

Glenton "Glen" Gilzean, Jr.  
*Chair*  
Don Gaetz  
*Vice Chair*  
Michelle Anchors  
William P. Cervone  
John Grant  
William "Willie" N. Meggs  
Ed H. Moore  
Wengay M. Newton, Sr.  
Jim Waldman



State of Florida  
COMMISSION ON ETHICS  
P.O. Drawer 15709  
Tallahassee, Florida 32317-5709

325 John Knox Road  
Building E, Suite 200  
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

*"A Public Office is a Public Trust"*

Kerrie J. Stillman  
*Executive Director*

Steven J. Zuilkowski  
*Deputy Executive Director/  
General Counsel*

(850) 488-7864 Phone  
(850) 488-3077 (FAX)  
[www.ethics.state.fl.us](http://www.ethics.state.fl.us)

---

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
March 15, 2023

CONTACT PERSON:  
Lynn Blais or  
Kerrie J. Stillman  
850.488.7864

May be accessed online at [www.ethics.state.fl.us](http://www.ethics.state.fl.us)

TALLAHASSEE—March 15, 2023—Meeting in Tallahassee on March 10<sup>th</sup> in closed session, the Florida Commission on Ethics took action on 36 matters, Chair Glenton "Glen" Gilzean, Jr. announced today. Nine of those matters were complaints considered for probable cause. A finding of probable cause is not a determination that a violation has occurred. Such a determination is made only after a full evidentiary hearing on the allegations.

The Commission considered a complaint filed against Osceola High School teacher **DAVID MARTINEZ**. No probable cause was found to believe Mr. Martinez abused his position to obtain a disproportionate benefit or that he misused his position when he transported students in the ESE/Transition program to his residence to teach them how to use yard equipment.

No probable cause was found to believe **RICHARD RAUL FELLER**, Volusia County Planning and Land Development Regulation Commissioner, violated Florida's financial disclosure laws by failing to disclose a federal tax lien, that had not been reduced to a judgment, on his 2020 Form 1 disclosure.

The Commission no found probable cause to believe former Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Director of Cannabis **HOLLY BELL** violated the financial disclosure laws by failing to file her Form 1F within 60 days of leaving her position.

The Commission considered a complaint filed against Town of White Springs Council Member **MARY BERRY**. No probable cause was found to believe Ms. Berry abused her position to obtain a disproportionate benefit or that she misused her position regarding the development of an ordinance allowing internet café gambling. Similarly, no probable cause was found to believe she had a conflicting contractual relationship or employment or that she had a voting conflict when she voted on the ordinance.

The Commission found probable cause on an allegation regarding Levy County Commissioner **JOHN MEEKS**. Probable cause was found to believe he had a voting conflict that would inure to the special private gain or loss of his business and that he failed to announce the nature of his conflict when he abstained from voting on measures and voted on consent agenda items that inured to the special private gain or loss of his hardware store. However, no further action will be taken by the Commission due to the particular circumstances of the matter.

A self-initiated investigation – required by statute – to determine if **EARL EUGENE KETRING**, Member of the Taylor County Planning Board, willfully failed to timely file his 2018 and 2019 Form 1, resulted in a finding of no probable cause.

After reviewing the results of a self-initiated investigation – required by statute – the Commission found no probable cause to believe **PAUL CHESTNUT**, Flagler Beach Planning and Architectural Review Board Member, willfully failed to timely file his 2018 Form 1 disclosure.

Similarly, in a self-initiated investigation – required by statute – the Commission found no probable cause to believe that **TOSHMON D. STEVENS**, Department of Corrections Assistant Detention Center Superintendent, willfully failed to timely file his 2018 Form 1.

In another self-initiated investigation – required by statute – probable cause was found to believe **JOHN POLINSKY**, who serves on the Dorcas Fire District Board of Commissioners and is the District Fire Chief, willfully failed to file his 2018 Form 1.

The Commission reviewed 27 complaints for legal sufficiency. These reviews are limited to questions of jurisdiction and determinations as to whether the contents of the complaint are adequate to allege a violation of the Code of Ethics or other laws within the Commission's jurisdiction. As no factual investigation precedes the reviews, the Commission's conclusions do not reflect on the accuracy of the allegations made in these complaints. The Commission dismissed the following complaints for lack of legal sufficiency: **SHERITTA JOHNSON**, Risk Management Director for the City of Fort Pierce; **DEBRA HIXON**, Broward County School Board Member; **MARY ELIZABETH KUENZEL**, Clerk of the Second District Court of Appeal; **BROOKE NICOLE MALONE**, Vero Beach Recreation Advisory Board Director; **JASON JEFFRIES**, Vero Beach City Planner; **MELODY RATCLIFF SANDERSON**, Vero Beach City Code Enforcement Officer; **MONTE KEVIN FALLS**, Vero Beach City Manager; **LISA FOSTER**, Pinellas County Floodplain Manager and Town of Redington Shores Planning and Zoning Board

Chair; **ALEXANDRIA AYALA**, Palm Beach County School Board Member; **RAY BROOKS**, Sebring Sun 'n Lake Improvement District Board of Supervisors President; **WILLIAM D. WASHINGTON**, Third Judicial Circuit Clerk of Court; **CHRISTINE FRAGA**, Miami-Dade School Board Member and candidate for Mayor of Doral; **DANA MCCOOL**, Deltona City Commissioner; **PATRICIA ROGERS**, Chair of the Board of Advantage Academy of Hillsborough; **CHARLES HARRIS**, Vice Chair of the Board of Advantage Academy of Hillsborough; **CHRISTOPHER BRYANT**, Vero Beach Code Enforcement Board Member; **HORRACE JONES**, Escambia County Zoning Department Supervisor; **EMILY HOFFMAN**, Lawtey City Councilwoman; **ANDREW HOLMER**, Escambia County Zoning Department Director; **WILLIAM BOUTIN**, Groves Golf and Country Club Community Development District Chairman; **HERMAN PEREZ**, VillaSol Community Development District Board of Supervisors member; **REBECCA RUDOLPH**, Fourth Judicial Circuit Assistant State Attorney; **BAKER CHAPMAN**, Fourth Judicial Circuit Assistant State Attorney; **OFFICER MANRIQUES**, Jacksonville Sheriff Officer; **OFFICER GREBINGER**, Jacksonville Sheriff Officer; **REBECCA BAXLEY**, Vernon City Council President; and **JERRY FELTNER**, Lawtey Chief of Police.

### **PUBLIC SESSION**

During its public session meeting, the Commission considered a settlement agreement entered into between the Commission Advocate and City of Jacksonville Council Member **KEITH DOHERTY**. The Commission adopted the agreement finding Mr. Doherty failed to disclose businesses in which he served as an officer, director or proprietor, agent, or owned a material interest, on his 2015 and 2016 Form 1 disclosures. A civil penalty of \$500 was recommended to the Governor for imposition.

The Commission granted the Advocate's Motion to Dismiss a complaint filed against former Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services, **NICOLE HEATHER FRIED**. Additional discovery and amended disclosures resulted in a lack of evidence to proceed.

The Commission adopted an opinion finding a City Commissioner would have a prohibited conflict of interest if she were to receive funds from the City's property improvement grant program that she helped to set up.

In another opinion, the Commission provides guidance to a member of the West Villages Improvement District Board of Supervisors who also serves as a member and officer of his Property Owners Association. The Commission found there would be a prohibited conflict of interest or a conflicting employment or contractual relationship by the member being involved in a lawsuit where he has roles on both sides of the lawsuit. Voting conflict guidance also was provided to the member.

The Florida Commission on Ethics is an independent nine-member commission formed in 1974 to review complaints filed under the statutory Code of Ethics and to answer questions from public officials about potential conflicts of interest through its issuance of advisory opinions.

If the Ethics Commission believes a violation of the law may have occurred, it may decide to hold a public hearing. If it concludes a violation has been committed, it may recommend civil penalties including removal from office or employment and fines up to \$10,000 per violation.