



Honesty - Integrity - Character

**Palm Beach County
Commission on Ethics**

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News Release

For immediate release:
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December 12, 2019
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Summary of Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics Meeting Held on December 12, 2019

The Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics (COE) took the following actions at its monthly public meeting held on December 12, 2019.

One complaint was heard in executive session. The complete file is published on the COE website at: <http://www.palmbeachcountyetics.com/complaints.htm>.

C19-004: After considering the investigative report, probable cause recommendation, and statement of the COE advocate and respondent, the COE found probable cause did not exist and dismissed the complaint because the evidence did not indicate that a violation had occurred.

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

RQO 19-021: A city of Boynton Beach (city) commissioner asked if the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics (code) prohibits her from accepting employment with the Police Athletic League of West Palm Beach (PAL), a nonprofit organization that is not a city vendor or a lobbyist or principal or employer of a lobbyist who lobbies the city.

The COE opined as follows: No, the code does not prohibit her from accepting this employment. However, any participation in fundraising for PAL would need to be in her personal name without title or connection to her official position as a city commissioner. She would also be prohibited from using her elected position with the city in any way, including participating in or voting on any matter, to give a special financial benefit to PAL. Finally, since PAL is a 501(c)(3) organization, should the commissioner or anyone else acting under her direction solicit or accept a donation in excess of \$100 from a vendor, lobbyist, or principal or employer of a lobbyist of the city, she must maintain a record of the solicitation and submit the record to the COE within 30 days of the event, or if no event, within 30 days of the solicitation.

RQO 19-022: The town manager for the town of Lake Clark Shores (town) asked if the code prohibits him from starting a business and consulting for other businesses during non-work hours.

The COE opined as follows: As long as neither he nor his outside business enter into any contracts or other transactions for goods or services with the town, directly or indirectly, and he operates his business outside of his town work hours, he will not be prohibited from having an outside business. However, he is prohibited from entering into any contractual relationships to provide paid services with a town vendor. Further, he is prohibited from using his position with the town to influence another person to take or fail to take some action that would give a special financial benefit to his customers or clients, soliciting business during his town work hours, and identifying himself as the town manager or a town employee on any written or verbal communication in an attempt to obtain a customer. The COE also recommends that he refrain from working for any potential customer or client who may need to obtain Town Council or department approvals, as it may create an appearance of impropriety even where he is not directly involved in the approval process as the town manager.

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

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