



Honesty - Integrity - Character

Palm Beach County

Commission on Ethics

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Commissioners

Michael S. Kridel

Peter L. Cruise

Michael H. Kugler

Rodney G. Romano

Kristin A. Vara-Garcia

Executive Director

Christie Kelley

General Counsel

Rhonda Giger

Intake & Compliance Manager

Gina A. Levesque

Education & Communications Manager

S. Lizabeth Martin

Investigator

Mark A. Higgs

Investigator

Abigail Irizarry

Agenda

July 10, 2025 – 1:30 p.m.

Governmental Center,

301 North Olive Avenue, 6th Floor

Commissioners Chambers

Meeting will begin at 1:30pm
Executive Session will begin at 1:40pm
Regular Agenda will resume immediately
following the Executive Session

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- I. Call to Order
 - II. Pledge of Allegiance
 - III. Roll Call
 - IV. Introductory Remarks
 - V. Approval of Minutes from June 5, 2025
 - VI. Executive Sessions
 - a. C24-013
 - b. C24-014
 - VII. Processed Advisory Opinions (Consent Agenda)
 - a.
 - VIII. Items Pulled from Consent Agenda
 - a.
 - IX. Executive Director Comments
 - X. Commission Comments
 - XI. Public Comments
 - XII. Adjournment

If a person decides to appeal any decision made by this Commission with respect to any matter considered at this meeting or hearing, (s)he will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, (s)he may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

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

JUNE 5, 2025

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

**COMMISSION CHAMBERS
WEISMAN GOVERNMENTAL CENTER**

MEMBERS:

Michael S. Kridel, Chair
Peter L. Cruise, Vice Chair
Michael H. Kugler
Rodney G. Romano
Kristin A. Vara-Garcia

COMMISSION ON ETHICS STAFF PRESENT:

Rhonda Giger, General Counsel
Mark Higgs, COE Investigator II
Abigail Irizarry, COE Investigator II
Christie E. Kelley, COE Director III
Gina A. Levesque, COE Intake and Compliance Manager

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT & COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE STAFF PRESENT:

Danielle Freeman, Deputy Clerk
Karla Perez, Board Meetings Specialist

I. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The commissioners recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Roll Call

Present: Chair Kridel, Vice Chair Cruise, Commissioner Kugler, and
Commissioner Vara-Garcia

Absent: Commissioner Romano

IV. Introductory Remarks

No comments were made.

V. Approval of Minutes from April 3, 2025 (COE 15th Anniversary Interviews)

MOTION to approve the minutes. Motion by Commissioner Vara-Garcia, seconded by Vice Chair Cruise, and carried 4-0.

VI. Approval of Minutes from May 1, 2025

MOTION to approve the minutes. Motion by Vice Chair Cruise, seconded by Commissioner Kugler, and carried 4-0.

VII. Executive Session Re: C25-001

RECESS

At 1:33 p.m., the chair declared the meeting recessed for executive session.

RECONVENE

At 1:56 p.m., the meeting reconvened with Chair Kridel, Vice Chair Cruise, Commissioner Kugler, and Commissioner Vara-Garcia present.

Chair Kridel read the following final order into the record:

In re: Denise Cleckley

C25-001

Complainant, Terrence Moore, filed the above-referenced complaint alleging that Respondent, Denise Cleckley, Neighborhood and Community Services Assistant Director (former) for the City of Delray Beach, used her official position in a manner that may have violated the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics.

Pursuant to Section 2-258(a) of the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics Ordinance, the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics is empowered to enforce the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics.¹ On June 5, 2025, the Commission conducted a probable cause hearing. After reviewing the Report of Investigation and the Probable Cause Recommendation and considering statements by COE staff, the Commission concluded that there was insufficient evidence to support a finding of probable cause.

Therefore it is:

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that the complaint against Respondent, Denise Cleckley, is hereby DISMISSED.

DONE AND ORDERED by the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics in public session on June 5, 2025.

VIII. Processed Advisory Opinions (Consent Agenda)

There were no items on the consent agenda.

IX. Items Pulled from Consent Agenda

No items were pulled from the consent agenda.

X. Executive Director Comments

Ms. Kelley shared the following updates:

1.

Staff had conducted several trainings with various municipalities and the County Attorney's office. They also participated in outreach events hosted by COE Communication and Education Manager S. Lizbeth Martin.

2.

The next COE meeting would be held on July 10th.

3.

Ms. Kelley congratulated Ms. Levesque on her upcoming graduation, where she would be earning her master's degree.

XI. Commission Comments

1.

The commissioners expressed their congratulations to Ms. Levesque on successfully earning her master's degree.

2.

Commissioner Kugler recognized his mother-in-law in the audience, and the commissioners also welcomed her.

XII. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

XIII. Adjournment

At 2:01 p.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.

APPROVED:

Chair/Vice Chair