscribed before me
this 30 day of MARCH, 2015, by

John Szerdi
(Name of Person Making Statement)

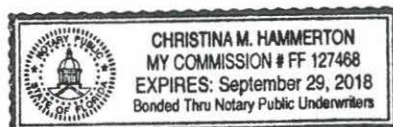
who is personally known to me [initials] or produced
identification _____. Type of identification
produced: _____

[Signature]
(Signature of Notary Public, State of Florida)

RECEIVED

APR 1 2015

Commission on Ethics
by: [Signature]



(Print, Type, or Stamp Commissioned Name of Notary Public)

COMPLAINT

I believe the person named as Respondent, Ryan Maier, has violated Florida Elections Code Section 104.271 and, likewise has committed an ethical violation. Mr. Maier and I were candidates for Lake Worth City Commissioner. During a debate on Monday, February 23, 2015, which took place at the Beach Club at the municipal golf course, located at 17 Avenue North, Lake Worth, FL 33460, Mr. Maier made the statement: "... [John Szerdi] recently received word from the Inspector General of Palm Beach County that his relationship with the developer of this project is an ethical violation." A video of Mr. Maier making this statement can be found at: <https://youtu.be/LPd9B-aSehl>.

Mr. Maier, the current Lake Worth City Commissioner, made this statement, with actual malice about me, a then opposing candidate, which is false. The statement accusing me of an ethical violation is a serious accusation, especially given the nature of the election, and was a contributing factor to my loss in the election. The statement was made with the knowledge that it was false, or was made with a reckless disregard for its truth or falsity – thus constituting malice. Additionally, this statement is verifiably false. In fact, I had called the Palm Beach County Ethics Board on February 24, 2015 and spoke with Anthony, an investigator there, who confirmed that there is no ethical violation against me. In conclusion, the statement noted above by Mr. Maier is verifiably false, was made with actual malice, and is a violation of Florida Election Code, Section 104.271.

PALM BEACH COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS

LEGAL SUFFICIENCY DETERMINATION

To: The Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics
From: Steven P. Cullen, Executive Director
Re: C15-009 – Ryan Maier, Commissioner, City of Lake Worth

- **Background**

This matter came to the attention of the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics (COE) through a sworn complaint by John Szerdi dated March 30, 2015. Attached to the complaint form, which names Ryan Maier as the Respondent, is a two-paragraph supporting statement. The complainant alleges that the respondent "... has violated Florida Elections Code Section 104.271 and, likewise has committed an ethical violation." Szerdi alleges that Maier, in the course of a campaign for Lake Worth City Commissioner, knowingly made an untrue statement about him involving having "recently received word from the Inspector General of Palm Beach County that his relationship with the developer of this project is an ethical violation is an ethical violation." A video, allegedly of the respondent making this statement, is found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPd9B-aSehl>.

Prior to the election in question, at the time of the alleged statement, Maier was a private citizen. <http://www.ryanmaierhasmyvote.com/about.php>

- **Finding**

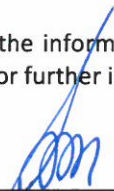
There is no specific allegation to invoke the jurisdiction of the COE made by the Complainant other than Respondent has committed an "ethical violation." There is no cognizable violation of the Code of Ethics (Code) alleged. Violations of FS§104.271 are either criminal or within the jurisdiction of the Florida Elections Commission. Similarly, to the extent that allegations a "false statement" or "malice" are made, those claims are within the jurisdiction of a court, not the COE.

Legal sufficiency exists where there is an allegation of a violation of an ordinance within the jurisdiction of the Ethics Commission, purportedly committed by an individual within the authority of the Ethics Commission, based substantially on the personal knowledge of the Complainant, relating to an alleged violation occurring after the effective date of the code, and filed with the Ethics Commission within two years of the alleged violation.

Even if the allegations as stated in the Complaint are true, they do not constitute a violation of any Section of the Code by a person within the authority of the COE.

Therefore, based on the information listed in both the Complaint and the Memorandum of Inquiry, there is **NO LEGAL SUFFICIENCY** for further investigation of the Complaint.

BY:



Steven P. Cullen, Executive Director
Florida Bar No. 362204
PBC Commission on Ethics

4/6/2015

Date