



Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics

Commissioners

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In Re: Debra West

C11-025

Public Report and Final Order of Dismissal

COMPLAINANT, LaDonna Booth, filed the above-referenced COMPLAINT on November 29, 2011, alleging a possible ethics violation involving RESPONDENT Debra West, Assistant Director, Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department.

The COMPLAINT alleges that Ms. West corruptly misused her official position to secure a special benefit for Ms. Natalie Jones, daughter of Ms. Dawn Jones who is one of her subordinates, by allowing Natalie to be hired under the supervision of her mother and signing off on her time sheets.

Pursuant to Chapter 2, Article V, Division 8, Section 2-258(a)¹ of the Palm Beach County Code, the Commission on Ethics is empowered to enforce the county code of ethics. Corrupt misuse of official position is prohibited pursuant to Article XIII, sec. 2-443(b) of the Palm Beach County Code.²

On December 28, 2011, after initial inquiry into the matter, the COMPLAINT was determined by staff to be LEGALLY INSUFFICIENT, and presented to the Commission on Ethics on January 4, 2012 with a recommendation of dismissal as LEGALLY INSUFFICIENT

The factual basis underlying this COMPLAINT had been previously addressed in C11-019 and C11-020 with Inquiry made and NO LEGAL SUFFICIENCY found in INQUIRY AN11-023.

¹ Article V, Division 8, section 2-258. Powers and duties. (a) The commission on ethics shall be authorized to exercise such powers and shall be required to perform such duties as are hereinafter provided. The commission on ethics shall be empowered to review, interpret, render advisory opinions and enforce the;

- (1) County Code of Ethics;
- (2) County Post-Employment Ordinance, and
- (3) County Lobbyist Registration Ordinance.

² Article XIII, sec.2-443. Prohibited conduct.

(b) *Corrupt misuse of official position.* An official or employee shall not use his or her official position or office, or any property or resource which may be within his or her trust, to corruptly secure or attempt to secure a special privilege, benefit, or exemption for himself, herself, or others. For the purposes of this subsection, "corruptly" means done with a wrongful intent and for the purpose of obtaining, or compensating or receiving compensation for, any benefit resulting from some act or omission of an official or employee which is inconsistent with the proper performance of his or her public duties.

The Commission on Ethics reviewed the memorandum of inquiry and determined that the COMPLAINANT has no personal knowledge or independent evidence that the RESPONDENT, Debra West, used her official position to secure a special benefit in violation of Sec. 2-443(b) of the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics and DISMISSED the COMPLAINT on January 4, 2012, due to NO LEGAL SUFFICIENCY.

Therefore it is:

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED THAT the COMPLAINT against RESPONDENT Debra West is hereby DISMISSED.

DONE AND ORDERED by the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics in public session on January 4, 2012.

Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics

By:


Edward Rodgers, Chair