

**OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES
OF THE
PALM BEACH COUNTY INSPECTOR GENERAL COMMITTEE
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

NOVEMBER 18, 2021

**THURSDAY
9:30 A.M.**

**COMMISSION CHAMBERS
WEISMAN GOVERNMENTAL CENTER**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS:

Peter L. Cruise, Chair
Michael S. Kridel, Vice Chair
Carol E.A. DeGraffenreidt
Carey Haughwout – Arrived later
Alan Johnson, Chief Assistant State Attorney, proxy for David Aronberg
Michael H. Kugler – Absent
Rodney G. Romano - Absent

STAFF:

John A. Carey, County Inspector General

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:

Julie Burns, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller

III. INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS – None

IV. APPROVAL OF INSPECTOR GENERAL (IG) COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

a. Meeting: May 13, 2021

MOTION to approve the May 13, 2021 minutes. Motion by Carol DeGraffenreidt, seconded by Michael Kridel, and carried 4-0. Carey Haughwout, Michael Kugler and Rodney Romano absent.

V. SIX-MONTH STATUS REPORT

a. Presentation by Inspector General Carey

IG John Carey provided a PowerPoint presentation, and he stated that:

- New Office of Inspector General (OIG) staff included Frank Frank, Lizette McGowan, Chelsea Flint, Hank Nagel, and Nicole Spence.
- New promotions and certifications included:
 - Chris Dyckman, Investigator III Supervisor;
 - D. J. Lormistois, certified Inspector General Investigator;
 - Shonnelle Brathwaite, certified Inspector General Auditor;
 - Tiffany Thomas, certified Fraud Examiner; and
 - Kalinthia Dillard, Chair, Florida Bar Association's Professional Ethics Committee.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Carey Haughwout joined the meeting.)

- The OIG provided oversight for the disbursement of over \$750 million in federal and State COVID-19 relief funds for business grants and rental/food assistance.
- 87 incoming complaints were evaluated to determine whether they belonged under the IG's jurisdiction.
- Preliminary inquiries were made to determine whether an investigation should be conducted.
- The number of complaints did not necessarily correlate to the number of intake activities.
- Sixteen of the 26 ongoing investigations and four of the six issued reports were COVID related.

Responding to an IG Committee question, Mr. Carey said that the IG Committee would be notified and a press release would be issued if law enforcement was involved in any of the investigative reports.

Mr. Carey continued his PowerPoint presentation with the following comments:

- There was one current and one previous ongoing contract oversight and evaluation.

- 4% of contract oversight and evaluations involved monitoring the activities of County and municipal COVID and surtax funds.
- Two tips and trends were issued on local preferences for soliciting State-funded construction and services and the use of drones by police departments.
- The two open contract oversight and evaluations involved the CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan Act.
- Most of the contract oversight activities were procurement related.
- Explanations why the OIG determined that a contract complaint did not result in a report were included in a letter to the complainant and management.
- There were 13 ongoing audits.
 - Some audits involved interlocal agreements between the County and municipalities receiving County funds to pay police officers overtime for enforcement of waters in protecting manatees.
 - Not all questioned costs indicated potential fraud or waste but rather a lack of proper accounting.
 - The most basic internal control action should be to segregate duties and never allow one person the sole authority over spending dollars.
- The OIG provided 13 different State and national outreach trainings and presentations.
- Fiscal Year 2021 accomplishments included:
 - accreditation and re-accreditation by the State Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission; and
 - peer review by the Association of Inspectors General.
- The OIG's annual report would be completed by mid-December.
- The OIG's 2021 annual budget was \$3.5 million compared to the \$7 billion combined budget of organizations and agencies overseen by the OIG.
- The 27 OIG staff provided oversight on over 14,500 full-time municipal and County employees.

- An OIG outreach campaign to meet with community groups and municipal councils would begin again.
- His four-year contract would end June 28, 2022, and he would submit a new contract.
 - The IG ordinance stated that at least six months prior to the end of the contract term, the IG Committee would determine whether to renew the contract for an additional four years.

Discussion ensued regarding the IG contract process, and the following points were made:

- The IG would review his current and new contract with the County's Human Resources (HR) Department and the County attorney.
- The new contract would be sent to the IG Committee chair, who would sign to renew the contract, along with himself, the County's legal department, and HR.
- The signed, renewed contract would be submitted to the Board of County Commissioners for approval.

Vice Chair Michael Kridel suggested that Mr. Carey notify HR and allow them to initiate the contract process.

Alan Johnson, Chief Assistant State Attorney, commented that the IG Committee's intent to renew the IG's contract did not lock the IG Committee into approving the renewal itself because the contract had to be accepted. He added that the ordinance's language indicated that the IG Committee should voice its intent within six months.

MOTION to approve the IG Committee's desire to renew IG Carey's contract. Motion by Carey Haughwout, seconded by Michael Kridel, and carried 5-0. Michael Kugler and Rodney Romano absent.

Mr. Carey continued his PowerPoint presentation with the following comments:

- The IG Committee's FY 2022 audit plan included construction contracts and how COVID-19 funds were being spent and accounted for.
- Since the OIG's 2010 inception:
 - thousands of people called the hotline or the OIG's office as well as sent correspondence;

- over 1,000 OIG recommendations were made with a 95% management acceptance rate;
- investigations and audits led to 19 arrests or prosecutions; and
- over 200 cases were referred to law enforcement or to the State or local Commission on Ethics.

b. Discussion

Discussion ensued regarding the IG's six-month status report, and the following points were made:

- Basic checklist audits would not require an internet technology expert to conduct network and application security.
- Some previous six-month investigations were still ongoing in the current six-months.
- Moving forward, the six-month status report would include information regarding the average time it took to conduct various activities and audits.
- Audit Report 2021-A-0007 related to the previous City of Lake Worth (City) manager's discretionary fund purchasing card purchases that lacked review and oversight.
- The OIG reviewed and audited the municipalities' policies on purchasing cards and discretionary travel funds, and they offered tips, trends, and best practices for their use.
- The OIG could collaborate with the Palm Beach County League of Cities (League) to offer training on purchasing cards and discretionary travel funds.
- The OIG still considered hiring another attorney to handle contract procurement.
- The IG Committee was previously briefed about Investigative Report 2020-0006 involving Fire Rescue's use of facilities for profit.
 - The current reporting period ended on September 30, 2021, and the report took place in the gap between the end of the last six-month period and the current six-month period.
- The IG ordinance could incorporate language that required outreach training every four years with the Commission on Ethics.

c. Public Comment

1.

DISCUSSED: OIG Municipal Training.

Richard Radcliffe, League Executive Director, stated that:

- Training for newly elected municipal officials was not held once every four years but four hours every year.
- The County probably had the best ethics culture anywhere in the country.

VI. NEW BUSINESS – None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:56 a.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.

APPROVED:

Chair/Vice Chair